

ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Board of Education is committed to the effective use of electronic mail ("e-mail") by all County staff members in the conduct of their official business. This policy is not meant to limit or discourage the use of e-mail for conducting the official business of the County, but rather, this policy and any corresponding guidelines are intended to establish a framework for the proper use of e-mail as an official business tool.

When available, the County's e-mail system must be used by employees for any official County e-mail communications. Personal e-mail accounts on providers other than the County's e-mail system may be blocked at any time due to concerns for network security, SPAM, or virus protection. Furthermore, County staff are expected to exercise reasonable judgment and prudence and take appropriate precautions to prevent viruses from entering the County's network when opening or forwarding any e-mails or attachments to e-mails that originate from unknown sources.

County staff shall not send or forward mass e-mails, even if the e-mails concern County business, without prior approval of the Technology Director.

County staff may join list serves or other e-mail services (e.g. RSS feeds) that pertain to their responsibilities in the County, provided these list serves or other e-mail services do not exceed the staff member's e-mail storage allotment. Staff members are required to keep their inbox and folders organized by regularly reviewing e-mail messages, appropriately saving e-mails that constitute a public record or student record and e-mails that are subject to a Litigation Hold, and purging all other e-mails that have been read. If the staff member is concerned that his/her e-mail storage allotment is not sufficient, s/he should contact the County's technology coordinator (IT staff). Similarly, if a staff member is unsure whether s/he has adequate storage or should subscribe to a list serve or RSS feed, s/he should discuss the issue with his/her building principal or the County's technology coordinator or IT staff. The Technology Director is authorized to block e-mail from list serves or e-mail services if the e-mails received by the staff member(s) regularly exceed 100 megabytes.

Public Records

The County complies with all Federal and State laws pertaining to electronic mail. Accordingly, e-mails written by or sent to County staff members may be public records containing information relating to the conduct of the public's business, prepared, owned and retained by the District, or education records if their content includes personally identifiable, non-directory information about a student. State and Federal law exempt certain documents and information within documents from disclosure, no matter what their form. Therefore, certain e-mails may be exempt from disclosure or it may be necessary to redact certain content in the e-mails before the e-mails are released pursuant to a public records request, the request of a parent or eligible student to review education records, or a duly served discovery request involving ESI.

E-mails written by or sent to County staff members by means of their private e-mail account may be public records if the content of the e-mails contains information relating to the conduct of the public's business, prepared, owned and retained by the District, or education records if their content includes personally identifiable, non-directory, information about a student. Consequently, staff shall comply with a County request to produce copies of e-mail in their possession that are either public records or education records, or that constitute ESI that is subject to a Litigation Hold, even if such records reside on a computer owned by an individual staff member, or are accessed through an e-mail account not controlled by the County.

Retention

Pursuant to State and Federal law, e-mails that are public records or education records, and e-mails that are subject to a Litigation Hold shall be retained.

E-mail retention is the responsibility of the individual e-mail user. E-mails sent or received using the County's e-mail service may only be retained for 30 days on the server. This retention is for disaster recovery and not to provide for future retrieval. The County does not maintain a central or distributed e-mail archive of e-mail sent and/or received.

Unauthorized E-mail

The Board does not authorize the use of its proprietary computers and computer network ("network") to accept, transmit, or distribute unsolicited bulk e-mail sent through the Internet to network e-mail accounts. In addition, Internet e-mail sent, or caused to be sent, to or through the network that makes use of or contains invalid or forged headers, invalid or non-existent domain names, or other means of deceptive addressing will be deemed to be counterfeit. Any attempt to send or cause such counterfeit e-mail to be sent to or through the network is unauthorized. Similarly, e-mail that is relayed from any third party's e-mail servers without the permission of that third party, or which employs similar techniques to hide or obscure the source of the e-mail, is also an unauthorized use of the network. The Board does not authorize the harvesting or collection of network e-mail addresses for the purposes of sending unsolicited e-mail. The Board reserves the right to take all legal and technical steps available to prevent unsolicited bulk e-mail or other unauthorized e-mail from entering, utilizing, or remaining within the network. Nothing in this policy is intended to grant any right to transmit or send e-mail to, or through, the network. The Board's failure to enforce this policy in every instance in which it might have application does not amount to a waiver of its rights.

Unauthorized use of the network in connection with the transmission of unsolicited bulk e-mail, including the transmission of counterfeit e-mail, may result in civil and criminal penalties against the sender and/or possible disciplinary action.

Authorized Use and Training

Pursuant to Policy IFGBA staff members using the County's e-mail system shall acknowledge their review of, and intent to comply with, the County's policy on acceptable use and safety by signing and submitting a form annually.

Approved: June 26, 2012