

## District E-Mail Guidelines

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### Summary

Electronic mail is provided by Enid Public Schools for the use of district staff to enable efficient and effective communication. Keeping this purpose in mind, staff shall adhere to the district policies for appropriate, efficient and secure use described in District Technology Policies.

### Appropriate Use

This section provides the framework within which staff are permitted to utilize district-provided electronic communication and an indication of what would be considered appropriate use of this technology. Board policies and administrative regulations that pertain to staff and student conduct, such as the use of offensive language and harassment, also apply to electronic communication vehicles and their use. District staff should not be subjected to inappropriate, inefficient or ineffective communication, including jokes and chain mail. It should be clear, to all employees, that district information systems (including e-mail) are provided and intended for official school district use. Staff should always exercise good judgement in utilizing district e-mail and present a professional appearance through such usage. Remember that district communications, including e-mail, are matters of public record open to public inspection.

### **Every staff member using the district's electronic mail system must be aware of the following guidelines:**

- The prime purpose of the district's e-mail system is to enable our staff to conduct their work in an efficient, effective manner that displays the professionalism of each staff member.
- When you communicate using e-mail, you are using public property and you must comply with board policies and administrative regulations as well as meet community standards of appropriateness.
- To facilitate professional demeanor among our community and clients, all personnel are to refrain from using alternative e-mail accounts for school business. Yahoo or hotmail accounts are not acceptable for conducting school business and should be discontinued.
- The use of add-on programs such as incredimail is not acceptable. This program, as well as others, includes spyware that is detrimental to the district's network.
- E-mail accounts used for district business are the property of the district and not the individual user. In the case of an employee absence, the school or department may assign other staff to access an individual's e-mail account.
- E-mail messages are district records as defined in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) Act. E-mail messages can therefore be the subject of a FOIPP request. You can delete messages, discard old messages, and purge archived messages that are considered transitory records as defined by the FOIPP Act.

- As with other inappropriate behavior, the consequence of inappropriate use of electronic communication may range from reprimand to termination of employment.

**The following use of electronic mail is prohibited:**

- Intentionally transmitting or receiving pornographic material, hate literature and material promoting violence.
- Sending messages, jokes or other forms of communication that violate the district's harassment policy or create an intimidating, hostile or inefficient working environment.
- Distributing unsolicited personal views except when related to district matters.

For assistance in controlling abusive or offensive e-mail, you may contact the district's Information Technology Director e-mail at [mdking@enidk12.org](mailto:mdking@enidk12.org).

**Efficient Use**

The following guidelines are intended to reduce the volume of electronic mail received by users and to enable a more efficient and uninterrupted service. It is important that users be knowledgeable about the district's e-mail system.

**Reduce the use and size of attachments.**

- Attachments take more memory and transmission capacity as well as time to handle. If the information consists of one page, copy and paste it into the body of the message.
- Follow district specifications for e-mail attachments.
- Take into consideration that the transmission of color pictures, cartoons, voice and video attachments usually utilize large files.
- Keep attachments small. Attachments should never exceed 10 Megabytes in size. If you need to send a file larger than this please contact the Information Technology Director for alternative methods.

**Reduce bulk communication.**

- If you intend to send e-mail to more than 50 people check for appropriateness and timing with the district's e-mail administrator. Create your own distribution list and limit it to those who need to know.
- Use existing communication vehicles, rather than bulk e-mail, for communication to all schools or for a specific purpose (e.g. sale of surplus furniture). Use the *Superintendent's Memo* for communicating to all schools. E-mail to all schools requires prior approval from the superintendent.
- Mass mailing to district staff or the use of a distribution list to communicate from or on behalf of an external organization requires prior approval of the Superintendent. Limit your potential exposure to "junk mail". There is extensive commercial use and sale of e-mail addresses for product and service distribution.
- When sending mass mailings, utilize the blind carbon copy (bcc :) that will hide the distribution list of e-mail addresses therefore protecting that list from ending up on 'junk mail' lists.

- If it comes from within the district, ask the sender to remove your name from the mailing list. If you receive e-mails from friends, family members or others that violate district policy or that you consider inappropriate, please respond with the following message:

Enid Public Schools is a non-profit political subdivision of the State of Oklahoma engaged in the Public instruction of students in the 4-year-old program through 12<sup>th</sup>-grade. Only e-mail messages and attachments appropriate for this student-centered environment should be sent to my school account (name@enidk12.org). The e-mail sent previously from your account does not meet this standard. Thank you for your cooperation with this policy in the future.

The above note should be sent in a new message, **not a reply message**, which would only continue to circulate the inappropriate material. Please do not reply, with this note or any other note, to junk mail or to addresses that you do not recognize, which could compound the problem.

- If it comes from outside the district, contact the district's Information Technology director. Do not reply to the sender. Requesting the outside source to remove your name validates your e-mail address and you may be subjected to significant "junk mail".
- Messages should be concise and directed to individuals with an interest or need to know.
- Sending e-mail chain letters constitutes an inappropriate use of resources and subjects district staff to unnecessary communication.
- Be cautious. When using websites that require you to register your personal information and e-mail address, consider setting up a junk e-mail account through hotmail or yahoo to use for registering. Also ensure that you check or uncheck fine print options in regards to sharing your information with others, or receiving e-mail notices or newsletters, specials or alerts.

### **Security and Safety**

**The following guidelines are intended to make users aware of security and safety issues related to e-mail.**

- There are no laws that protect the privacy of the e-mail user. This method of communication is neither private nor secure. Do not send confidential or sensitive information via e-mail and do not disclose personal information. Use encryption if you have to forward confidential information using the e-mail system.
- The technology of computers is such that it keeps a record of just about everything that is done on them, even if "deleted".
- The district's anti-virus program updates automatically and protects the network from most viruses, or spyware also known as malware. Malware can now infect computers just from viewing e-mails, without opening attachments, clicking on popup windows or from visiting infected websites. The district request that all personnel use good judgement when viewing websites for business use and avoid questionable sites. If you do not know the sender, do not open the e-mail.

- Change your password at least quarterly. While this may be an inconvenience, it is an important way to ensure that others are not able to gain access to your e-mail. A password should consist of at least six alphanumeric characters and should not be easy to guess. Instructions for changing passwords are included in the message sent to alert users of impending password expiration.
- Do not give out your password. You are responsible for maintaining the security of your account and password. Your account cannot be used without your password and therefore the account is your signature of your online activities and behaviour.
- Do not leave your computer unattended with e-mail still accessible. Log off your computer or use a password on your screensaver.

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The ***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the Act)*** applies to all public bodies including ministries, corporations, municipalities, hospitals, schools, universities and colleges.

The purposes of this Act are:

- (a) to allow any person a right of access to the records in the custody or under the control of a public body subject to limited and specific exceptions as set out in this Act.
- (b) to control the manner in which a public body may collect personal information from individuals, to control the use that a public body may make of that information and to control the disclosure by a public body of that information
- (c) to allow individuals, subject to limited and specific exceptions as set out in this Act, a right of access to personal information about themselves that is held by a public body,
- (d) to allow individuals a right to request corrections to personal information about themselves that is held by a public body, and
- (e) to provide for independent reviews of decisions made by public bodies under this Act and the resolution of complaints under this Act.”