

West Bonner County School District

PERSONNEL

5330

Employee Electronic Mail and On-Line Services Usage

Electronic mail (“e-mail”) is defined as a communications tool whereby electronic messages are prepared, sent and retrieved on personal ~~computers~~ **electronic devices**. On-line services (i.e., the Internet) are defined as a communications tool whereby information, reference material and messages are sent and retrieved electronically on personal ~~computers~~ **electronic devices**.

Because of the unique nature of e-mail/Internet, and because of the District’s desire to protect its interest with regard to its electronic records, the following rules have been established to address e-mail/Internet usage by all employees:

~~The~~ District e-mail and Internet systems are provided for other informal or personal purposes is permissible within reasonable limits. All e-mail/Internet records are considered District records and should be transmitted only to individuals who have a need to receive them and only relating to educational purposes.

The following uses are prohibited:

- The promotion of election or political campaigns, issues dealing with private or charitable organizations or foundations, ballot issues, or proselytizing;
- Sending unsolicited messages such as advertisements, chain letters, junk mail, and jokes;
- Any commercial use, including buying, selling, soliciting, or advertising goods or services;
- Forwarding or redistributing the private message of an e-mail sender to third parties or giving the sender’s e-mail address to third parties without the permission of the sender;
- Sending e-mails that are libelous, defamatory, offensive, or obscene.
- Notifying patrons or the public of the occurrence of a school election by providing anything other than factual information associated with the election – such as location, purpose, etc. Such factual information shall not promote one position over another.

District records, ~~may including~~ **include** e-mail/internet records ~~are~~ subject to public records requests, disclosure to law enforcement or government officials, or to other third parties through subpoena or other processes. The District may review any and all e-mail of any employee, at any time, with or without cause. Consequently, employees should always ensure that all information contained in e-mail/Internet messages is accurate, appropriate and lawful. E-mail can be used to communicate with parents however, it is important that confidential information about a student never be transmitted via email. A letter, telephone call, or a parent conference may be more appropriate. Please be aware that student-teacher and parent-teacher communication via email is not secure and that any email ~~can~~ **may** become a public record or possibly be obtained by unauthorized users. **Best practice is for employees to use e-mail to only transmit to others information for an educational purpose. This includes student names (full first and last name; first initial of first name, full last name; full first name, first initial of last name,**

first initial of first and last name) to be clear in the communication. When communicating with students and parents by e-mail, employees should use their District e-mail rather than a personal e-mail account. E-mail/internet messages by employees may not necessarily reflect the views of the District. Abuse of the e-mail or Internet systems, through excessive and/or inappropriate personal use, or use in violation of the law or District policies, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

While the District does not intend to regularly review employees' e-mail/Internet records, employees have no right or expectation of privacy in e-mail or the internet, and the District may review any and all e-mail of any employee, at any time, with or without cause. Employees shall not use the District's equipment, e-mail, network, software, etc. to engage in otherwise confidential communications as there is no right or expectation of privacy in any communication using District property and any such communications are subject to review by District personnel. Depending upon content, email/internet communications may potentially be disclosed to any member of the public through a public records request **after redacting information**. The District owns the computer and software making up the e-mail and Internet system and permits employees to use them in the performance of their duties for the District. E-mail messages and Internet records are to be treated like shared paper files, with the expectation that anything in them is available for review by the Superintendent.

Personally identifiable information concerning students may not be disclosed or used in any way on the Internet without parent permission (i.e., websites, social media, online publications, etc.). Staff should be aware that conduct on the District's computer and/or using the District's server may be subject to public disclosure depending upon the nature of the communication. A supervising teacher or administrator may authorize the release the release of directory information as defined by law, for internal administrative purposes or approved educational project or activities.

Staff email accounts will have an "In Place Hold" for two (2) years for administrative and supervisory staff and three (3) months for all other staff. An in place hold will preserve items for a specific duration of time.

Administrative & Supervisory Staff include, but may not be limited to the following:

- Superintendent
- Principals
- Department Heads
- Athletic Directors
- Dean of Students

Cross Reference: 5290 Political Activity-Staff Participation
5325 Employee Use of Social Media Sites, Including Personal Sites

Legal Reference: Idaho Constitution Article III, Section 1
Idaho Attorney General Opinion No. 95-07

Policy History:

Adopted on: March 12, 2008

Revised on: December 18, 2012

Revised on: December 17, 2014

Revised on: