

School Board Use of Electronic Mail and Social Media

Use of electronic mail (e-mail) by members of the Board will conform to the same standards of judgment, propriety, and ethics as other forms of school board-related communication. Board members will comply with the following guidelines when using e-mail in the conduct of Board responsibilities:

1. The Board will not use e-mail, communications via social media, or other electronic communications as a substitute for deliberations or voting at Board meetings or for other communications or business properly confined to Board meetings.
2. Board members will be aware that e-mail and e-mail attachments received or prepared for use in Board business or containing information relating to Board business (regardless of whether sent or received on a school owned computer or personally owned computer) may be regarded as public records, which may be inspected by any person upon request, unless otherwise made confidential by law.
3. Board members will note that individual postings made to social media sites should be considered carefully in light of how they would reflect on the poster, the Board of Trustees, and the District. Opinions expressed by staff on a social networking website have the potential to be disseminated far beyond the speaker's desire or intention, and could undermine the public perception of fitness of the individual to serve students' interests. Individual Board member postings are an act of the individual and are not an act of the Board.
4. Board members will avoid reference to confidential information about employees, students, or other matters in e-mail communications, because of the risk of improper disclosure or unsecure websites. Board members will comply with the same standards as school employees with regard to confidential information.

Definitions

"Deliberation" is defined as the receipt or exchange of information or opinion relating to a decision, but shall not include informal or impromptu discussions of a general nature which do not specifically relate to a matter then pending before the public agency for decision.

Legal Reference: I.C. § 9-337 Public Writings *et. seq.*
I.C. § 74-202 Open Public Meetings – Definitions
Cowles Pub. Co. v. Kootenai Co. Bd. of County Commissioners
144 Idaho 259 (2007).

Policy History:

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