

The School District is obligated to respect and, in many cases, to protect confidential data. There are, however, technical and legal limitations on the District's ability to protect confidentiality. For legal purposes, electronic communication (e-mail) is no different than a paper document. In limited circumstances the District may be legally compelled to disclose information relating to business or personal use of e-mail to community members under the Right-to-Know Law, to governmental authorities or, in the context of litigation, to other third parties. E-mail may also contain information that should be retained in the official records of the School District.

Any e-mail message that would be saved had its contents been transmitted in paper form will be printed and retained in school records in accordance with the Local Records Retention Schedule. **If a printed e-mail message document that should be retained is not otherwise described in the Local Records Retention Schedule¹, it will be retained for one calendar year.** An e-mail recipient's decision on whether to print and retain e-mail will be made within 60 days of receipt of an e-mail message. All e-mail messages will be deleted from the system by the e-mail user (after those messages that will be retained have been printed in hard copy) within 60 days after receipt of an e-mail message.

Individuals with questions regarding the retention of particular e-mail messages should obtain an opinion from their supervisor.

I. Examples of e-mail messages which may be deleted without printing a hard copy are:

- A. Messages that address routine administrative, curricular and co-curricular matters, announcements of meetings, schedules of events, etc.
- B. Messages that take the place of informal discussion and which if they were printed would not be retained in school records.
- C. Messages that transmit generic information and are not specific to a student's educational program.
- D. Messages that address personal matters unrelated to the School District.

II. Examples of e-mail messages which should be printed and retained are:

- A. Messages that address significant aspects of a specific student's educational program including, but not limited to, health, discipline, special education program, interaction with the Division of Child, Youth, and Families (DCYF), and communication with parents relating to specific aspects of the student's interaction with the school district.
- B. Messages that address and/or provide information used in making policy decisions, concerning curricular or co-curricular activities, personnel actions or that relate to the business transactions of the School District.
- C. Messages that address activities of significant interest in the community relating to the School District.

Law Reference:

Appendix Reference:

Date Adopted: October 8, 2002

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