

Electronic Mail

Electronic mail (email) includes all electronic messages that are transmitted through a local, regional, or global computer network. An electronic mail message is a communication that is transmitted between two or more computers or electronic terminals, whether or not the message is converted to hard copy format after receipt and whether or not the message is viewed upon transmission or stored for later retrieval.

All District electronic mail systems are owned by the District and are provided for the purpose of conducting official District business, especially the enhancement of staff collaboration and improvement of instruction. Employees' personal messages are permitted, but they shall not be considered private or secure. Email messages sent on or with District resources cannot be considered confidential.

Disclosure of confidential student records, including disclosure via electronic mail or other telecommunication systems, is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Therefore, the sharing of student records or other confidential information with persons or agencies outside the District via e-mail is prohibited without prior written consent of the student's parent/guardian, unless disclosure is under an exception to FERPA (See policy JRA/JRC, Student Records/Release of Information on Students for detailed information on student records and FERPA). Student records and other confidential information may be shared with other District staff members via email, as long as the staff member with whom the records are shared has a legitimate educational interest in the student and the records are shared for a legitimate educational purpose.

Users of District email systems are responsible for appropriate use of those resources. All illegal and improper uses of the electronic mail system, including but not limited to pornography, obscenity, harassment, illegal solicitations, commercial advertisements prohibited by District policy or administrative limitations, gambling, and violation of copyright or intellectual property rights, are prohibited. Also, use of the electronic mail system for which the District will incur an expense without expressed permission of a supervisor is prohibited.

In order to keep use of District electronic mail systems restricted to employees and Board members who are licensed VrainNet users, a user may not leave his/her computer or terminal "signed (logged) on" when unattended and may not leave a password available in an obvious place near the terminal nor share a password with anyone except the electronic mail system administrator.

The District retains the right to review, store, and disclose all information sent over the district electronic mail systems for any legally permissible reason, including but not limited to:

- a) determining whether the information is a public record
- b) determining whether a message or messages contain/s information discoverable in litigation
- c) accessing District information needed in an employee's absence

Except as provided herein, District employees are prohibited from accessing another employee's electronic mail without the expressed consent of the employee. Such consent should be given only in rare circumstances. All District employees should be aware that electronic mail messages may remain retrievable even if they have been deleted and that a statement made in electronic mail communications can form the basis of various legal claims against the individual author or the District.

Electronic mail sent or received by the Board, the District, or the District's employees may be considered a public record subject to public disclosure or inspection under the Colorado Open Records Act. All Board and District electronic mail communications will be monitored in accordance with the attached regulation to ensure that all public electronic mail records are retained, archived, and destroyed in compliance with state law.

The custodian of records for the District will assist the public in locating any specific public electronic mail record requested and will ensure public access to public electronic mail records without unreasonable delay or cost.

District employees will be subject to disciplinary action for violation of this policy and regulation.

Adopted August 27, 1997
Revised June 25, 2008

LEGAL REFS.: CRS 24-6-401 et seq. Colorado Sunshine Act
CRS 24-72-201 et seq. Colorado Open Records Act
CRS 24-80-101 et seq. State Archives and Public Records

CROSS REF.: JRA/JRC, Student Records/Release of Information on Students
JRA/JRC-E, Notification to Parents
EHC, Networking and the Internet
EHC-R, SVVSD Network Terms and Conditions for Access

St. Vrain Valley School District RE-1J, Longmont, Colorado