

8400

INTERNAL BOARD POLICY

Acceptable Use of Electronic Mail Communication

The Board of Education believes that Board members electronically connected to other Board members is an efficient and convenient way to communicate. The main goal of electronic mail (e mail) is to expedite the passage of information. E mail gives Board members quick access to one another. Communication among Board members via e-mail should conform to the same standards as other forms of communication (e.g., committee meetings, etc.) as directed by the Freedom of Information Act. When used properly, e-mail is an effective communications tool and can provide a formal record.

All Board members are encouraged to access e-mail. It will be the responsibility of individual Board members who use e-mail to provide the hardware, hook-up and pay all consumable expenses associated with e-mail usage.

The Freedom of Information Act mandates that all meetings of public bodies such as school Boards be open to the public. It is the policy of the Board of Education that e-mail shall not be used in such a manner as to deprive the public of the rights given to it under the Freedom of Information Act.

This policy sets forth guidelines for intended uses of e-mail by Board members when communicating with other Board members.

1. E-mail, like other written forms of communication relating to the conduct of the public business, is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and subject to disclosure.
2. Board members shall not use e mail as a substitute for deliberations at public Board meetings, and/or shall not discuss policy matters or vote informally on any issues.
3. E-mail should be used to pass along factual work-related information.
4. Security of e-mail communication cannot be assured. Board members shall not reveal their passwords to anyone. If any Board member has reason to believe a password has been lost or stolen, or that e-mail is being accessed by someone without authorization, he/she shall notify the Superintendent, who will notify the district's technology specialist.
5. Personnel issues and other sensitive subjects should never be discussed on-line. The confidentiality of employee data, student data, and other sensitive subjects must always be maintained.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes, Section 1-200 et seq
The Freedom of Information Act
Manchester Board of Education Policy 1121
Manchester Board of Education Bylaws, Section 7

Adopted: June 24, 2002