

POLICY

PEQUANNOCK TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF EDUCATION

BYLAWS
0169 / PAGE 1 OF 2
Board Member Use of Electronic Mail/Internet

0169 BOARD MEMBER USE OF ELECTRONIC MAIL/INTERNET

The Board of Education is a public body as defined in the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., and the Board and its members are required to comply with the provisions of this Act. It is the right of the public to be present at meetings of public bodies and to witness deliberations, policy formulation, and decision-making.

The Board of Education is also subject to the Open Public Records Act, N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq. The Open Public Records Act requires public agencies/School Boards to make certain governmental records subject to public access.

Board members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including but not limited to email, internet web forums and internet chat rooms. Electronic messaging communication shall conform to the same standards of judgment, propriety and ethics as other forms of Board-related communication (committee meetings, telephone calls, etc.).

In order to ensure the Board and/or individual Board members comply with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act and the Open Public Records Act, Board members shall adhere to the following guidelines when communicating electronically.

1. Board members shall not use email or any other electronic messaging service as a substitute for deliberations at Board meetings. The Open Public Meetings Act defines a “meeting” as any gathering attended by or open to all of the members of a public body, held with the intent to discuss or act as a unit upon the specific public business of that body.
2. Email among and between Board members, in their capacity as Board members, shall not be used to conduct Board business and shall be limited to disseminating information, such as suggestions for public agenda items and reminders regarding committee meeting times, dates and places.
3. Board members shall be aware that email and email attachments received or prepared for use in Board business are likely to be regarded as public records that may be inspected by any person upon request, unless otherwise made confidential by law.

POLICY ————— PEQUANNOCK TOWNSHIP

BOARD OF EDUCATION

4. Board members shall avoid reference to confidential information about employees, students or others in email communications because of the risk of improper disclosure.

In the event a Board member(s) fails to comply with the guidance of this Policy, the matter shall be referred to the Board President, who will meet and/or discuss the matter and this Policy with the Board member(s). The Board President may request the Board Attorney participate in this meeting and/or discussion.

N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.

N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq.

Adopted: 14 February 2005

Revised and Adopted: 12 December 2005