Category:	Procedure:
Instructional Goals and Objectives	**Electronic Mail**

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2 E-mail has become one of the most used communications tools in both our constituents' homes and their
3 workplaces. As a portion of Knox County Schools' contract with the recommended contractor for the
4 Tennessee Department of Education, the service provider provides e-mail accounts and services to all
5 employees of Knox County Schools at no charge to the employee. As it is now an integral part of all Knox
6 County School District classrooms and offices, the following guidelines are important to keep in mind.
7
8 a. Establishment of Accounts – Each employee is expected to establish an account through the official
9 system and use that e-mail account for official communications. In most cases, a short training session
10 pertaining to the utilization of the e-mail system will be required prior to the issuing of an account.
11
12 b. Security Responsibilities –
13   (1) Usernames and passwords should be protected from unauthorized use at all times. Do not post
14   any of this information where it may be viewed by others.
15   (2) Usernames and passwords should not be shared among staff members or with students.
16   (3) Passwords should never be shared via e-mail. All legitimate requests for this type of information
17   must be requested in person.
18
19 c. Termination/Revocation of System User Account – The District may suspend or revoke a system
20 user's access to the District's system upon violation of District policy and/or administrative regulations
21 regarding acceptable use. Termination of an employee's account will be effective on the date the principal
22 or department head receives notice of user withdrawal or of revocation of system privileges, or on a future
23 date if so specified.
24
25 d. Consequences of Improper Use – Improper or unethical use may result in disciplinary actions
26 consistent with existing Human Resource policies and, if appropriate, other local, state or federal laws.
27 This may also require restitution for costs associated with system restoration, hardware, and software
28 costs.
29
30 e. Outside or Personal E-mail Services – E-mail services outside of the system should not be used for
31 official communication.
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33 f. Confidentiality – The software and hardware that provides e-mail capabilities to Knox County Schools'
34 employees have been publicly funded. For that reason, it should not be considered a private, personal form
35 of communication. Although, there is currently no requirement in the state's contract to actively monitor
36 e-mail communications, the contents of any communication of this type should be considered public
37 record. The district would have to abide and cooperate with any legal request by the proper authorities to
38 access e-mail contents.
39
40 g. Publication of E-mail Addresses – Since e-mail access is provided as a normal operating tool for
41 employees who require it to perform their jobs, individual staff e-mail addresses must be shared
42

with interested parents and community members who request to communicate with staff in this fashion. While there is no published district-wide directory of e-mail addresses, each campus and department should post a list of e-mail addresses for their staff on their web site.

h. Timeline for Answering E-mail – Staff should be expected to return e-mail communications to parents or other public members who have a legitimate request within 48 hours whenever possible. Requests from outside agencies for information do not fit into this same category and may be handled with a different timeline or in a manner consistent with previous experience in working with similar requests. Staff should not participate in e-mail surveys without district authorization.

i. Network Etiquette – System users are expected to observe the following network etiquette (sometimes known as "netiquette"):
    (1) Use appropriate language: swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs, and any other inflammatory language are prohibited.
    (2) Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving messages is prohibited.
    (3) Transmitting obscene messages or pictures is prohibited.
    (4) Revealing such personal information as addresses or phone numbers of users or others is prohibited.
    (5) Be polite. For example, messages typed in capital letters are the computer equivalent of shouting and are considered rude.

j. Misaddressed E-mail – Incoming e-mail that is misaddressed will remain "undeliverable". Our email contractor does not have the resources to personally inspect all messages of this type and forward them to the proper person.

k. Utilization of Correct E-mail Addresses – Please be certain that the correct e-mail address is given to the person who requests contact. Please check school web pages carefully to insure that lists of staff address are correct. The school web page containing staff addresses should also contain a disclaimer that makes the user aware that if an e-mail is not responded to in a 48 hour timeframe, it may have been misaddressed and should be resent.
    l. Requests for Confidential Information – Requests for personal information on students or staff members should never be honored via e-mail. It is critical for a personal contact to be made with any individual requesting personal information. This relates particularly to any requests for student grades, discipline, attendance or related information. In addition, security information such as usernames or passwords should not be sent via e-mail for any reason.

m. E-mail Notification – Professionals are advised to turn off your e-mail notifier during student contact time to prevent interruptions. Staff members should set aside time at least once a day to check and respond to e-mail messages.

n. Responding to E-mail – E-mail does not have to be answered immediately, simply allow enough time so that a 48-hour turnaround time can be met in most instances. If it is not reasonable to effectively obtain the answer to a question within the recommended 48-hour turnaround time, it is recommended that the staff member at least respond with a confirmation of receipt of the request.

o. Appropriate Types of Messages – Since e-mail is provided for school business related use, employees are asked not to forward messages that have no educational or professional value. An example would be any number of messages that follow a "chain letter" concept. These messages should be deleted.

p. Utilization of Lists and Groups – List serves will be developed for use within the district to facilitate larger, logical mail groups. The Instructional Technology Department will assist schools in developing

groups to facilitate mass e-mails at the campus level. Users are advised to use these functions appropriately. Do not send messages to the entire staff when only a small group of people actually needs to receive the message. Users are also advised to use care when using the "reply" or "reply to all" function and insure their reply is targeted to the appropriate audience.

q. Attachments – Attachments to e-mail messages should only include data files. At no time should executable code be sent or forwarded via e-mail. This activity may violate software licensing requirements. Further, there exists the possibility that any program files received as attachments over the Internet may include viruses or other destructive capabilities once they are "launched". Users who receive an attachment of this sort are advised to delete the entire message immediately without saving or looking at the attachment.

r. E-mail Subscriptions – Subscriptions to Internet list serves should be limited to professional or educational digests due to the amount of traffic generated by general subscriptions. Users are encouraged to use their personal e-mail to receive subscriptions of a general interest.

s. Student Accounts – Students will not be issued individual accounts. For projects that involve email communications, the staff member may use their district account as a facilitator of the activity, or, work with the Instructional Technology department to activate a special project account for a limited time. Students' personal accounts should never be used.

t. Unsolicited E-mail – The Instructional Technology department should be notified if a user receives unsolicited e-mail, particularly if it is of a "hate mail" nature. Every attempt will be made to track down the source of the e-mail and steps will be taken to prevent the user from receiving additional unsolicited e-mail.

u. Disclaimer – The District's e-mail system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The District does not make warranties, whether expressed or implied, including, without limitation, those of fitness for a particular purpose with respect to any services provided by the system and any software contained therein. The District uses a variety of vendor supplied hardware and software and contracts some services. Therefore, the District does not warrant that the functions or services performed will meet the user's requirements. Neither does the District warrant that the system will be uninterrupted or error-free, nor that defects will be corrected.