

BOARD MEMBER USE OF E-MAIL

As elected public officials, school board members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including but not limited to electronic mail (e-mail), Internet Web forums and Internet chat rooms.

Under the open meeting law, deliberation by a quorum of members constitutes a meeting. Deliberation is defined as movement toward a decision including but not limited to the sharing of an opinion regarding business over which the committee has supervision, control or jurisdiction. A quorum may be arrived at sequentially using electronic messaging without knowledge and intent by the author.

School board members should use electronic messaging between and among members only for housekeeping purposes such as requesting or communicating agenda items, meeting times, or meeting dates. Electronic messaging should not be used to discuss board matters that require public discussion under the open meeting law.

The following are examples of appropriate uses of electronic communication:

- The dissemination of any information by a school board member to any number of school board members by one-way distribution (no discussion).
- The dissemination of information by a school board member to any number of school board members and the return of information that is not a matter or matters over which the board has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power. An acceptable form of information to be returned would be availability of time for a meeting or the review of meeting minutes for omissions or corrections.
- The discussion between two school board members of a matter or matters over which the board has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.
- The dissemination of any information by the administration to any number of board members for the purposes of collecting board members' opinions individually without sharing the opinions in the form of discussion with school board members.

The following are examples of inappropriate uses of electronic communications:

- The discussion with more than one school board member of a matter or matters over which the board has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power when the number of school board members involved constitutes a quorum.

- The forwarding of a school board member's comments to another school board member on a matter or matters over which the board has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

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