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Ten Best Practices for Using Email[*]

"People worldwide send 182 billion emails each day. That adds up to more than 67 trillion messages a year." – The New York Times, "Looking for Relief From a Flood of Email," 1/19/14

10. Understand the Difference Between "To" and "CC."

- The people in the "To" field should be those you expect to read and respond.
- The "CC" field should be used sparingly. You should only "CC" people who have expressed a desire to stay in the know or are directly involved in the subject at hand.
- Including people in the "CC" field who are not directly involved in the subject discussed in the email can cause confusion for the recipient(s) as well as adds unnecessary clutter to the recipient's inbox.

9. Be Aware of Attachments and File Size

- Always ensure your attachment is attached and it is the version you wish to send.
- Always ensure you convert your document (Word, etc.) into a PDF before sending as an attachment. This ensures the integrity of the document remains intact and discourages the recipient from editing/altering the document.
- Compress multiple files into a "ZIP" file to reduce the strain on a recipient's inbox (HOW TO: Create a new folder and place the files you wish to email in it; Right click on this folder and highlight "Send To"; Another window will appear; Select "Compressed (zipped) folder"; The new folder will appear on your desktop; Attach and send)
- Note: If sending a 1GB (gigabyte) file to the "ALLRTSD" email address, this actually means 1GB for every recipient on the list, or hundreds of gigabytes. To reduce this massive amount of storage, save large files to a shared folder on your hard drive that is accessible to others in your building. Ask your tech for help with this if you are unsure.

8. Whenever Possible, Don't Discuss Multiple Subjects in the Same Message

- If you need to discuss more than one subject, send multiple e-mails.

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[*] This list was developed through research on professionally recommended email best practices. It is current as of 8/19/14.

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135 S. Wayne Avenue
Wayne, PA 19087-4117
610.688.8100
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- Separating emails per subject makes it easier for the recipient to find the message he or she is looking for later.
- Separating emails per subject means briefer emails and a greater likelihood of a response. The more specific your subject line, the better.

7. Be Mindful of Tone and Assume Best Intent

- Unlike face-to-face meetings or phone calls, email recipients don't have the benefit of hearing an email sender's pitch, tone, inflection or other non-verbal cues.
- The lack of non-verbal cues in email is a major disadvantage to deciphering meaning. As much as 80% of communication is made up of non-verbal cues.
- Before sending an email, be sure to review its tone and phrasing for ways it could be misinterpreted; sarcasm is especially vulnerable to misinterpretation.
- If the message gets "lost in translation," you risk offending the other party.
- On the flip side, email recipients should assume the sender has good and positive intentions when reading an email that may seem to have an offensive tone.

6. Don't Overuse the "High Priority" Exclamation Point.

- Outlook allows you to classify a message "high priority" with a red exclamation point.
- This symbol should be reserved for messages that are truly urgent. If you overuse it, the urgency will be lost and your message will be like "crying wolf" to the recipient.

5. Don't unnecessarily "CC" a supervisor.

- Including a recipient's supervisor in the "CC" field when the supervisor was not among the original recipients in an email chain, when the supervisor has not indicated the need for his/her involvement in the details of a project/issue, or when there is no expressed reason in the email as to why the supervisor was included can appear as if you are trying to coerce the recipient or "prove" your involvement in the project/issue.
- Including a supervisor in the "CC" field may be tempting when you don't get a response to an earlier request. However, the best course of action is to pick up the

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phone and call the recipient. If you don't get a response to an email, try a different communications approach.

- If you feel the need to update your supervisor about a project/issue, do so in a separate email, face-to-face or over the phone.

4. Don't Overuse "Reply to All" & Permission for "ALLSCHOOL"

- "Reply All"
    - o Before replying to every recipient of an email, consider who needs to know.
    - o Your default response should be to reply only to the sender.
- "ALLSCHOOL"
    - o Staff members wishing to send an all-school email to a certain school's email list (ALLRHS, ALLRMS, ALLIES, ALLRES or ALLWES) must get permission from that school's principal. **Please note, emails that contain content prohibited by the district's Acceptable Use Policy (Policy) will not be permitted.**
    - o Please note, the ALLRTSD email list previously open for all staff has been limited to certain administrators effective the 2014-15 school year.

3. Email Addresses Are Personal; Send an Email to Yourself and Use "BCC"

- You would not include a person's home address or phone number in an email to a large number of recipients. A person's work or personal email address is also private information and should be treated in the same manner.
- Should you need to send an email to a large distribution list, especially when the recipients are parents or students, put your email address in the "To" field and place every recipient's email address in the "BCC" field. All recipients will receive the same message, but none will be able to see the emails of the other recipients.

2. Don't send or forward emails containing offensive remarks or personal info.

- Never send emails with libelous, defamatory, racist, obscene or offensive language.
- Sending or forwarding offensive emails puts you and/or the district at risk.

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- District email is not private nor is it your personal email account. Do not send emails that include personal pictures, requests, solicitations or other information.

1. Always Remember Who We Serve

- The nature of our jobs means we have a great responsibility to protect the privacy of our most valuable asset – students. Emails to multiple recipients must be carefully reviewed to ensure no confidential information is shared.

- When in doubt, send a separate email to the person authorized to receive the information. A follow-up email without the sensitive information can then be sent to the remainder of the recipients if need be.