

East Baton Rouge Parish School System District Email Guidelines and Procedures

Updated August 2011

Purpose of Email Guidelines And Procedures

The purpose of these guidelines and procedures is to ensure the proper use of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System's email system and make users aware of what the East Baton Rouge Parish School System deems as acceptable and unacceptable use of its email system. These guidelines and procedures support the Board-approved Network and Internet Use Policy. The East Baton Rouge Parish School System reserves the right to amend these guidelines and procedures at its discretion. In case of amendments, users will be informed appropriately.

All Employees Need To Know

It is important to fully understand and follow the district's Board-approved Network and Internet Usage Policy as well as these EBR Email Guidelines and Procedures. Pay particular attention to the following items:

- The EBR email system is the property of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System.
- Your EBR email account is not a personal email account. (State and federal funding regulations prohibit personal use of district resources.)
- There are no expectancies of privacy or confidentiality regarding any content of any email message(s) transmitted by or received by the EBR email system. All email messages of all EBR employees are subject to Louisiana statutes pertaining to public information.
- Write nothing in an EBR email that you would not want to see on a public bulletin board or on the front page of the local paper.
- Use of your EBR email account is intended solely for the instructional and business communication needs of the school system.
- Your EBR email account is electronically monitored 24/7/365.
- All employee-transmitted email messages are electronically and automatically scanned by content filtering technologies to detect profanity, racially offensive verbiage, hate speech, and threatening or abusive language. District administration is automatically notified when violations are detected.
- The EBR email system is designed and intended to provide rapid communication. It is NOT a document storage system, nor is it designed as a delivery system for large attachments.

- In order to operate efficiently, the email system must be routinely trimmed of old and useless email messages.
- Routinely clean up your mailbox and always save wanted attachments to a local or external storage location or device.
- Once you delete files in GW, you must also *empty* your trash to remove these items from your mailbox.

Legal Risks

Email is a business communication tool and users are obliged to use this tool in a responsible, effective and lawful manner. Although by its nature email seems to be less formal than other written communications, the same laws apply. Therefore, it is important that users are aware of the legal risks associated with the use of email:

- If you send emails with any libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks, you and the East Baton Rouge Parish School System can be held liable.
- If you forward emails with any libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks, you and the East Baton Rouge Parish School System can be held liable.
- If you unlawfully forward confidential information, you and the East Baton Rouge Parish School System can be held liable.
- If you unlawfully forward or copy messages without permission, you and the East Baton Rouge Parish School System can be held liable for copyright infringement.

By following these guidelines and procedures, the email user can minimize the legal risks involved in the use of email. If any user disregards the rules set out in these email guidelines and procedures, the user will be fully liable and the East Baton Rouge Parish School System will disassociate itself from the user as far as legally possible.

Legal Requirements

The following rules are required by law and are to be strictly followed. Email users may not:

- Send or forward emails containing libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks. If you receive an email of this nature from an EBRPSS email account user, you must promptly notify your supervisor.
- Forward a message with copyrighted content without first acquiring permission from the sender.
- Send unsolicited, non-work related email messages.
- Forge or attempt to forge email messages.
- Disguise or attempt to disguise your identity when sending mail.

- Send email messages using another person's email account.
- Copy a message or attachment belonging to another user without permission of the originator.

Best Practices

The East Baton Rouge Parish School System considers email an important means of communication and recognizes the significance of proper email content and speedy replies in conveying a professional image and delivering good customer service. Users should take the same care in drafting an email as they would for any other communication. Therefore the East Baton Rouge Parish School System expects users to adhere to the following guidelines:

Writing Emails

- You should make every effort to write well-structured emails and use short, descriptive subjects.
- The East Baton Rouge Parish School System's email style is informal. This means that sentences can be short and to the point. The use of Internet abbreviations and characters such as LOL, BTW, and smiley faces, etc., however, is not encouraged.
- Signatures should include your name, job title and company name. A disclaimer may be added underneath your signature (see Disclaimer)
- Users should spell check all mails prior to transmission.
- Do not send unnecessary attachments. Do not send extremely large attachments. Message size is limited to 10 MB.
- Do not write emails in full capital letters. Doing so is considered 'screaming.'
- If you forward mails, state clearly what action you expect the recipient to take.
- Only send emails containing content that could be displayed on a public notice board. If they cannot be displayed publicly in their current state, consider rephrasing the email or using other means of communication.
- Only mark emails as important/high priority if they address urgent business or educational matters.

Replying To Emails

Emails should be answered within 8 working hours if possible.

Opening Attachments

Attachments such as Word documents, PDF files, Excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint files, etc. should be saved to your local hard drive (or server home directory) PRIOR to opening them. Opening large attachments within the email application may produce undesirable results. Save the file, exit the email system, and then open the file as usual.

Maintenance

Delete all non-essential messages after you have read them. Do not consider your email account to be a document storage system. Excessive emails in your mailbox will slow the system for all users. Mailbox size is limited to a generous 250 MB of storage capacity. Accounts exceeding the mailbox storage quota are subject to automated deletions without prior notice.

Email Retention

All email messages will be deleted after 365 days from receipt. If a user has sufficient reason to keep a copy of an email, the message must be printed to hardcopy or otherwise retained outside of the GroupWise system. It is logistically impractical to provide permanent, unlimited storage of email messages.

Personal Use

The East Baton Rouge Parish School System forbids the use of its email system for anything other than legitimate business and educational purposes. Therefore, the sending of personal emails, chain letters, junk mail, jokes, music or video files, and executable programs is prohibited. Providing EBR email addresses at personal or commercial websites for anything other than legitimate business or educational purposes is prohibited. Such practices result in a tremendous increase in the amount of incoming SPAM email messages. Messages distributed via the district's email system are not private and are the East Baton Rouge Parish School System's property.

Confidential Information

Never send any confidential information via email. If you are in doubt as to whether to send certain information via email, check this with your supervisor first. State and federal statutes are strict regarding maintaining privacy and confidentiality of student and employee information.

Passwords

The use of passwords to gain access to the email and computer systems or to secure specific files does not provide users with the right to privacy in the respective system or document.

Email Accounts

All email accounts maintained on our email systems are property of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System. Passwords should not be given to other people and should be changed frequently by the user. Email accounts not used for 60 days may be deactivated and possibly deleted. Employee email accounts are disabled immediately upon resignation, retirement, or termination from the East Baton Rouge Parish School System. Email accounts are deleted from the system 90 days following the effective date of termination of employment.

System Monitoring

Users expressly waive any right of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive on the East Baton Rouge Parish School System's computer network. The East Baton Rouge Parish School System can, but is not obliged to, monitor emails without prior notification. If there is evidence that an employee is not adhering to these guidelines and procedures, the East Baton Rouge Parish School System reserves the right to take disciplinary action, including termination and/or legal action.

Disclaimer

The following disclaimer may be added to each outgoing email:

'This email message and any file(s) transmitted with it are intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. There shall be no expectation of privacy regarding the content of this message. Please note that any views or opinions presented in this email are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System. Finally, the recipient should check this email and any attachments for the presence of viruses or malware. The district accepts no liability for any damage caused by any virus or malware transmitted by this email.'