4.1 DISTRICT EMAIL GUIDELINES

GUIDELINES FOR ACCEPTABLE USE OF DISTRICT E-MAIL

The AAPS e-mail system is designed to facilitate communication for school district business. The purpose of these guidelines is to limit the amount of unsolicited e-mail received by system users.

E-MAIL SHOULD:
• Contain a message that is appropriate and pertinent to all receivers
• Contain a message that relates to district business only
• Contain non-business related material only for the following purposes:
  • To announce the death of an employee or former employee
  • To relay information relating to the retirement of an employee
  • Other information as approved by the Superintendent

District Rules and Regulations for Acceptable Computer Use prohibit any communication, which is disruptive, obscene, pornographic, profane, vulgar, threatening or otherwise prohibited by law.

GUIDELINES FOR ACCEPTABLE USE OF DST_ANNOUNCE

An email message sent to dst_announce@ reaches all subscribers of the AAPS email system. The purpose of these guidelines is to limit the amount of unsolicited email received by system users.

E-MAIL SENT TO DST_ANNOUNCE SHOULD:
• Contain a message that is appropriate and pertinent to the entire district staff
• Contain a message that relates to district business only
• Contain non-business related material only for the following purposes:
  • To announce the death of an employee or former employee
  • To relay information relating to the retirement of an employee
  • Other information as approved by the Superintendent

E-MAIL SENT TO DST_ANNOUNCE SHOULD NOT:
• Contain a message that is directed toward an individual or specific group of individuals, including but not limited to those messages, which solicit a response
• Contain a message that relates to personal business (except when included in an approved district communication such as the Grapevine)

District Rules and Regulations for Acceptable Computer Use prohibit any communication, which is disruptive, obscene, pornographic, profane, vulgar, threatening or otherwise prohibited by law.

4.2 EMPLOYEE RELATIONS HANDBOOK

VII. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Open door policy
A critical part of the District’s employee relations program is open communication. A key element in good communications is an Open Door Policy that allows the District to address employee concerns internally. The District has an Open Door Policy designed to promote open communications and speedy resolution of problems. Through this Open Door Policy employees have an opportunity to openly discuss work-related problems or concerns without fear of retaliation.
If you or any employee feels that s/he has been treated unfairly, the matter should be brought to the attention of the immediate supervisor. There may be situations where an employee cannot approach his/her supervisor or does not feel comfortable doing so. In this case, the employee will meet with the Director of Employee Relations or the Compliance Officer at A&HRS.

**Fair Treatment**
The Board of Education is committed to treating all staff, students and parents in the District fairly and impartially. The Board is committed to assuring a school and working environment which is appropriate for institutions of learning and which assures the safety and welfare of all.

All staff, students and parents of the District have the right to a due process of procedure in the handling of their complaints against the school system.

**Complain Procedures**
A complaint made by an employee who is a member of a bargaining unit concerning wages, hours, or terms and conditions of employment that are covered by the collective bargaining agreement must be processed through the grievance procedure outlined in the Master Agreement.

Complaints concerning matters not covered by a Master Agreement should be brought to the attention of the employee’s supervisor whenever possible. If the employee is not comfortable with this approach or does not feel that his/her complaint has been adequately resolved, the complaint should be addressed to the Director of Employee Relations or the Compliance Officer. If the complainant agrees, there shall be an attempt to resolve the problem through mediation or other informal procedures. If the employee requests, or if administration feels the complaint is of a serious nature, the following formal procedure shall be used:

- The complaint shall be put in writing
- An investigation shall be conducted
- A written report will be issued with recommended actions (if any)
- The complainant will receive a copy of the written report.

**Harassment - Board Policy 4020**

**Purpose**
- To support federal and state regulations and Board policy prohibiting employees from engaging in activities involving sexual harassment or harassment of any kind

**Organizational Units Affected**
- All Ann Arbor Public Schools employees

**Definitions**
- AAPS: Ann Arbor Public Schools
- Employee: an employee of the Ann Arbor Public Schools
- State: State of Michigan
- HR/Legal Services: Human Resource/Legal Services
- Board: Board of Education

**Background Information**
• AAPS believes the work environment should be professional and free from intimidation, hostility or other offenses that might interfere with work performance.
• Harassment of any sort—verbal, sexual, and/or physical—will not be tolerated.

Procedures

• Reporting Claims
  o All claims of harassment should be reported to the employee's supervisor or to the HR/Legal Services.
  o The Office of the Assistant Superintendent for HR/Legal Services will review the complaint and confer with the employee's supervisor regarding how the complaint will be investigated.
  o The Office of the Assistant Superintendent for HR/Legal Services will conduct an investigation, interviewing all involved parties and any witnesses, and will request written documentation.
  o At the completion of the investigation, the Office of the Assistant Superintendent for HR/Legal Services will attempt to resolve the matter; decide what, if any, disciplinary actions will be taken; and discuss the findings with the employee and the employee's supervisor.

Work Instructions, Templates & Samples

Training & Feedback

• In an effort to educate employees, as well as abide by federal law, HR/Legal Services will provide annual training for all employees on fair treatment and harassment, and/or provide web-based training.

Implementation, Compliance & Assessment

4.3 GIFTS AND DONATIONS POLICY

Procedure for accepting donations:

1. Every donation must have a recipient. In other words if no one wants it, we do not accept it. NO EXCEPTIONS!
2. Staff may accept donated items on approval of your building/department head.
3. Complete the Gift/Donation form and send it in via mail or email. It will be processed and formally accepted by the Board. An acknowledgement letter will be sent to the donor. NOTE: we do not provide value estimates. Donors will have to contact their tax advisors for that information.
4. If you are unsure about a particular donation, have the donor CALL the Executive Assistant of the Board of Education. Do not send donor.
5. For monetary donations, donors may request the funds be spent a certain way ONLY with the building/department head approval. These requests may not cause any additional financial burden on the district.
4.4 HOLIDAY GUIDELINES

Attached is a very comprehensive review about current accepted practice of holiday observances in the public school. It was adapted from Finding Common Ground: A Guide to Religious Liberty in Public Schools* by Charles C. Haynes and Oliver Thomas.

Please keep in mind the following local guidelines at the

**elementary level**

- Parties should not exceed an hour and one half at elementary.
- If students are excluded or choose not to participate they must have appropriate work and supervision.
- The activities should serve the academic goals of the course and school.
- Employee Handbook – As employees of the district, individuals shall not accept gifts of more than token value from students or their parents or guardians or from vendors or businesses. [Exception: gifts to a retiring or reassigned employee.]
- Administrators will communicate this information to all employees, student teachers, students, and parents during September of each school year and again in the first week of December of each school year. [Policy adopted: December 9, 1987]

**secondary level**

- Any movies shown should be the correct rating for the age group of the student audience and should only be viewed with parental permission.
- Parties should not exceed one class period at secondary.
- If students are excluded or choose not to participate they must have appropriate work and supervision.
- The activities should serve the academic goals of the course and school.
- Employee Handbook – As employees of the district, individuals shall not accept gifts of more than token value from students or their parents or guardians or from vendors or businesses. [Exception: gifts to a retiring or reassigned employee.]
- Administrators will communicate this information to all employees, student teachers, students, and parents during September of each school year and again in the first week of December of each school year. [Policy adopted: December 9, 1987]

**Tips for Planning around Religious Holidays**

1. Any teacher or administrator should ask herself/himself the following questions as she/he plans holiday activities:
   - How does this activity serve the academic goals of the course, or the educational mission of the school? Do I have a distinct educational purpose in mind? If so, what is it? It should not be the purpose of public schools to celebrate or observe religious holidays.
   - Are we prepared to teach about the religious meaning of this holiday in a way that enriches students’ understanding of history and cultures?
   - If I use holidays as an opportunity to teach about religion, am I balanced and fair in my approach? If in December: Do we plan activities to teach about religious holidays at various times of the year or only in December? If I teach about Christmas and Easter, do I also teach about non-Christian holidays? Ask: Would this activity/event be equally appropriate in January, April, September?
   - Does the planned activity have the primary effect of promoting or inhibiting religion? Does it, for example, promote one faith over another or even religion in general? Remember that the school’s approach should be academic, not devotional, to teach about, not to preach. It is never appropriate for public schools to proselytize.
   - Will any student or parent be made to feel like an outsider, not a full member of the community, by this activity?

2. A common misconception is that it is permissible to promote Christianity at Christmas, provided that other religions receive similar treatment at other times. For example, some teachers may try to justify celebrating Christmas by celebrating Hanukkah. This approach is wrong. First, Hanukkah is not a major Jewish holiday and should not be equated with Christmas, one of the two most important holidays in the Christian year. Instead of “balancing” Christmas with Hanukkah, teachers should work to ensure that all holiday activities focus on objective study about religion, not indoctrination and are not unduly influenced by seasonal/commercial symbolism.

3. Symbols of a holiday may be displayed at an employee’s individual work space, as long as they are of a secular [e.g., Christmas tree, Santa, wreath, dreidel], not of a religious [e.g., crèche, angel, menorah] nature. However, employees are encouraged to be sensitive to the beliefs and non-beliefs of those who work in proximity to them and of the clients/students/families/community members with whom they come in contact.

You may also be interested in viewing information about the District’s religious calendar.
**QUESTIONS and ANSWERS:**

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**What do the courts say?**
The Supreme Court has ruled that public schools may not sponsor religious practices (Engel v. Vitale, 1962; Abington v. Schemp, 1963) but may teach about religion. The study of religious holidays may be included in elementary and secondary curricula as opportunities for teaching about religious. Such study serves the academic goals of educating students about history and cultures as well as about the traditions of particular religions in a pluralistic society. Its purpose is secular, not religious.

**When should teaching about religious holidays take place?**
On the elementary level, natural opportunities arise for discussion of religious holidays while studying different cultures and communities. In the secondary curriculum, students of world history or literature have opportunities to consider the holy days of religious traditions. If it is important to the curriculum, it can be taught at any time of the year. Teachers find it helpful when they are provided with an inclusive calendar noting major religious and secular holidays with brief descriptions of their significance. Such a calendar is available on the Ann Arbor Public Schools website, aaps.k12.mi.us – General Information, Religious Calendar.

**How should religious holidays be treated in the classroom?**
Teachers must be alert to the distinction between teaching about religious holidays, which is permissible and celebrating religious holidays, which is not. If the approach is objective and sensitive, neither promoting nor inhibiting religion, this study can foster understanding and mutual respect for differences in belief. Teachers will want to avoid asking students to explain their beliefs and customs. An offer to do so should be greeted with courtesy and accepted or rejected depending on the educational relevancy. Teachers may not use the study of religious holidays as an opportunity to proselytize or to inject personal religious beliefs into the discussion. Teachers should avoid this by teaching through attribution, i.e. by reporting that “some Buddhist believe…”

**May religious symbols be used in public school classes?**
Provided they are used only as examples of cultural or religious heritage, religious symbols are permissible to use as teaching aids or resources. Religious symbols may be displayed only on a temporary basis as part of the academic program. Students may choose to create artwork with religious symbols, but teachers should not assign or suggest such creations.

**May religious music be used in public schools?**
Sacred music may be sung or played as part of academic study of music. School concerns that present a variety of selections may include religious music. If the music is part of a program that is primarily secular and educational, it is legal. The criteria for selecting the music should be on the basis of its musical and educational value, rather than its religious context. The use of art, drama or literature with religious themes also is permissible if it serves a sound educational goal in the curriculum, but not if used as a vehicle for promoting religious belief.

**What about Christmas?**
Decisions about what to do in December should begin with the understanding that public schools may not sponsor religious devotions or celebrations; study about religious holidays does not extend to religious worship or practice. Holiday concerts in December may appropriately include music related to Christmas and Hanukkah, but religious music should not dominate. Any dramatic productions should emphasize the cultural aspects of the holidays. Nativity pageants or plays portraying the Hanukkah experience are not appropriate in the public school setting. Holiday activities in December should not have the purpose of effect of either promoting or inhibiting religion. The courts have decided that Christmas trees, Santas, wreaths, wrapped gifts and reindeer are secular symbols of the season. However, their inordinate use may make several groups feel uncomfortable. It is preferable to be more inclusive and sensitive to the beliefs and non-beliefs of all by using less value-laden symbols of the season such as snowflakes, gingerbread houses and mittens.

**What about religious objections to some holidays?**
Students from certain religious traditions may ask to be excused from classroom discussions or activities related to particular holidays. Some holidays considered by many people to be secular (for example Halloween and Valentine’s Day) are viewed by others as having religious overtones. Excusal requests may be especially common in the elementary grades, where holidays often are marked by parties and similar non-academic activities. Such requests are routinely granted. However, school personnel must understand that a policy or practice of excusing students from specific activities or discussions cannot be used as a rationale for school sponsorship of religious celebration or worship for the remaining students.

**May students be absent for religious holidays?**
Students should be allowed a reasonable number of excused absences, without penalties, to observe religious holidays within their traditions. Students may be asked to complete makeup assignments or examinations in conjunction with such absences.

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*Adapted from Finding Common Ground: A Guide to Religious Liberty in Public Schools by Charles C. Haynes and Oliver Thomas—A First Amendment guide to religion and public schools, published by First Amendment Center. The First Amendment Center works to preserve and protect First Amendment freedoms through information and education. The center serves as a forum for the study and exploration of free-expression issues, including freedom of speech, of the press and of religion, the right to assemble and petition the government.*

*The First Amendment Center, with offices at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., and Arlington, Va., is an independent affiliate of The Freedom Forum and is associated with the Museum. Its affiliation with Vanderbilt University is through the Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies.*
**4.5 LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST**

Please be advised that Human Resources may require a doctor’s note for use of a sick day before or after a holiday or vacation period unless otherwise noted in your contract.

If a doctor’s note is not submitted to Human Resources you will have your pay deducted. The note must be submitted upon your return to work.

**4.6 MEDICATION FIELD TRIP POLICY**

In accordance with the AAPS Medication Policy, all students must have both physician and parent permission for any medications (prescription or OTC) that will be taken while on a school related activity. With parent permission, students can self-administer medications except controlled medications such as Ritalin, Concerta, Adderall, Vicoden. When self-administering medications, those medications need to be listed on the medication form and must be signed by both the physician and parent/guardian.

This form may be used multiple times for a complete academic year as long as there are no changes in health status or in medications.

If you have any questions/concerns feel free to contact your school nurse.

**4.7 OPERATIONS INFORMATION**

**Incident Reports:**
The Incident Report Database is accessed through the main page of the FileMaker Server (located under the “General District Use” header) the same way you access Field Trip Requests. The incident report password is located on page 4 of the directions.

All incident reports must be completed on-line. No paper copies will be accepted.

- Log into your building, which will bring up only your building incident reports
- Staff will enter incident reports, Principals will review and indicate they have seen it
- Reports can be revised/modified after the initial report is completed, showing a revision

*Please note:* Employee injuries cannot be reported on the electronic Incident Report form. All employee injuries must be reported on the yellow MIOHA Form#101 and sent to HRS. This is not a new procedure.

**Liability Insurance:**
Deductibles have not changed from last year and continue to remain high. This is a reminder that the responsibility lies with the building principal and staff to take extra measures to secure equipment to prevent theft. Deductibles per incident are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Deductible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruments</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers &amp; Projectors</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building contents</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cameras</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building damage</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(includes small electronics such as digital DVD players, etc)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reminder: Contracted Services with outside vendors for student field trips/camps – Agreements/contacts must be sent to the Operations office for review of the district liability responsibility. After approval a signed copy and insurance certificate will be sent back to the building for staff to sign and return to the vendor. Or questions, contact 994-2250.

SECTION IV: AAPS DISTRICT INFORMATION

4.8 ONLINE TRAININGS

Ann Arbor Public Schools now offers online trainings on Sexual Harassment, Blood Borne Pathogen and Diversity. These training modules allow employees the convenience of accessing the materials at any location with Internet access. Employees gain an understanding of the policies regarding these areas of employee relations as well as learning the rights afforded to them under the law. These trainings are a requirement for all employees and should be taken annually. Please provide this information to all of your employees. Below are the instructions on logging onto the site:

**Instructions:** Online Blood Borne Pathogen, Sexual Harassment & Diversity Training

1. Go to [http://www.gcn1.net](http://www.gcn1.net)
2. Click on LOGIN
3. Enter company user name “aaps” and click on “Create new account”
4. Create your unique user ID (UID)
5. Enter your personal data (You do not have to enter an e-mail address)
6. From here, you are able to click into the tutorials

4.9 WHAT SCHOOLS MUST PROVIDE

✓ Classroom teachers cannot charge for supplies. If you require it, you must provide it.
✓ School districts must provide pencils, paper, crayons, scissors, glue sticks and textbooks without charge.
✓ Schools may not charge for shop material, drafting supplies, home economic materials, science materials, towels, locks, lockers, workbooks and school field trips that are required to successfully achieve course credit.
✓ Districts may charge fees for extracurricular activities, but only on a “pay to participate” basis. Fees that are portrayed as mandatory costs for families are not allowed. School districts also should make provisions so students without financial means are not excluded.
✓ School districts may charge students, on a participant basis only, for athletic games, lunch, yearbooks, athletic shoes, bus transportation for nonresident students, school sponsored educational trips not directly related to the curriculum, vaccinations, caps and gowns.
✓ If band or orchestra is a class that requires a grade or credit, the district must provide instruments free to qualified students. School districts do not have to own enough instruments to provide each eligible student with an instrument of his or her choice.

*SOURCE: Michigan Department of Education*
4.10 TRANSPORTATION FIELD TRIP POLICIES

Request for transportation should be submitted to the Transportation Department at least \textbf{10 days} prior to the date of the trip. Trips are granted on a first come/first served basis. Your request must include complete billing information, the address and city destination, etc. \textbf{Make sure all lines are filled out with proper information.}

Incomplete requests may be returned for clarification, delaying scheduling for your trip.

HINT: Field trips are billed by the actual times you request. To avoid paying driver wages all day for an in-town trip, fill out two different request forms – a request for drop off, and a request for pick up. If the time on an in-town trip request reads from 9:30 to 2:30, you will be billed for the entire time period, because we will honor your written request and insure that drivers are available throughout the times you listed to respond to early cancellations, weather issues, etc. (This does not relate to out of town, after hours, athletic, or weekend trips where the bus typically remains with the party.) \textbf{We must bill to recover all costs incurred on your trip.} If your request requires us to pay the driver overtime above and beyond their daily bid hours, then the overtime costs will be part of your trip cost.

Pick up and Return times:

- Buses are not available to start trips until 9:30 AM.
- All High School and Non-Public Field Trip Buses must be back at the school and the students unloaded by 2:00PM.
- These time frames allow drivers to cover their scheduled daily routes.

BUS DEPARTURE TIMES

Please remind all Teachers that the Driver will determine the departure time for the field trip, based on the driving time required. Teachers/coaches need to sign the trip tickets and initial by the actual return time at the completion of the trip.