



Paradise Valley Unified School District

“Where individual excellence is our goal”

E-mail Guidelines

E-mail is a valuable tool for PVUSD employees. It improves communication of many kinds of information. But the very things that make it so valuable — its informality, speed and ease of use — can also promote faulty communications and unthinking responses. Following are a few guidelines to help you get the most benefit from the e-mail system.

PVUSD e-mail policy

- **Property of PVUSD.** E-mail messages, just like paper documents, are the property of the school district and are subject to PVUSD policy, procedures and control. All messages created in the PVUSD system are public records subject to disclosure under the Arizona Public Records Law (A.R.S. 39-121), available to the public and subject to court subpoena in legal proceedings.
PVUSD employees, public officials, and those who generate e-mail to them, should have no expectation of privacy related to the use of this technology.
- **Official use only.** E-mail is for business use, not personal use. Your e-mail messages are not monitored, but be aware that they can be stored, retrieved, forwarded and printed.
- **Watch your language.** As in other business communications, avoid using slang, profanity, ethnic or sexual slurs or other unprofessional language. Don't write anything you wouldn't want repeated.

Address Fields

- To:** The addresses in the 'To:' are for the people you are directly addressing.
- Cc:** (Carbon copy) This contains the addresses of recipients who you believe have an interest in the information being circulated. Address in both the 'To:' and the 'Cc:' fields are visible to all recipients.
- Bcc:** (Blind carbon copy) Addresses placed in this field are not visible to other recipients (direct, 'Cc' or other 'Bcc'). This field can be used to

protect e-mail addresses from distribution to everyone on the list.

Signatures

The originator of an e-mail is not always apparent to the reader. You should include a "signature" at the bottom of your e-mail. Most mail programs will allow you to set this up to be automatically included in all your e-mails. Include your first and last name, title, department/school, address (optional), phone number, fax number (optional), Paradise Valley Unified School District, and your e-mail address.

Practical hints

- **E-mail is business communication.** Since e-mail is so informal, there is a tendency to ignore grammar and neglect common punctuation. Appearance still counts. Treat e-mail as you would any other business communication.
- **Identify your software.** When you enclose a more complex document (an Excel spreadsheet, for example), make sure your recipient has the proper software to open and use it. In your message, identify the software in which the enclosed document was written.
- **In replies, refer to the original message.** If you are notified of an upcoming meeting, for example, mention it in your reply (especially if responding a day or more later). "I will attend your meeting on . . ." is a more useful message than "OK, I'll be there."
- **Restrain the urge to 'return fire'.** The immediacy of e-mail may make you feel compelled to respond immediately. Don't be hasty, especially if you are responding to a message that upset you.
- **Don't use all capital letters.** Messages in all caps are hard to read and MAKE IT LOOK LIKE YOU'RE SHOUTING.
- **Save or delete.** PVUSD's e-mail system stores all messages, but there is limit to the number it can hold. Save to your computer or print out any important attachments and delete any unneeded e-mail.