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# A WORD FROM MSEA'S LEGAL TEAM



## Professional Email Etiquette: It's a GOOD Thing ... A VERY GOOD Thing

Always remember that email communications with parents, colleagues, supervisors, and administrators are a reflection of you and your profession. Emails from your school account should contain only thoughtful professional correspondence. Avoid personal sentiments in your school email signature, including quotes or references to religion or politics.

Be smart, savvy, and safe. One poorly worded email, or ill-advised response, could damage your reputation and your profession.

### **FOLLOW THESE 10 SIMPLE RULES OF EMAIL ETIQUETTE IN ALL OF YOUR PROFESSIONAL AND COLLEGIAL CORRESPONDENCE:**

- 1 Always show the highest standards of professionalism—Use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- 2 Be efficient—Get right to the point and answer questions or concerns in clear and concise language.
- 3 Protect yourself from the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) violations—Use only initials, or first name with initial of last name, when referring to a student.
- 4 Communicate with parents about their child and only their child.
- 5 Don't use all UPPER CASE, or use different fonts, sizes, and colors—a professional email uses one simple black font.
- 6 Don't forward emails from anyone that contain potentially libelous, defamatory, offensive, or racist remarks.
- 7 Don't "Reply All"—If you don't know the other individuals included in the email, or the others don't need to be involved, reply only to the sender.
- 8 Think before you click "Reply"—Consider a telephone call and have a direct conversation, particularly if the issue is a complex one.
- 9 In the case of a "serial email-er," seek guidance from your administrator to stop the emails.
- 10 Do not use email to discuss confidential matters of any kind.



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