E-Mail *GUIDELINES*

NOTHING IS CONFIDENTIAL

- Every electronic message leaves a trail.
- A basic guideline is to assume that others will see what you write.
- Don't write anything that would be ruinous to you or hurtful to anyone else.
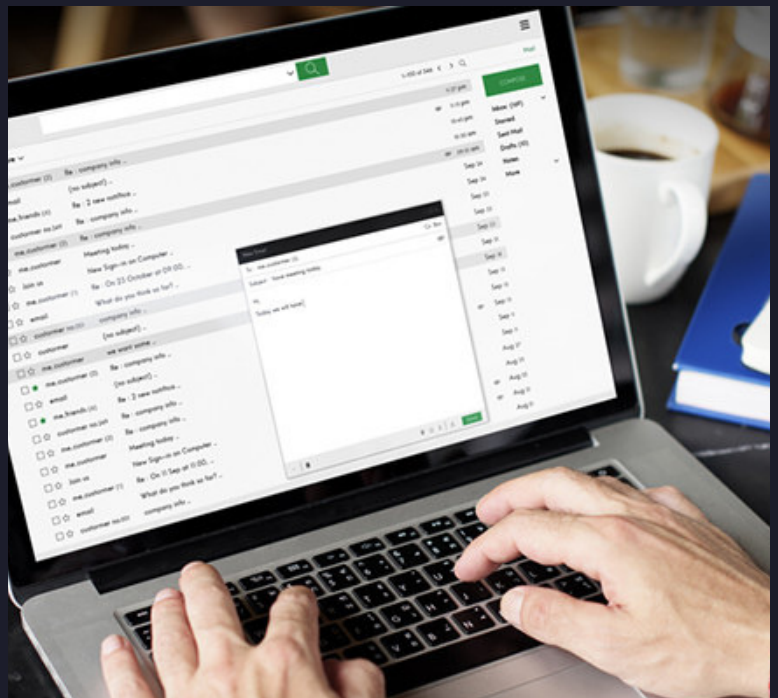- Remember -- email is dangerously easy to forward and print.

"IN THE KNOW" ABOUT EMAIL

- Content of your EMail
- Reply, Reply All, CC, BCC
- Before You Hit Send
- Signature, Image, Font, Size, and Color
- EMail Settings

Created by Julia Zangl Colby,
Technology Coordinator, May 2018

Plymouth
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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CONTENT OF YOUR EMAIL

- ## Subject Line should be Clear, Direct, and Descriptive

Every email should have a subject line (Plymouth Public Schools: message will not send without a subject). Most professionals decide whether or not an email is worth their time based on the subject line. Keep it brief and relevant. Use key words that pertain directly to the content of your email. If the email is urgent, indicate in the subject line. Additionally, searching through your inbox for a specific email is usually expedited if the subject line is pertinent.

- ## Keep Email as Short as You Can

It saves you time and respects the recipient's time.
Include one line of context if the recipient isn't expecting this email.
Put your "ask" or "action items" first in the email, not last, and make them explicit.
If you don't need a response and an email is FYI only, say so.

- ## Be Courteous

Avoid excessive or aggressive punctuation, like exclamation points. These can be misinterpreted in an email. Same for typing in all caps. WRITING IN ALL CAPS MAKES IT SEEM AS IF YOU ARE SHOUTING.

- ## Know People from Different Cultures Speak and Write Differently

Miscommunication can easily occur because of cultural differences. Tailor your message to the receiver's cultural background or how well you know them.

- ## Be Cautious with Humor

Humor can easily get lost in translation without the right tone or facial expressions. In a professional setting, it is better to leave the humor out of the email unless you know the recipient well.

- ## Pay attention to Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation

Proofread your messages. Make sure you spell check. Emails with no full stops or commas are difficult to read and can sometimes even change the meaning of the text. Use appropriate spacing. Reading from a screen is more difficult than reading from paper -- structure and layout is very important. Use short paragraphs and blank lines between each paragraph. Exclamation points should be used sparingly in writing.

- ## Don't send emails while you are angry or emotional

If you need to write it, do it but don't fill in the recipient line, lest you send it accidentally. Don't write anything that would be ruinous to you or hurtful to anyone else. Remember – email is dangerously easy to forward and print.

- ## Follow-Up

If you are emailing a very busy person, it is totally acceptable and somewhat expected that you'll forward the initial email back to him/her with a follow-up message after a week or two.

REPLY, REPLY ALL, CC, BCC

- ## Reply to your Email

Try to reply to every email message sent to you if the sender is expecting a reply. If you feel the email was sent in error, reply and let them know.

- ## Think Twice and Know When to Use "Reply All"

If there are multiple people looped in on an email, you usually use Reply All.

But – **Always pay attention to the list of people included in the email before replying all.** Think twice before using Reply all.

Read the message before doing a Reply All. If the email is requesting personal information, for example, no need for a Reply All.

Refrain from hitting "Reply All" unless you really think everyone on the list needs to receive the email.

- ## CC with Care (Carbon Copy)

Do not CC if sending to a mailing list.

When sending an email to a large number of people, some people place all the email addresses in the To: field.

There are two drawbacks to doing this:

> 1) The recipient knows that you have sent the same message to a large number of recipients and

> 2) You are sharing and publicizing someone else's email address without their permission. One way to get around this is to place all addresses in the BCC: field.

When dealing with parents, it is very important to use the BCC: field if you are sending to multiple parent recipients. We should not be sharing parent/guardian email addresses with other parents/guardians. By sending the email to yourself and using the BCC: field for the recipients, no one will see who the message was sent to other than themselves.

Always CC the minimum number of people necessary to get the job done.

- ## To BCC or Not to BCC (Blind Carbon Copy)

BCC-ing a single recipient on an email allows you to include that person in the recipient list, without other recipients knowing. Sometimes seen as the office equivalent of shade. Use with caution and only when appropriate.

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BCC-ing is helpful when sending mass emails to guest lists or all school personnel or multiple parents – this will keep all recipients' emails confidential. Additionally, if someone prints out the email, it will not print out the long list of recipients. Saves ink/paper.

BEFORE YOU HIT SEND

- ### Don't Leave out the Message Thread

When you reply to an email, you should include the original mail in your reply. Click Reply instead of New Mail.

- ### Read the Email Before You Send It.

Allows you to send a more effective message and avoid misunderstandings.

- ### Don't Mix Topics

Don't hijack a thread on one topic to discuss another topic. Start a new email thread with the relevant subject line and recipients.

- ### Add the Email Address Last

Add the recipient's address when you are sure the message is ready to be sent and double-check that you have selected the correct recipient.

SIGNATURE, IMAGE, FONT, SIZE, COLOR

- ### Email Signature and Image Should be Professional

Professionally, your email signature should include your full name, job title, school name, and contact information. Social media link can be included if relevant to your job. Make sure your image in Google is a professional image.

- ### Keep Fonts Classic

Your emails should be easy for other people to read. Generally, it is best to use 10- or 12-point type and an easy-to-read basic font such as Arial, Verdana, Calibri, or Times New Roman. As for color, black is the safest choice.

Plymouth Public Schools Google Mail: Size selections are Normal (suggested), Large, Huge; font selection can be basic sans serif. This can be set in your Email settings.

EMAIL SETTINGS

- To make "Reply" your default setting	- To Turn "Conversation View" On or Off
Open Google Mail In the top right, click the Settings Gear Icon ⚙ Click Settings; In the "Default reply behavior" section, select Reply	Open Google Mail In the top right, click the Settings Gear Icon ⚙ Click Settings; In the "Conversation View" section, select Conversation View On or Conversation View Off