

Student Email Etiquette

Common Sense Rules

Below are a few guidelines you should follow which will help you use email effectively.

Style

- Keep messages short and to the point.
- Use blank lines between paragraphs to improve readability.
- Use bulleted lists for more concise messages when appropriate.
- Use mixed upper and lower-case letters. Text in all upper-case letters is more difficult to read, and USING ALL UPPER-CASE IS CONSIDERED SHOUTING.
- You may want to SHOUT only a single word or two to emphasize a point.

Content

- Modesto City Schools does not monitor student email messages, but no email system is totally private - think of an email message as a postcard being sent through the US Postal Service. It is unwise to send very personal or sensitive information through email.
- While the district does not monitor email, parents have the right to inspect a student's email upon request.
- Email can be subpoenaed by law enforcement if a student is suspected of breaking the law.
- A good rule of thumb to use with email is "Don't put it in email if you would be embarrassed by your message being read out loud to your mother in a courtroom".
- Use an appropriate subject line; this will help the recipient locate or file your message in their Inbox (you have folders in your inbox that you can sort mail into).
- Pay attention to grammar and spelling. While Email is less formal than letters, people will form an opinion of you based on how you write.
- It is a good idea to spell check and read over every message before sending it. The "Spell Check" button is at the top of the new message composition window.
- Sign all of your emails with your name. If the email is being sent to a teacher you should include your teacher's name and your class period.

Attachments

- You can send an email with an attachment to yourself to move it from school to home, or back. It will pop up in your inbox as soon as you send it.
- File attachments are limited to 3MB.
- Your total storage on the server is 10MB. You should copy off and delete any attachments so you don't use up all of your storage.
- Most file types that can carry virus or malicious code are filtered out by our gateway server. You are allowed to send Word, Excel and PowerPoint files.
- Don't send MP3's, zip files and other executables or copyrighted files. This is against [board policy](#).
- Purposefully sending malicious code (spyware, virus, Trojans or others) through email is against [board policy](#).

Courtesy

- Before sending a message, consider whether you would say what you have written to the person's face. The detached nature of email will sometimes embolden people to say things they would never say in person.

- Instead of hitting "Send", you may consider pressing the "Save to drafts" button instead. This will place your message in the "Drafts" folder (folders are listed on the left side of the screen, click on a folder to open it). You can then come back and open the message later to review it when you are calm, and then edit if necessary before sending the message.
- It is much easier to delay sending an email than it is to try to repair the damage from a hurtful message.
- If you really can't help typing a furious response, don't send it immediately. Walk around the block, do some homework or watch TV, then re-read your message and tone it down before sending it.
- If you're asking for something from someone, say "please". And if someone does something for you, it never hurts to say "thank you".

Replying

- If you are replying to a message, it is a good idea to include the relevant parts of the original message in the reply. If you receive your original message back, with only "I agree" or "OK" added at the bottom, this is both irritating and a waste of network resources.
- Pay careful attention to where your reply is going; if a personal message ends up on a mailing list or listserv, it may be embarrassing for you and annoying for the other list-members.
- If you receive an objectionable Email via a mailing list, it is probably best to ignore it. But if you must reply, reply only to the sender, not the mailing list. Offensive, angry replies which themselves lead to complaints may lead to disciplinary action by the list owner.

Abuse

- Students should report all abusive messages.
- Abusive messages from other students will be forwarded to the appropriate district staff.
- Inappropriate messages from outside the district will be forwarded to the appropriate authorities, or the sender will be added to our district block list.
- Modesto City Schools filters incoming email for inappropriate language and content. No filter is 100% effective. Many times you can tell that a message is spam or inappropriate simply by its subject line.
- If you were not expecting a message it is usually best to just delete it without opening it. This will save you from having to read sometimes offensive or inappropriate messages.

Protecting Your Email Address

- You will invite spam to your inbox if you post your email address to webpages.
- Newsgroups and other interactive forums are places that emails are harvested for spam.
- DO NOT use your email address to enter online contests or other drawing like events.
- If you receive spam in your inbox, DO NOT click the "remove from list" button or reply to the message. This will only alert the spammer to you being a live victim and land you on many spam email lists.

The word "Spam" as applied to Email means Unsolicited Bulk Email.

Unsolicited means that the Recipient has not granted verifiable permission for the message to be sent. Bulk means that the message is sent as part of a larger collection of messages, all having substantively identical content.