

Use of Email & School Computers

While there is no specific statutory direction on this issue, state statutes generally, including election laws and public employee ethics laws, provide some guidelines and restrictions. In addition, guidelines and restrictions for use of school district equipment exist in school district policies (acceptable use policies) and Collective Bargaining Agreements. Please review both where you have further questions.

Following are lists of acceptable, unacceptable and unadvisable conduct that should guide membership use of school district computers and email systems:

1. Most Collective Bargaining Agreements allow for Associations to use school district equipment including computers and email systems for communication of union related matters. This type of communication is acceptable if it is during non-working hours and it does not violate one of the unacceptable uses described below.
2. Acceptable uses for school district email communications involving union activity would be communications about meetings, elections of Association officers, Association election campaigns and the like.
3. Members should **NOT** use school district computers and email systems for personal purposes, ie: no Ebay transactions, Mary Kay sales, or any political activity "during working hours." (ORS 260.432(2)).
4. School employees are prohibited from using their positions as public employees to obtain financial gain. (ORS 244.040(1)). For example, PERSONAL email accounts should be used for all external communications. Personal email accounts would also be best when communication about a personnel issue, although not strictly prohibited. Be careful when accessing personal email from a school-owned computer.
5. Members cannot expect school email communications to be private, unless specifically stated in the school district acceptable use policy.
6. **Members should assume that anything accessed or downloaded on a school district computer, whether it is retrieved from a school or private home email account, may be accessed or reviewed by the school district.**