

## **Guidelines for Email and Conference use**

### **Important Reminder to all Lexington Staff**

We are fortunate to provide LPS staff with a new conferencing and communication system, *First Class*. As with all electronic communications, anything posted in email or a conference is public record. Please review the LPS Acceptable Use Policy (<http://lhs.lexingtonma.org/PTSA/handbook/id854.htm>) to help you assess whether an email or conference posting is in the best interest of our educational community.

Below are some guidelines to remind you of appropriate use of our communication system.

- The First Class email and conference system is used primarily to promote and extend our school community.
- Email and conferences messages are considered to be 'public' to the same extent as any written communication to the same audience. As with written records, any e-mail message can be made available in a criminal or other investigation.
- Since any message that is written in an email or posted to a conference can be easily forwarded, staff should always consider whether the message is appropriate.
- It is not appropriate to communicate highly confidential or sensitive information/discussions regarding students and/or staff through e-mail or conferences. Specifically, if a certain piece of communication would not be appropriate as a paper document, then it also must not be communicated by email or conference.
- The district maintains the ability to monitor web and email usage and may do so either during routine maintenance or when requested to by an investigating authority. This is part of the mandate created by the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
- Messages that are deleted often may still be retrieved and be considered part of the public record. (Deleting a message only removes the electronic pointers to the file. The actual file may remain on the computer system indefinitely unless it is properly expunged from the system.)

If you have any questions about appropriate use of First Class, please do not hesitate to contact Shelley Chamberlain via email ([chamberlain](mailto:chamberlain)) or by phone (ext. 2174).

Special Note: The guidelines above are based upon the Commonwealth of Massachusetts SPR Bulletin NO. 1-99 February 16, 1999.

(<http://www.state.ma.us/sec/arc/arcrmu/rmubul/bul199.htm>)