

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Mail and Delivery

A mail service system shall be maintained within the school system in order that communications from inside and outside sources may be delivered to the intended recipient in the most practicable way. The use of district mail facilities and personnel shall be restricted mainly to the distribution of materials and communications that further the educational purposes of the district. The Superintendent may, by regulation, authorize certain exceptions without defeating the intent of this policy.

The Board of Education directs the Superintendent to establish procedures for the safe handling of all mail received by the district.

Political, non-educational or commercial materials shall not be distributed through the school system mailboxes or school mail system unless received through the United States mail.

Policy adopted: ~~February 24, 2014~~

WOODBRIIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Woodbridge, Connecticut

A sample regulation to consider

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

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Mail Handling Safety Procedures

Chemical and biological weapons are disruptive forces that can pose a significant threat to safety in the current political environment. Threats and hoaxes that include anthrax have been received in the mail at various public sites. The U.S. Postal service provides emergency response procedures and management guidelines for incidents in which letters or parcels are received that allegedly contain anthrax. The remote, but real, possibility anthrax will be introduced in the mail stream requires specific procedures to be followed.

Designation of mail handlers: Each District school shall designate a primary and alternate person to receive and open mail.

Designation of mail opening location: Each District building shall designate a place away from the main administrative office to process mail, preferably with a sink and, if possible a shower or reasonable access to a shower. The room shall be marked "Do Not Enter" during mail handling. Arrangements shall be made for the mail designee to be able to communicate with those outside the mail handling room.

Receiving mail: Only mail from known sources such as the United Post Office, UPS, Fed Ex, District office, vendors etc. shall be accepted. Upon receipt of mail, it shall be immediately placed in a sealed container, large sealable trash bag or other sealable container, until the mail is opened at the end of the day.

Opening mail:

- Mail shall be opened near the end of the workday, preferably when students are no longer in the building.
- Designee shall take sealed container to designated mail handling room/area to open mail.
- Prior to opening sealed container, designee shall put on vinyl gloves and use letter opener to minimize hand contact.
- Mail should be opened with a minimum of movement to avoid spilling any contents.
- Designee shall have readily available Ziploc bags, garbage bags, soap, paper towels, facemask, duct tape and permanent markers in case suspicious mail is discovered or a substance released.
- Common sense and care shall be utilized when inspecting and opening mail, (Do not shake, smell or taste.)
- Hand washing shall be performed after opening the mail.

Mail screening: The first protective measure against potentially harmful mail is to screen all incoming mail. The likelihood of receiving a letter or package containing harmful substances is remote. However, it is important to be aware of characteristics that are common to suspicious letters and packages. Postal inspectors have determined that the following characteristics should trigger suspicion:

- From a foreign country.
- Addressed to someone no longer with the organization or title or other information is outdated.
- No return address or one that can't be verified as legitimate.
- Misspelled words, badly typed or poorly hand written.
- The city or state in the postmark doesn't match the return address.
- Marked with restrictive endorsements, such as "Personal" or "Confidential."

Mail Handling Safety Procedures (continued)

- Excessive postage.
- Excessive wrapping.
- Rigid or bulky.
- Has unusual weight given the size or is lopsided or protruding.
- Has strange odor, stains or protruding wires.
- Addressed to title only or wrong title with name.
- Received from someone or someplace unfamiliar.
- Has unusual or powdery feel.

Any **one** of these characteristics should not be cause for alarm. Primary concern should be given to mail having multiple characteristics.

If a District employee encounters a suspicious looking mail piece(s) or receives an anthrax threat by mail, these procedures should be followed immediately:

If a suspicious letter or package is received:

- Do not open, shake or tamper with the mail or package;
- The person who has come in contact with the mail or package should wash their hands with warm water and soap;
- Leave the mail or package where it was found and evacuate the room;
- Keep others from entering the room or area; and
- Notify a building administrator and the Superintendent or his/her designee, who will immediately contact the Postal Inspection Services, local police, safety office and other designated persons. The Superintendent or his/her designee will notify the local county and State Health Departments and the State Emergency Office.
- The building administrator will make a list of all persons who have touched the letter and/or envelope or package. The list is to be provided to the Postal Inspection Service.
- Remain available to be interviewed by law enforcement authorities or health professionals as necessary.
- Invoke the local emergency action plan, including mechanical shutdowns of air handling equipment and evacuation, as appropriate.

For packages that are opened and which contain suspicious material:

- Do not panic;
- Contain the exposure;
- Close off the room, do not allow anyone other than qualified emergency personnel to enter.
- Close the package or envelope to limit additional exposure. Do not clean powder up; keep others away.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or any other part of your body.
- If possible, wash hands thoroughly.
- If clothing is heavily contaminated, don't brush vigorously.
- If possible, close down the building's heating/air conditioning/ventilating system.
- Make a list of the people who had actual contact with the powder for investigating authorities.

Regulation approved:

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