



Email Access to Board Members Must be Posted

Last year, the General Assembly enacted an amendment to the Local Records Act (P.A. 98-930) which imposes a new posting mandate on all school districts, as well as other local governmental units, which maintain a website. **No later than April 1, 2015, every district must post to its website a mechanism for members of the public to electronically communicate with its school board members.** This posting may be by a hyperlink which is easily accessible from the district's homepage.

The mechanism for electronic communication might be a uniform single email address, the only example specified in the statute. (The single email address which a district establishes in compliance with this law would look something like this: [SchoolBoard@\[district's website\]](mailto:SchoolBoard@[district's website]).) The persons responsible for maintaining the District emails should ensure that all such messages to a uniform address are directed to the school board members. Districts may use individual email addresses for board



members either in addition to, or in place of, the single address.

This new law requiring the public's access to school board members via email does not attempt to address various other issues about board member use of electronic means of communication, such as the use private email accounts for school-related communications, a majority of a quorum of board members communicating about substantive school issues outside of a board meeting, retention of and public access to records of electronic communications, etc. Please review your board policies to ensure that these issues are addressed, such as in the Illinois Association of School Board's PRESS model policy number 2:140. Keep in mind that public comments or questions, once sent to a school board member's public email account, are public records.

If you have questions about email access to board members, please contact one of our attorneys in Flossmoor (708-799-6766) or Oak Brook (630-928-1200).

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