



From the Desk of the President

Don't Let Technology Cause Problems

Welcome back! At EBRFT, 2023 is off to a very busy, but productive start. During our recent team meetings, we have been debriefing on the member cases that we have been dealing with lately. It has become apparent that more and more member issues have stemmed from the improper use of technology. We are NOT tech experts, but there are a few basics that you need to know to save your job.

- **Email.** Use your work email address for work-related matters only. Every email that is sent or received by your work email account is trackable. It is basically saved in a cloud and can be accessed by the district at any time. You are responsible for ensuring that the messages that you send and receive align with your job and don't violate any EBRPSS policies. The easiest way to do this is to NEVER GIVE OUT YOUR WORK EMAIL ADDRESS FOR PERSONAL MATTERS!
- **Google Docs.** Over the last few years, the Google Suite of products (Google Docs, Google Classroom, etc) has become a very easy and popular method of securely sharing documents. While the applications are very useful, be mindful of how you use them. Notice that when you forward documents or attempt to open documents that were forwarded to you, you often see a dialog box pop up. This dialog box states that permission is needed to access the document. This means that if you were attempting to discretely share information, the sender will be made aware of it and have to grant permission for you to share. One common scenario occurs when a union member receives a write-up. If your supervisor/administrator sends you a signed copy of the reprimand via Google Docs, then you send a copy to your union representative, the original sender (the administrator) has to grant permission for your union representative to open the document. Often, you don't want your administrator to be aware that you are seeking representation at that point. To avoid this situation, download the document to your computer, then send it as an attachment.

- **Wifi.** On your personal device (cell phone, tablet, laptop, etc), as long as you are on your own personal mobile network, you are reasonably secure. However, as soon as you log your personal device into your employer's wifi network, they can see ALL activity on their network. This means that if you are at school and using the school's wifi network, the district can see when you log into a shopping site or pay a bill. This means that if an emergency takes place while you are on duty, but you were not paying attention because you were shopping, the district has the means to prove that you were neglecting your duties by simply checking the activity on their network.
- **Student Information.** Don't forward school-related documents that contain the name or personally identifiable student information.
- **Social Media.** Social media posts present problems...

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Upcoming Dates



Saturday, February 4th
Building Rep Training 10:00
(Bluebonnet Library)

Thursday, February 9th
Membership Meeting 4:30
(Main Library)

Monday, February 20th- Wednesday, February 22nd
Mardi Gras Break

Thursday, March 9th
Membership Meeting 4:30
(Main Library)



GCU Scholarship Opportunity

Have you been considering furthering your education to get ahead in your career? If so, Grand Canyon University may be the place for you. We have partnered with GCU to ensure that our members have access to all the scholarship opportunities available. Currently, there is a possible scholarship that would save you 25% off tuition prices if at least 10 EBRFT members register in one of their programs and start within the next two months. For more information, contact:

Monique Smith,

GCU University Development Counselor
(225) 810-1071
monique.smith@gcu.edu

Check out her Zoom Info Session for more information about the school and scholarship opportunities.

January 31st @ 4:00 pm CST
Zoom Meeting ID:
988 9223 5833

Building Rep Training



Saturday, February 4th

10:30am - 12:30pm

Bluebonnet Branch Library

*9200 Bluebonnet Blvd
Baton Rouge, LA 70810*

Contact (225) 292-2680 or barbara.ebrft@gmail.com to register or for questions.

Technology Continued...

...for many educators. Though it has been around for many years, policies are relatively new and ever-evolving. Most school districts, EBRPSS included, have an overarching “standards of common sense” policy that grants them the power to discipline you if they deem your actions do not align with the expectations of your position, even if the expectations are not specified by policy. Since this policy is so broad, it allows your employer to deem your social media posts to be inappropriate and possibly harmful to their image. Most posts go unnoticed, but it only takes one student or parent to spread something they found on your page or with your picture. You are one post away from going viral for the wrong thing and jeopardizing your employment. The safest ways to handle social media are:

- Keep your pages private.
- Do not accept students, parents of students, and other people connected to your job as “friends” or “followers.”
- Stop and think BEFORE you post.

These are only a few important points that you need to know to navigate your career in this current age of technology. One other general rule of thought--If you sign into an account, be sure to sign out when you finish.

Membership Update Form

Scan the QR code to update your contact information today. It only takes a minute or two and will ensure that we have accurate means of keeping you informed on current events related to your career. Currently, our Building Reps are helping us gather updated contact information on the members at their school site. Don't wait for your Rep to find you; follow the link to complete your form today!

