

Oregon High School Equestrian Teams, Inc. (OHSET)

Standard Operating Guidelines

Email Communication

Please adhere to the following policies as much as possible when communicating with athletes, coaches, parents, volunteers, etc.

1. Never forward an email without the permission of the author.
2. Do not use the “Blind Copy” function to hide recipients – sometimes, you have LOTS of recipients and using BCC makes sense so the addresses don’t take up a full page of email.
 - a. For example when sending to all media outlets, it often makes sense to use BCC
 - b. I will sometimes use when sending to a large group (50+) families, and then I will always start the email with something like: “For ALL Central District Families” so everyone knows that just because the email address isn’t here, doesn’t mean others aren’t getting the email.
3. Email should be a communication tool, not a barricade you choose to hide behind and throw out stones. Communicate as you would in person, being direct is fine AND be kind too. If the conversation is potentially controversial or combative, have that conversation in person or at the very least over the phone. **Over 75% (some say up to 90%) of your communication is not the words.** This is why face-to-face conversation is so critical to quality communication. AND why email, text and social media communication is not a good way to communicate any tough topic. These written communications should be used to download information, things like:
 - a. Over fences is starting in 30 minutes
 - b. Practice is canceled tomorrow due to inclement weather
 - c. Your medals are at my house, stop by anytime and pick them up.
 - d. Can we leave at 2?
4. If meeting face to face is intimidating or difficult, take someone with you – another parent, another coach, another athlete, etc. Write down what you feel you need to say, so you are not thinking about what to say next and you do not forget anything – instead, you are listening too and making sure everything you want to say is communicated.
 - a. If you are concerned that what you have to say could be interpreted incorrectly, or misunderstood and shared later differently, follow up with an email; something like:
 - i. Thank you for meeting with me today, this is my understanding of what we agreed to... Did I miss anything?
5. If you receive a disturbing Email, do not perpetuate the situation, ask if you can meet and discuss the issue or if time or distance are an issue, ask to discuss it on the phone, or better via video chat. Again, it is completely ok to follow up with a “this is what I heard” email.
6. Do NOT share these emails with others without permission from all parties involved. At the very least without notifying the parties. Sometimes, getting “permission” does not make sense, so something like “I’m going to forward these statements on to the district chair so he/she can help us resolve this issue.”