Note: New Phase II Start Date

To: All Employees

From: Information Technology Services (ITS)

With the increasing usage of the Internet and email for business and educational purposes, a serious nuisance issue has evolved; specifically SPAM or unsolicited bulk email. ITS currently has installed an industry standard firewall protection device that effectively stops *over 2 million* inappropriate emails per day. However, as spammers become more devious in their methods of sending, many SPAM emails continue to get through to district staff. Until recently, filters that would effectively stop this unwanted email traffic created such slow downs on the Internet, that they were considered more of a hindrance than an improvement. Realizing the need, our firewall provider has developed a SPAM Blocker device that stops unwanted email without affecting user response time. This device will compliment the existing firewall technology at no cost to the district. The new device will detect and eliminate the most damaging, content-based threats from email and Web traffic such as viruses, worms, intrusions, inappropriate Web content - without degrading network performance. To fully test this new technology, ITS will implement the SPAM Blocker in two phases that run for approximately three weeks.

Phase I - Begins November 1, 2004

1.   The SPAM Blocker will be set to flag all emails that are suspected as SPAM. These emails can be identified by the user from the subject field that will be changed to read "*****SPAM*****".
2.   If you receive an email that is *correctly* identified as SPAM, you do not have to do anything further. The flag email address will be programmatically added to the blocked file.
3.   If you receive an email that you consider from a *valid school district business* source, you must forward the email to Support Services at sus@dadeschools.net to request the address to be removed from the blocked file. Once the email is received and the site is determined to be legitimate, the senders email address will be removed from the blocked file and placed on an exclude list. Due to the continuing practice by outside companies of selling email address and contributing to the SPAM problem, **no non-school business exceptions will be made**. If staff must correspond with a blocked company, they must use a non-school district email account (Yahoo, AOL, Hot Mail etc.) on a non-district email system.

Phase II - Begins November 22, 2004 **** New Date****

1.   The SPAM Blocker will be set to block all emails identified as SPAM. Those identified and placed on the exclude list will not be affected.
2.   Using the before mentioned process, when an email is received that you consider from a valid *school district business* source, you must forward the email to Support Services at sus@dadeschools.net. Once received and the site is determined to be legitimate, the senders email address will be placed on the exclude list.

All staff should note that given the continuing challenge to "beat" safeguards put in place by large companies, no technology can be 100% effective. However, it is felt this new device will significantly reduce the SPAM currently being received by district staff.   If there are questions or concerns regarding this process, staff may email Support Services at sus@dadeschools.net or by calling 305-995-3705(0).