

To – All account users at North Iowa  
Subject – District Passwords

**Executive Summary** – Starting January 16<sup>th</sup> login passwords for all users will have the following rules.

- Passwords not changed within the last 6 months will ask to be changed.
- When changing passwords they will be required to be “strong”

On January 16<sup>th</sup> if your password is older than 6 months you will be asked to change it. Please stop by the media center if you have problems or questions.

### **Implementing Guidelines for Strong Passwords**

“Adopting strong password policies is one of the most effective ways to ensure system security.”

#### **Why should I have a strong password?**

- We are connected to the world - With the advent of anywhere anytime access the users accounts are exposed to the world.
- To be a good net-citizen - If your account is accessed by someone else they can use the large amount of resources at North Iowa to attack other systems through out the world.
- To protect our school – If your account is accessed your files including JMC data is available to the intruder. This can lead to identity theft or other frauds.

#### **How do I create a strong password?**

- 8 Characters - A strong password has at least 6 characters but more is always better
- Changed often - Be changed every 180 days or less (the system will prompt for the change)
  - Starting January the system will force system login passwords to be changed every 180 days. This will not apply to JMC but users should follow the same guidelines when working with JMC.
- 3 of the 4 types of characters –
  1. English Upper Case Letters A, B, C, ... Z
  2. English Lower Case Letters a, b, c, ... z
  3. Westernized Arabic Numerals 0, 1, 2, ... 9
  4. Non-alphanumeric (“special characters”)  
For example, punctuation, symbols. ({}[],.<>:;'"?/\`~!@#\$\$%^&\*()\_-=)

#### **How can I remember a strong password?**

- Use a trick of putting something you can remember in code for example:
  - Chr1st1n^ (this is Christina with caps and special characters)
  - mAdIs0n (note it is zero not an O)
  - Niba#1 (North Iowa Bison are number one)
  - Msi5!YOld (My Son is 5 years old)
  - IhliIf5#yN (I have lived in Iowa for 5 years now)

#### **Passwords I should not use:**

- Your password should not contain your e-mail name or any part of your full name.
- Your new passwords should never be the same as any of your last eight passwords.
- Your password should not be a "common" word (for example, it should not be a word in the dictionary or slang in common use).
- Your password should not contain words from any language, because numerous password-cracking programs exist that can run through millions of possible word combinations in seconds.