



THOMAS | GREENBRIER | IVY HILL | OLIVE | PATTON
SOUTH | DRYDEN | WESTGATE | WINDSOR

Expectations for Social Media and Electronic Communications

Arlington Heights School District 25

Expectations for Staff Social Media & Electronic Communications

Arlington Heights School District 25 recognizes that digital tools are essential for fostering a collaborative learning environment. As our staff engages with parents and the community via email, websites, and social media platforms (such as X/Twitter and Instagram), we must ensure these interactions meet the high professional and public standards expected of our educators.

The goal of these guidelines is to provide clear direction for staff and auxiliary personnel to ensure that all digital communication reflects the integrity of District 25, protects student privacy, and maintains healthy professional boundaries.

Foundational Board Policies

All staff must adhere to the following Board of Education policies when communicating electronically:

- [Policy 5:120](#) - **Ethics**: Standards for professional conduct.
- [Policy 5:125](#) - **Personal Technology and Social Media**: Specifically governing the usage and conduct of staff on digital platforms.
- [Policy 6:235](#) - **Access to Electronic Networks**: Internet safety and acceptable use procedures.

The TAPE Test

Before posting or sending any electronic communication, staff should evaluate the content using the **TAPE** method. If a communication fails any of these four benchmarks, it should not be sent or posted.

1. The communication is **transparent**: ALL electronic communication between students, staff, and parents should be transparent. As a public school district, we are expected to maintain openness, visibility, and accountability in all communications.
2. The communication is **accessible**: ALL electronic communications between students, staff, and parents are a matter of public record and may be accessible to others.



3. The communication is **professional**: ALL electronic communication from staff to students or parents should be written as a professional representing District 25. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a District 25 professional. Always choose words that are courteous, conscientious, and generally businesslike in manner.
4. The communication is **ethical**: ALL electronic communication from staff to student, parent, or community must be free of harassing or intimidating (bullying and/or cyberbullying) content and comply with Board of Education policies. In addition, ALL electronic communications and postings should demonstrate respect for intellectual property.

If communication meets all four of the criteria above, then it is very likely that the methods of communicating with students and parents are appropriate.

Primary Communication Platforms

To ensure security and FERPA compliance, District 25 utilizes **authenticated, closed-loop systems** as the primary means of sharing classroom content. These platforms are safer than public social media because they are restricted to verified family members.

- **Seesaw (K-5)**: Our primary tool for student portfolios and classroom updates. This is the **preferred platform** for sharing photos and videos of student work. Because Seesaw is a "walled garden," it provides a secure environment where content is only visible to the specific student's connected family.
- **Schoology (6-8)**: The Learning Management System (LMS) for our middle schoolers. It serves as the hub for assignments and class resources. Like Seesaw, it is an authenticated platform that ensures classroom interactions remain within the D25 community.
- **District Email**: Use of D25 email is the official channel for individual parent/student communication and is subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

Social Media Usage (X/Twitter, Instagram, etc.)

While social media is a powerful tool for "telling our story," it carries unique risks. **Public-facing platforms like X (Twitter) lack the privacy protections found in Seesaw and Schoology.**

Posting Photos of Students & The Opt-Out ([handbook Page 37](#))



Per the **District 25 Parent/Student Handbook (Page 37)**, parents have the right to **opt-out** of the release of "Directory Information," which includes student photographs and videos.

- **Refusal of Permission:** If a student has a "Refusal of Permission for Student Media/Directory Information" on file, their photo or video **cannot** be posted to public social media under any circumstances.
- **The Verification Process:** Do not rely on memory or verbal permission. Staff members **must reach out to the Building Principal** to confirm if an opt-out is on file for any student appearing in a post.
- **Identification:** Never post a student's last name on public social media. Whenever possible, focus photos on the *activity* or *student work* rather than identifying the student's face directly.

Account Management

- **Professional Accounts:** Staff wishing to maintain a professional account for school purposes must use their D25 email and obtain supervisor approval. These accounts must remain public and accessible for monitoring.
- **Personal Accounts:** Per **Policy 5:125**, personal accounts should be kept strictly separate from professional life. Staff should not "friend" or follow current students on personal accounts and should maintain high privacy settings.

Questions?

Guidance on these expectations is available through your building leadership. If you are unsure whether a specific post or platform is appropriate, please reach out to your **Building Principal** or the **District 25 Head of Communications** before posting.