

Dear Technology Applications Parents,

There are many different forms of communication used today that are taught in our schools. Email is one form that is quickly becoming the preferred method of communication for most adults, for both personal and business applications. It is important for students to become proficient in this tool in order to be successful adults, and our state education standards include technology and electronic communication. Using email will also provide students with extra practice using correct writing conventions, improving overall literacy.

In order to meet these standards, and give students hands on experience with email, I have obtained safe email accounts through Gaggle.Net (AISD approved). Gaggle.Net is a safe, web-based Internet system for students where the teacher is always in control. They provide numerous tools that protect our students from the potential problems of email and social networking. The school controls what level of access the students have and whom they can communicate with, and can set it to be as restricted as necessary. All messages pass through a number of filters. Messages with offensive language, questionable domains, banned file types, or pornographic images are automatically rerouted to the student's teacher for review. Gaggle uses a unique Anti-Pornography Scanner, and Blocked Word lists that are customizable by our school.

In addition to email, Gaggle.net has many advanced features that will enhance students' educational experience.

- All users have a Digital Locker, which is an online file storage system. Files can be uploaded and accessed from anywhere, so students can work on documents or projects at home without needing a floppy disk or USB drive. I can also store files that can be accessible to students or parents.
- I can create class Message Boards and Chat Rooms for real-time instructions or assistance during absences and control which students have access. These are filtered in the same manner as emails, and postings blocked for offensive language and images will be rerouted to the teacher for review.
- Students can create a Blog as a personal webpage or journal. Unlike many of the popular blogging sites that have been in the news recently, Gaggle Blogs are safe because they are filtered for content and images. I control access, and entries can be reviewed at any time.
- Additional features include built-in Language Translation, Spell Check, and an Auditory Feedback System that will read emails and message boards aloud.

I am excited about providing email to my students, and confident that by using Gaggle.Net as our provider, we are putting safety first. You can visit www.gaggle.net for more information, or contact me with any questions at rwillia9@gaggle.net .

To get your child started with this safe and free service, sign, date, and return the [Gaggle Pledge](#).