

Communication between school and home is crucial. Not only should parents know how their child is performing, they should also be aware of the different ways their child is engaged in learning. Likewise, our community members should know how its schools are educating children.

These days, classrooms in our district are not made up of rows of desks with teachers lecturing their students. Group projects, collaboration and discovery occur every day. One of the most efficient ways to share the engaging and innovative teaching and learning happening in our schools is to use social media as a communication vehicle. Throughout the district, we have embraced Twitter, Facebook and Instagram this year to tell our story to our community.

Through social media, you are able to see how our students are learning in the classroom at any given time. You can also see innovation, celebrations and student achievement. In addition, our teachers use social media to connect with one another and learn from each other, including our volunteer professional development series, #LakotaEdChats, every Wednesday evening on Twitter.

Twitter is the most commonly used social media platform for Lakota Schools. With 140 characters to tell a story, it is a quick way for our parents and community to catch a glimpse of what's happening. Recently, our kindergarten and first grade students celebrated the 100 day of school. Twitter was abuzz with tweets showcasing photographs of our kids dressed as centenarians and activities centered around the number 100.

In addition to Twitter, other social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook are used to engage our community and share what our students are doing at school. Social media is also a way to have a little fun. Have you participated in our monthly challenges? Each month, a new challenge is issued. Throughout February, our followers on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram have been challenged to post a picture showing what they love about Lakota. Each post must contain #WEloveLakota and tag the district. At the end of the month, the post with the most "likes" on each site will be declared our most loved people, place or program. Our School/Community Relations department will then deliver a special valentine to the star of the photo. Don't want to post a picture? No problem! You can still participate by "liking" your favorite posts.

Hashtags are a quick way to search for topics that interest you. Over the summer, we reached out to our community members for help in deciding a new district hashtag. When put to a vote, the community selected #WEareLakota. Did you know that the WE is capitalized to represent West and East? With two high schools in our district, we enjoy a friendly rivalry, but it is important to remember that WE are one district and celebrate everyone's achievements. If you aren't following our district, staff and schools, I encourage you to do so. Take a moment to search #WEareLakota on your favorite social media site and join the conversation.

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