

To: Unit 5 Board of Education

From: Dayna Brown, Director of Communications and Community Relations

CC: Dr. Kristen Weikle, Superintendent

Date: May 20, 2026

RE: Communications Tool Adoption

The Administration recommends approval of a three year contract with ParentSquare as the District's universal communications platform.

Following multiple surveys and focus group conversations with families, including members of the Community Advisory Council (CAC), the District began a comprehensive review of communication tools to identify a more streamlined and unified approach for family engagement and communications.

A committee of approximately 25 individuals was formed and included District administration, technology staff, school leadership, instructional staff, and representatives from both UFEA and UFSPA. The committee met several times with the goal of identifying a communications solution that could meet districtwide and building-level needs, while creating a more consistent experience for families. Committee members determined that if one universal platform could not meet all needs, the goal would be to reduce district communication tools and create greater cohesion across grade levels.

The committee reviewed seven platforms through presentations, demonstrations, and follow-up surveys. ParentSquare emerged as the strongest overall option for Unit 5.

ParentSquare Highlights

- Reaches families through their preferred method — text, email, app notifications, voice, and/or web
- Automatic translation supports communication in more than 190 languages
- Two way communication allows families and staff (classroom and co-curricular) to interact directly within one system
- Provides district-level oversight and consistency while allowing school and classroom level communication
- Includes digital forms, sign ups, RSVPs, permission slips, and document delivery tools
- Integrates with student information systems to keep contact information updated automatically
- Allows district to communicate with audiences outside the student information system, such as alumni, community members, and newsletter subscribers
- Supports emergency notifications and mass alerts from a single platform

The plan is for ParentSquare to become the primary platform for district and building level communications. All teachers and many staff members will receive ParentSquare training in August. During the 2026–2027 school year, elementary teachers will be encouraged to utilize ParentSquare; however, ClassDojo will remain available at the elementary level due to

committee feedback regarding its popularity and effectiveness with younger students and families.

The proposed agreement includes annual costs of \$58,787.63 in Year One, \$57,280.25 in Year Two, and \$60,295.00 in Year Three. Adoption of ParentSquare will also allow the District to discontinue contracts with SchoolMessenger and TalkingPoints, resulting in an estimated savings of \$28,212.37 compared to projected costs next year, when TalkingPoints would no longer be at its introductory pricing rate and annual costs for the two were expected to increase to approximately \$87,000.