The Benefits of Private Accounts in Your Email Archive
THE BENEFITS OF PRIVATE ACCOUNTS IN YOUR EMAIL ARCHIVE

Switching to a free email archiving solution, such as Google Vault, might sound appealing, but the inability to create Private Accounts should be considered a big reason not to make the move.

Private Accounts provide major benefits for school districts concerned about who has access to their archived data. For example, Private Accounts can prevent an archive administrator—typically someone in an IT role—from gaining access to a superintendent’s or school board member’s archived email. Also, Private Accounts prevent a superintendent, even with the highest access level, from looking at school board member’s archived email messages.

If you’re not actively monitoring who’s accessing your archive, consider Private Accounts as a way to protect the privacy of administrators by restricting access to their accounts and removing the risk of manipulation, whether it be accidental or malicious. Messages and content of Private Accounts are still archived, preserving data for Open Records requests.

“The ability to create private accounts is an essential component of good archive management,” said Michael Osterman, principal analyst at Osterman Research. “Private accounts permit the best of both worlds: the ability to protect sensitive content from unauthorized access or tampering; while still making it fully available for audits, Open Records requests and the like.”
CASE STUDY: Dysart Unified School District

With Private Accounts, a CTO or IT director has all the rights of an administrator, but is prevented from accessing any of the archived content. If you’re the person responsible for email in your school district, Private Accounts provide the help and protection you need from your email archive.

“Some of my major responsibilities are to make sure that our leadership is using collaborative and communication tools, like email, effectively, that the messages are kept with integrity, and access to email archives is limited to employees who received the appropriate training on how to handle these email accounts,” explains John Andrews, Chief Information Officer at Dysart Unified School District in Arizona. “Features such as the Gaggle Private Accounts provide peace of mind to any IT leader whose responsibilities include protecting policy-makers’ accounts.”

Without the Private Account feature found in Gaggle’s hosted archiving and backup solution, John is convinced that he would end up playing a guessing game or spending countless hours he doesn’t have searching through logs to gain insight into who’s accessing the district’s archive.

“For us, it’s not about pointing fingers, it’s about the integrity of the archiving process,” he said. “It’s about having the right tool to protect our leadership and to deliver those records when requested.”

Private Accounts with Gaggle can be created and applied to groups or even an entire district. In fact, at Dysart, Private Accounts don’t fall into the district’s typical retention schedule of keeping email for one year past termination.

“If you’re a part of a team that creates district policies, then there’s an indefinite retention period,” said John. “The archive also becomes a tool to assist a new person in that position to catch up on how policy or a procedure was written. therefore it makes transitions easier.”

About Dysart Unified School District:
As part of a strong community foundation, the Dysart Unified School District is dedicated to creating a safe, diversified and engaging learning environment where every student attains academic excellence and is empowered to achieve life-long success. Dysart is the fastest growing school system in Arizona.

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When you decide to create a Private Account, you need to identify upfront who can make requests to change an account to no longer being private. Access to Private Accounts also can be given to attorneys responsible for eDiscovery or Open Records requests.

For added safety, when calling Gaggle’s award-winning customer service department, all inquiries concerning Private Accounts are directed straight to a shortlist of managers, further reducing the risk of someone going through sensitive archived email content.

Lastly, it’s important to remember that an archive administrator can’t view account properties of Private Accounts so users with this designation must reset their own passwords.

And when a user with a Private Account is no longer working at a school district, the same access control restrictions remain in place on that account until the person(s) authorized to make changes does so or advises Gaggle of the change.

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—JOHN ANDREWS
Chief Information Officer,
Dysart Unified School District

Private Account Snapshot

- Document a clear and concise process regarding how someone should submit an Open Records request.
- Provide quicker response to Open Records requests, reducing the need for multiple stakeholders.
- Help transition new cabinet or board members interested in learning how past policies were created.
- Create a different retention schedule or even keep archived messages of Private Accounts indefinitely.