

TECHNOLOGY TOOLS IN THE CLASSROOM

Dear Parents:

As you may have heard, our district is engaged in an exciting technology initiative that will allow us to better instill our students with 21st century skills and provide greater differentiation in instruction. As part of this initiative we are piloting new technology tools including iPads and Chromebooks in many of our classrooms. Combined with the proper framework of software and curricular content, these mobile devices have great potential to be an effective, collaborative classroom tool.

As part of this implementation, our students in grades two through twelve have been provided with restricted "Google Apps for Education" accounts. These accounts allow students to communicate and collaborate with their teachers and fellow students in a variety of ways. One of these ways is through a limited email account using the Google Mail system. A student Google Mail account allows the student to send and receive emails to staff members and fellow students, but does not allow them to send email to any email address outside of the district or to receive email from outside of the district. Should the student attempt to email anyone outside of the district, it simply does not get sent. Should someone outside the district attempt to email the student, it is not received. Rules for student network use are found in the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) included in the "Annual Notice to Parents," distributed at the start of each school year.

Another collaborative tool included in the Google Apps for Education suite is Google Drive, which allows students to create, share and collaboratively edit a variety of documents. Using Google Drive, students can simultaneously edit a document needed for a class project and collaborate with each other online while doing so. These tools allow teachers to make a variety of learning materials available to students online, as well as to deliver quizzes and exams on the computer. All of these online tools are available to students when they are using devices in the classroom and when they have Internet access at home; however, no student is required to have Internet access at home in order to complete assignments. Whether they are using the accounts at school or at home, all the restrictions on email still apply.

As stated in the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), student email is not guaranteed to be private. All email from students is electronically monitored for violations of the Acceptable Use Policy, and student email is automatically archived. In the event that a violation of the AUP is suspected, district network staff can retrieve archived emails and provide them to school administrators for review. We have also had some inquiries about parent access to these accounts. If you want to review your student's account, we encourage you to have your student provide you with the password. If this is a problem, the district can always reset the password, prevent the student from being able to change it, and share the password with both parent and student.

We believe these tools will be beneficial to our students, and we are combining this initiative with classroom training on responsible Internet use. If you have any questions about this program, please feel free to contact your school.

Calaveras Unified School District

<http://www.calaveras.k12.ca.us>