

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools  
Evergreen Avenue and Cedar Street  
Scotch Plains, NJ 07076

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood School District is committed to providing students with the best educational resources and technology. Toward that end, we recently decided to move students and staff to Google Apps for Education (GAFE) to integrate 21st century technology tools into the curriculum. As with any educational endeavor, a strong partnership with families is essential to a successful experience. With this letter we are sharing information regarding the use of Google Apps for Education in the Scotch Plains-Fanwood School District.

### **Facts about Google Apps for Education**

- GAFE is a cloud based learning platform that allows teachers and students access to a set of digital tools that can help them to complete assignments, store files, communicate, and collaborate with teachers and fellow students at home and school on any device.
- GAFE is used by many of the world's leading educational institutions, including universities, secondary and primary schools.
- GAFE is completely free for schools and does not contain advertising anywhere within it.
- GAFE does not share any data or user information with any other party unlike other Google products such as Gmail.
- Many of the GAFE apps such as Google Docs and Gmail are familiar to many students and parents.

Further information about GAFE can be found here:

<http://www.google.com/enterprise/apps/education/benefits.html>

### **What access is available to your student?**

- Access is determined by grade level:
  - Grades K-4 will have Calendar and Docs (e.g. word processing, drawing, presentation, forms, and spreadsheet programs)
  - Grades 5-10 will have Email (within the school domain only), Calendar, and Docs (e.g. word processing, drawing, presentation, forms, and spreadsheet programs)
  - Grades 11-12 will have Email (both within and outside of the school domain), Calendar, and Docs (e.g. word processing, drawing, presentation, forms, and spreadsheet programs)

### **How will Google Apps for Education enhance your child's learning opportunities?**

- GAFE allows fast, easy collaboration capabilities that help bring students, teachers and teams together in real time to learn more effectively.
- GAFE enables students to engage in dynamic learning across a range of modalities.
- GAFE provides multiple ways for teachers to be involved throughout the whole assignment process providing comments and feedback directly in the documents, slides, etc.
- GAFE works on any device. This allows our students to continue learning beyond the classroom through the ability to access their content at any time.
- GAFE helps to equip current and future generations with the skills they'll need in the workforce of tomorrow.

Teachers and Staff training has begun and will continue throughout the semester, so increased use is anticipated throughout the year.

## **What are the safety and security features?**

Along with all of the educational benefits that GAFE brings, it also brings a sense of security for students, parents and educators.

GAFE employs a variety of critical security features to keep data safe including:

- Filters to block SPAM, viruses, and inappropriate content
- no sharing or use of personal information
- an extra layer of security with two factor authentication
- the ability for school administrators to turn certain features or services on or off
- schools and students maintaining ownership over the data they put into Google systems

Even though a strict content filter will be in place while students are in school (and an email filter is in place at all times), there is always a chance students could be exposed to inappropriate content. School staff will incorporate responsible digital citizenship into the instructional program and monitor students' use of Apps when students are at school. Parents are responsible for monitoring their child's use of Apps when accessing programs from home. Students are responsible for their own behavior at all times and their strict adherence to the District's Acceptable Use Policy is expected.

For more information on GAFE privacy and security, please visit: <http://www.google.com/edu/privacy.html>.

## **District Policies**

- Access to and use of Google Apps for Education is considered a privilege accorded at the discretion of the District. The District maintains the right to immediately withdraw the access and use of Google Apps for Education when there is reason to believe that violations of law or District policies have occurred.
- Users of Google Apps for Education are strictly prohibited from accessing files and information other than their own. The District reserves the right to access the Google system, including current and archival files of user accounts when there is reasonable suspicion that unacceptable use has occurred.
- **STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**  
This is the policy that governs student technology/networked resources use in the District. This policy sign-off is required to enable your student to use the technology/networked resources in the school district. It is expected that students will operate within the parameters of the Student Acceptable Use of Technology policy with regards to Google Apps for Education. If this policy sign-off was not completed, your student will not have a Google account or access to any of its associated resources.

If you have any questions regarding Google Apps for Education, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your support as we work to leverage collaboration tools for 21st century teaching and learning.

Sincerely,

Darren Watsky  
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The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools  
Google Apps for Education

Thank you for your time in learning more about the expanded technology resources offered at Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools. Google Apps for Education is one more tool that will help our students to develop the 21st Century Skills needed to excel in today's world. With GAFE our students will have the same communication and collaboration abilities found in today's business world, but safely used within the electronic boundaries of the school district. To acknowledge receipt of this information,

***Please complete this form and have your child return it to their teacher.***

Student Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade 2014-2015 School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_