



January 2016

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Walled Lake Consolidated School District is committed to providing an environment that includes the use of technology to help students become skillful learners and innovators who use digital tools to support and develop skills related to creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and digital citizenship.

The District is proud to partner with Google Apps for Education (GAFE), used worldwide by thousands of schools and universities to provide productivity and collaboration tools to students in a safe, structured, and advertisement-free manner. Google Apps for Education is hosted online by Google but managed by the Walled Lake Consolidated School District. Unlike consumer Google accounts, this managed environment allows the Walled Lake Consolidated School District to provide appropriate access to tools and settings to help our students learn and grow as digital citizens.

About Google Apps for Education (GAFE)

GAFE is a suite of free online applications. These applications do not reside on a computer or other technology device, but are accessed through a web browser. Considered 'working in the cloud,' this structure allows flexibility in accessing documents and projects from ANY computer or mobile device with Internet access. Staff and students can access their school documents from a computer lab, a classroom, a public library and/or from a home. The GAFE suite of tools includes tools such as *Gmail, Calendar, Drive, Docs, Slides, Sheets, Drawings,* and *Classroom*.

Chrome Apps and Extensions

In addition to the tools mentioned, Google Apps for Education allows school districts to manage *Chrome* apps and extensions for teachers and students. Apps and extensions are available when logged onto a GAFE account and offer tools with additional features and functionality. *Chrome* apps and extensions are available at no charge from the *Chrome Web Store*. There are numerous apps and extensions for a variety of educational needs, from collaboration tools and video editing, to recorded lessons and image editors. The District allows teacher-requested apps and extensions to be assigned to groups of students based on age and/or learning needs.

Student Google Apps Accounts

The District provides GAFE accounts to students. Student GAFE accounts begin with the student's initials, followed by district ID number, and followed by *@students.wlcsd.org*. (Example: ab1234567@students.wlcsd.org)

For safety reasons, Walled Lake Schools' GAFE domain is set up so that *students cannot share files and send/receive email to/from the public*. File sharing and email correspondence can only occur between Walled Lake Schools' teachers and students. Student email access does not begin until 5th grade. Email is not intended for communication between teachers and parents/guardians or for communication between parents/guardians to communicate with and their children.

Acceptable Use and Online Safety

Teachers, media specialists and/or administrators will instruct students about online protocols for email etiquette, appropriate use of Google applications, and *Chrome* apps and extensions, and how accounts may be used in compliance with our *Acceptable Use Policy* and the *Michigan Educational Technology Standards*.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to speak with their children about online manners and safety. Helpful parent resources are available on the *Online Safety Tips* page of the *Instructional Technology* website at www.wlcsd.org (*Academics* menu).

Opting-out of Google Apps for Education Accounts

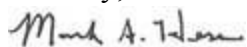
If you have concerns about your child having a GAFE account, please contact your child's principal. We can disable a student's account, if requested.

Additional Information

For more information, access the *District Google Apps Q & A*, located in the *Parents* menu at www.wlcsd.org. It includes an extensive list of common questions and answers.

You may also contact Pamela Shoemaker, District Technology Instructional Coach at pamelashoemaker@wlcsd.org, or your child's principal.

Sincerely,



Mark A. Hess
Executive Director of Instruction, Technology, and Assessment