**Google Apps for Education Policies and FAQ**

Bethlehem Area School District's *Roadmap to Educational Excellence* sets goals that include a focus on educating the whole child by offering more relevant and effective core learning, stretch learning, engagement, and personal skill development experiences for each BASD student. In order to increase the amount and quality of real world, problem-based learning at all levels, we use a variety of technology tools to help students achieve their academic goals. Using Google Apps for Education (GAFE) helps students develop technology proficiency, and enables students to develop skills with communication and collaboration.

Our primary reasons for introducing these tools to students are:
- To enable our students to use current technology applications and tools
- To give students the ability to work on common applications both at school and outside of school
- To facilitate paperless transfer of work between students and teachers
- To provide adequate electronic storage space for student work
- To promote collaborative work among students for project creation, peer-editing of documents, and publishing documents for an audience
- To build good habits of digital citizenship in students and educate them about the responsibilities that come with being interconnected online.

GAFE allows the district to give Google's communication and collaboration applications to our entire education community for free. All services are hosted by Google and are available to students and staff via any Internet-connected computer and many mobile devices. This service provides an approved and supportable alternative to "consumer" Google accounts.

GAFE includes the following services:
- **G-mail** – A free Google e-mail account, managed by the district, will be provided to students.
- **Google Drive** – Google Drive provides online file storage for school work. It also allows students to maintain electronic student portfolios of their work, which is preserved for the entire time they are a student at BASD.
- **Google Calendar** – Google Calendar allows easy coordination of work or class schedules, meetings and events online.
- **Google Docs** – Google Docs allows users to create and collaborate on documents, spreadsheets, presentations, forms and drawings in real-time.

Google Apps are housed in each student's online Google account, and may be accessed from any Internet-connected computer, from anywhere, at any time, by using a relatively recent web browser. No special software is required.

To help ensure the safety of our students and foster responsible online behavior, teachers will be reviewing our District's Acceptable Use Policy guidelines when introducing GAFE. Responsible use of the district's hardware, software, and online tools will be an important part of the learning experience for our students.

Please contact your child's classroom teacher or principal if you have questions about the use of any of our online educational resources. Other tools and add-ons may be made available to students in the future. These tools will be reviewed and selected in collaboration with classroom teachers.

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**Google Apps for Education Usage Policy**

Google Apps for Education (GAFE) is a special account-based service that has useful educational features for students and staff members.  The free tools provided by Google are available to students at school and are accessible from any Internet-connected computer or device at school or at home.   These tools help students keep organized, prevent lost homework, and allow students to work individually or collaboratively on school assignments. With collaboration comes increased responsibility in the hands of those who are sharing a document, spreadsheet, presentation, or site. Therefore, all users of the Bethlehem Area School District Google Apps for Education system must be aware of and agree to the following guidelines regarding use of this system.

1.  All rules, regulations, and guidelines already covered by the district Acceptable Use Policy, as well as all local, state, and federal laws apply to use of this system. Nothing illegal, immoral, or otherwise deemed inappropriate by all other school policies and outside laws may be entered into or displayed via the Google Apps system.

2.  GAFE is for school projects. Students or staff members using GAFE for their own purposes are cautioned that the district offers no guarantees to the safety or permanence of any data.

3.  When sharing a document, spreadsheet, presentation, or other file with other users, one agrees that:
    a.  all users are agreeable to receiving an invitation to collaborate,
    b.  all users must report any violations of any school policies or government laws immediately,
    c.  all users must be treated with respect, and
    d.  all users are expected to contribute fairly, citing sources whenever necessary, and following all rules, laws, and guidelines.

4.  In the case of a shared public space (i.e. Google Sites), all of the above guidelines also apply.

5.  Deliberate destruction or vandalism of other users' data or shared data is prohibited. Nothing should be deleted without the permission of the person who created it.

6.  Google Apps will not be used to post any information for commercial activities, product advertisement, or political advocacy, nor will it be used to post any obscene, discriminatory, or offensive material.

7.  District employees may monitor all postings and activities in Google Apps.

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**Google Apps for Education Frequently Asked Questions**

*About Google Apps for Education (GAFE)*

**What can my student/child do with GAFE?**

Students will have easy access to their documents, spreadsheets, and presentations within Google Docs.  In addition, students will have additional storage for other files they may need to use between home and school.  As the use of GAFE at BASD continues, there may be other features added.  You will be informed about any significant changes to the tools your student is using in the secure BASD environment.

**How much is BASD paying for GAFE?**

Google Apps for Education is free to Bethlehem Area School District.

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*Why BASD Is Using Google Apps for Education*

**Why is the school district doing this?**

Our goal is to provide the technology tools that can enable students to be successful in core learning, stretch learning, engagement, and personal skill development.  Digital Citizenship and 21st Century Skills are more than just teaching tools; they are concepts that help teachers and parents to understand what students should know in order to use technology appropriately.  Using GAFE can be a way to prepare students/technology users for a society full of technology.  See these web sites for more information:

- **http://www.digitalcitizenship.net/**

- **http://www.p21.org/index.php/**

**Why do students need e-mail?  Isn't there another way to communicate?**

Google Apps for Education is available in all BASD schools. Providing students with an e-mail account will allow for streamlined collaboration among their peers and teachers, and provides a consistent digital tool that can be accessed from home and at school.  This will also allow e-mail to become an instructional tool and allows students to participate in authentic online learning in a safe environment.

**What is the value of GAFE?**

Through classroom collaboration, students and teachers can open and edit their documents quickly.  Distractions like USB drives, outdated file attachments, or confusing software can be

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reduced or eliminated.  GAFE provides anytime, anywhere access so that users can be productive at school, at home, and even on their mobile phones.  Because GAFE tools run in a web browser, students can work from almost any family computer without having to purchase new software.  Easy uploading and sharing of files works on PC, Mac, Chrome, and tablet computers, and supports popular formats such as .doc, .xls, .ppt, and .pdf.  Files stored on Google are always secure, accessible and backed-up online.  The intuitive commenting feature is ideal for teacher and student feedback.  Viewing the revision history of a document allows users to review document edits over time.

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*Google Apps for Education Account Access*

**Who will receive a Google Apps for Education (GAFE) account in the Bethlehem Area School District?**

All students and staff members will be given a GAFE account.   All accounts are hosted in the @basdschools.org domain provided by the district.

Parents/guardians who do **not** want their student to have a GAFE account should:
- communicate with the student's teachers to determine the academic uses for GAFE and the impact of not having an account in those classes;
- sign the appropriate line on the Google Apps Parent Permission Form, opting the student out of the GAFE program;
- return the signed form to your child's school.

Once the form has been returned to the building secretary (or other specified staff member at the building), the student's account will be suspended.

**When am I able to opt my student in or out of the GAFE program?**

A student can be opted into or out of participating in the GAFE program at any time using the process described above.  Parents/guardians always have a right to determine what is best for their student(s).   Requests must be submitted in writing.

The decision to opt a student out of the GAFE program may have academic implications.  When using GAFE, students can collaboratively create, edit and share files and websites for school- related projects and communicate via email with other students and teachers. These services are entirely online and available 24/7 from any Internet-connected computer.  Examples of student use include class projects, building an electronic portfolio of school learning experiences, and working in small groups on presentations to share with others.

By opting out, students will be unable to interact and collaborate in the same online environment as their peers.  Parents/guardians are encouraged to consult their student's teachers to discuss the implications of this decision and discuss appropriate alternatives.

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**Does Bethlehem Area School District's GAFE program comply with Google's stated age restrictions?**

Students under age 13 ordinarily need parent permission to have e-mail accounts, as stated in Google's privacy policy.  However, since the GAFE tools that we are using are in a secure environment controlled by BASD staff, COPPA (the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act) allows the BASD to act as the parents'/guardians' agent and approve the accounts on their behalf.  To be COPPA compliant, BASD must provide an opt-out process.

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*Parent Access*

**Can parents use Google Apps for Education?**

Currently only BASD employees and students can access Google Apps for Education.

**Can I see what my child is doing on Google Apps? Will there be a Parent View account?**

There is not a Parent View account.  Parents are encouraged to explore Google Apps with their children by logging in together. You will be able to have your student log in to his or her BASD GAFE account at home and show you what they are currently working on in class, as well as items that have been "turned in" and commented on by the teacher.

**Will parents have access to their student's Google account?**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate directly with their student(s) to acquire their GAFE account login information.

**Who owns the district's Google Apps for Education accounts?**

As with other educational tools, the GAFE accounts are the property of the Bethlehem Area School District.  This means that content in these accounts may be accessed or searched by designated BASD employees in accordance with Board of Education Policy.

**What safety features are included with Google Apps for Education accounts?**

As the administrator of the district's GAFE accounts, the BASD has included safety features including filters to block spam, viruses, inappropriate content, and advertising on Google search pages when signed into their district account.

**What happens if a student misuses their GAFE account?**

The expectations for acceptable use of technology in BASD also apply to GAFE accounts. Students who misuse their accounts will be referred to their school's administrator who will deal with the infraction on a case-by-case basis. Administrators may choose to suspend student access to e-mail (preserving access to Google Docs and Sites for classroom use) or may choose to suspend a student's account privileges entirely for a length of time appropriate to the offense.  Parents will be notified should their student's account access be altered or

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suspended, as they would any time a building administrator makes a decision to withdraw privileges or enforce a consequence for inappropriate actions.

To report misuse or suspected misuse of a BASD GAFE account, it is appropriate to first contact your child's teacher or a building administrator.

**How does the district keep GAFE account information private?**

BASD's use of Google Apps for Education complies with legal requirements for safety and security such as the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA), Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

In addition, the BASD commits to the following regarding student privacy:
● Not to publish confidential educational records (grades, student ID numbers, etc.) for public viewing on the Internet
● To adhere to the District Photo Refusal form and to appropriately limit public access to student work and/or photographs
● To provide BASD parents or legal guardians with the right and a method to investigate the contents of their student's BASD GAFE account. Parents/guardians may contact the building administrator to gain access to the contents of their student's account.

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*Computer Access*

**What if I don't have a computer? How is my child going to use GAFE?**

The use of BASD GAFE is part of the instructional program and students have opportunities to work in their BASD Google Apps account during the school day. Because BASD GAFE is safe and web-based, it can be accessed from the public library or other places where computers are available.

**Should I get my child their own computer?**

The use of GAFE at BASD does not require students to have their own computer or any other personal device. That is an individual family decision.

**How will my child access BASD Google Apps for Education?**

With teacher guidance, students will be instructed on how to log in to their accounts while at school. With an active account, students may log in by going to **https://www.google.com** and log in using his or her full school e-mail address (username@basdschools.org) and password. Students may log in using a PC, Mac, or Chrome device. In addition, a number of tablet computers such as iPad and Android devices support Google Apps.

**Will my child be *required* to access GAFE at home?**

The instructional use of BASD Google Apps for Education is optional, with decisions about GAFE in the classroom made at the school level by teachers. Since GAFE is accessible from any

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device with access to the Internet, your child does have the opportunity to log in to his or her BASD Google account from home to access their information or work on their documents, and collaborate on shared documents with other students and/or their teacher.

**Why can't my child e-mail me with this account?**

BASD GAFE accounts for students in Grade K-5 are a "walled garden;" that is, it does not allow students to send or receive e-mail outside of the BASD Google Apps domain.  You will not be able to e-mail your student at his or her basdschools.org address, nor will they be able to e-mail you.

Students in Grades 6-12 are able to send and receive e-mail inside and outside the district with their BASD GAFE accounts.

**My child already has a G-mail account.  Why can't he/she use that one?**

Google Mail is one of the applications offered through Google Apps for Education for students.   This allows the district to establish a secure account for students, managed by the district, to use for academic work.  It enables collaboration with teachers and classmates, and is intended to prevent the accidental mixing of personal and academic communication.

**Do Google Apps work on an iPad or other tablet computer?**

Yes, Google Apps may be used on an Internet-connected tablet or mobile device.

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*Privacy and Security*

**What protections are there for my student from outside people?**

BASD takes security and privacy of student information very seriously.  BASD's GAFE accounts are not accessible by anyone not affiliated with the district, so your student will be able to work and collaborate in a safe and secure online environment.  Password security is of critical importance and all students should be reminded never to share their passwords with others.

**What about account privacy?**

BASD is responsible for protecting and safeguarding the confidentiality of student information.   Google Apps is governed by detailed privacy policy and security measures which BASD has reviewed and is satisfied they appropriately protect the privacy of its users of these tools.  Google, like BASD, is obligated to comply with FERPA regulations.  Additional information about GAFE security & privacy may be found at **https://www.google.com/intl/en/policies/privacy/**.

**What assurances has Google given BASD that they will not collect data on my student?**

Section 7 of the Google Apps for Education agreement (located at **http://www.google.com/apps/intl/en/terms/education_terms.html**) provides information about confidentiality.  BASD's use of Google Apps for Education is compliant with the Family

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Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

**Who has access to my child's account?**

The GAFE Terms of Service agreement with BASD contractually ensures that our institution (students, faculty, and staff) are the sole owners of their data. Google will only access content stored on GAFE when an administrator from BASD grants Google explicit permission to do so. One example would be to investigate inappropriate use.

**Does my child retain copyright of their creations?**

The same copyright rules apply to content in GAFE that would apply to any other creation, provided the student is the sole owner.

**What protection will BASD provide so that my child is not accessing inappropriate content on the web?**

All Internet content accessed through the district is filtered for inappropriate content. However, no filtering software is 100% effective. BASD believes that instructing students on appropriate use, teaching good research strategies, and providing appropriate adult supervision are the best ways to prevent accessing inappropriate content.

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*Google Apps in the Classroom*

**What apps are available and how can I expect my child's teacher to use them?**

BASD's GAFE will provide students with secure and easy online access to documents, spreadsheet, presentation and communication tools that can be accessed easily from home or school and enhance teacher and student collaboration in the classroom and beyond.

Teachers can use Google Docs to facilitate group projects and use the history tool to see the level of participation of each student in a group. Teachers will be able to give feedback to students directly in documents shared with a teacher. Turning in assignments will be as easy as sharing the file in Google Docs with the teacher, or by e-mailing it to the teacher through the student's BASD Google Apps Mail account.

**What if another student deletes their work?**

The owner is the only person who can delete a document. Once a document is deleted, no one can access it, including those with whom it was shared.

**How will Google Apps reflect in their grade?**

The use of Google Apps for Education will not in itself impact grades. Consult with your child's teachers about individual class requirements.

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**Why is Google necessary for the students; can't the teachers just answer the students' questions?**

The use of Google Apps for Education is another tool BASD provides to help students and teachers communicate, collaborate, apply critical thinking skills, and work creatively.  Neither educators nor parents have the means to completely control how students use technology.  That only makes it more important that teachers address digital citizenship in the classroom, so students will have a better understanding of how to be thoughtful and respectful of others, protect themselves online, and build a digital presence that will create a positive image for the future.

Teachers will continue to answer students' questions in the classroom. Google Apps for Education provide students an additional opportunity to ask a question electronically, helping students learn to communicate in a real world environment.

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