

# Google Apps for Education

## Background Information

Weld County School District RE-4 ("District") is committed to providing students with the best in educational resources and technology. Toward this end, the District utilizes a suite of online applications called *Google Apps for Education* to integrate 21st century technology tools into the curriculum.

### **Google Apps for Education**

*Google Apps for Education* is a free, web-based suite of applications that facilitates collaboration and communication among students and staff when creating, sharing, and storing documents and assignments online. Each of the Google Apps for Education tools can be accessed from any internet connection at school, home, or elsewhere. The District currently supports the following Google applications within *Google Apps* (descriptions from <http://support.google.com>):

- **Google Calendar:** Students can organize their schedules and share events and calendars with others.
- **Google Talk:** Students can call or send instant messages to their contacts for free anytime, anywhere in the world.
- **Google Docs:** Share documents, spreadsheets, and presentations. Collaborate in real-time with your team or with your whole school. You can publish final documents to the entire world, too.
- **Google Sites:** Work together to keep related documents, web content and other information in one place, on one site.
- **Google Video for education:** A video hosting and sharing solution that enables schools and other organizations to use video as an effective medium for internal communication and collaboration.
- **Gmail (Grade 6 and above):** Email storage and search tools that help your students find information fast and instant messaging from right inside their accounts.

In addition to the core Google applications listed above, the District may make additional applications available provided that any such app supports student achievement while reasonably ensuring a safe and secure environment. A list of available applications for the District's *Google Apps for Education* domain is maintained on the Technology Department website (<http://www.weldre4.org>).

After receiving a signed Appropriate Use form, student accounts are created through an automated process during which the student's first name, last name, and username are transmitted to, and stored by, Google on behalf of the District. This information is used only to create, manage, and maintain user accounts; Google's Privacy Policy prevents Google from sharing personal information, and they do not access content stored on Google Apps unless the District gives them explicit permission to do so for troubleshooting purposes. Student use of *Google Apps for Education* is subject to the District's policy on the Appropriate Use of District and Personal Technology by Students (Policy JS). More information about *Google Apps for Education* and its privacy policies is available at <http://www.google.com/apps/intl/en/edu/>.

### **Privacy Laws**

The District's use of *Google Apps for Education* is subject to two important privacy laws, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act ("COPPA"). FERPA protects the privacy of education records, including student class work stored in *Google Apps for Education*. Pursuant to FERPA, the District may not disclose such records without parental consent except in limited circumstances. COPPA requires commercial website operators to get parental consent before collecting any personal information from kids under the age of 13. COPPA allows, but does not require, schools to act as agents for parents in providing consent for the online collection of students' personal information within the school context.

Because the District's use of *Google Apps for Education* involves online storage of student class work and the collection of personal information from students under the age of 13 (first name, last name, and username), the District requires written parent/guardian consent for students to use *Google Apps for Education*. Parent/guardian consent is entirely voluntary. However, students who do not have permission to use *Google Apps for Education* will not be able to create or share assignments online.

### **Account Access**

*Google Apps for Education* accounts are created and maintained by the District for enrolled students; account access is not available after a student graduates, transfers, or otherwise leaves the District. Students are encouraged to save important work or content prior to changing enrollment status. Account content cannot be retrieved after the account has been terminated.