

# Alexander City Schools

## Google Apps for Education Permission Form

Dear ACS Parents/Guardians:

As part of its technology program, Alexander City School System plans to provide students in grades 3-12 with a Google Apps for Education account. Google Apps for Education is a free service designed by Google specifically for schools and colleges. It allows students to use Google services in a controlled environment where the System issues and manages accounts and features. This form briefly describes these services and certain responsibilities for using them. The parent/guardian permission form found on the back of this page must be completed and returned to the school in order for your child's account to be activated.

### Google Apps for Education Services

*Google Apps for Education accounts are free from advertising.*

Google Apps provide students with a set of digital tools that can help them to complete assignments, store files, and communicate with teachers and fellow students. Students will be able to access their account from nearly any type of Internet-connected device. This will make it easy for students to start a project at school and continue working on it from home, or vice versa. It also allows them to start a project using a computer, but work on it later using another type of device, such as a tablet. Using Google Apps may also reduce the need for students to print their digital work because teachers who choose to use Google Docs with their students will be able to view student work online and even provide them with feedback digitally.

<b>Docs, Sheets, Drawings, Slides</b>	a word processing, spreadsheet, drawing, and presentation app similar to Microsoft Office
<b>Storage*</b>	unlimited storage for Google Docs
<b>Calendar</b>	an individual calendar providing the ability to organize schedules, daily activities, and assignments
<b>Mail**</b>	an individual email account for school use managed by Alexander City Schools
<b>Sites</b>	an individual and collaborative website creation tool

Why is email included? Email is one of today's essential communication tools. Just as students learn how to write papers and letters, they also need to learn how to use email appropriately and effectively. These accounts will also improve overall communication between the school and its students. Schools will be able to easily send emails to all students about important news and events. In addition, the System will use emails to promote good digital behavior. For instance, students will receive periodic anti-bullying messages with links and information how to report abuse.

Schools that choose to enable student email can request certain restrictions. These settings can restrict email use to within the school or district; allow outside emails only from specific sites, such as when students need to use an address to create an account on an educational website; or allow unrestricted use. In order to give schools time to talk to students about the appropriate use of this account, all enabled accounts will be restricted to 'within school only' for at least the first month. After that, schools may request that their students' access be expanded. For instance, high schools may want enable their students to use their email outside the System in order to apply for jobs or communicate with colleges.

**Technology use in Alexander City Schools is governed by federal laws including:**

**Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)**

(<http://www.ftc.gov/privacy/coppafaqs.shtm>)

COPPA applies to commercial companies and limits their ability to collect personal information from children under 13. By default, advertising is turned off for Alexander City Schools' presence in Google Apps for Education. No personal student information is collected for commercial purposes. This permission form allows the school system to act as an agent for parents in the collection of information within the school context. The school's use of student information is solely for education purposes.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

(<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/students.html>)

FERPA protects the privacy of student education records and gives parents the rights to review student records\*. Use of Google Apps accounts for storing student work, completing assignments, and communicating with teachers may result in student records being stored by Google. Google will be considered a "School Official" (as that term is used in FERPA and its implementing regulations) and will comply with FERPA. For more on FERPA and Alexander City Schools see the Student Code of Conduct.

\*The information stored in the student's Google Apps drive will not be backed up. If the student deletes the file or overwrites a file, the district may not be able to retrieve it or reproduce it for either the student or the parent.

\*\* Each school may elect whether or not to enable student email.

## **Guidelines for the responsible use of Google Apps for Education by Students**

1. **Account.** Accounts will be created upon enrollment and disabled and terminated when the student is no longer enrolled.
2. **Email Address.** An email account will be created for each student. Although individual schools may decide to restrict their student's use of these accounts, parents should assume that at some point their student will have an active email account for educational use.
3. **Access.** Although Google has a very reliable system no guarantee is made that the account will be accessible 100% of the time. In addition, the System may elect to suspend access to certain Google Apps features when school is not in session. The System will make every attempt to give students advance notice of any known disruption to the service.
4. **Access Restrictions.** Access to and use of Google Apps accounts, including student email, is considered a privilege accorded at the discretion of the Alexander City Schools. The System maintains the right to immediately withdraw the access and use of these services, including email, when there is reason to believe that violations of law, System policies, or other applicable rules have occurred. In such cases, the alleged violation will be referred to a building Administrator for further investigation and adjudication. Access to a student's Google Apps account may also be suspended based on discipline issues that do not involve the Google Apps account itself, if recommended by a school or district Administrator.
5. **Security.** Alexander City Schools cannot and does not guarantee the security of electronic files located on Google systems. Although Google does have a powerful content filter in place for email, the System cannot assure that users will not be exposed to unsolicited information or hacked. Users are strictly prohibited from attempting to access another user's Google Apps account. Students should protect their files and information by not sharing their passwords with others and by logging out of their account when not in use.
6. **Privacy.** The general right of privacy will be extended to the extent possible in the electronic environment. Students are advised to be careful and purposeful when sharing access to their documents with others, something that Google Docs makes easy to do in order to help students and teachers collaborate on projects. (See 8. *Monitoring below.*)
7. **Prohibited Conduct.** Please refer to the Student Acceptable Use Policy found in the Student Code of Conduct.
8. **Monitoring.** Authorized staff may access, search, examine, inspect, collect, or retrieve information of any kind from these accounts at any time and without prior notice in order to determine if a user is in violation of any of the Board's rules, or for any reason not prohibited by law. In addition, authorized staff may delete or remove a user's files from a Google Apps account without warning when those files violate the Student Acceptable Use Policy or when necessary to maintain safe and correct operations of the service.
9. **Ownership.** Alexander City Schools' Google Apps accounts, like other accounts issued by the System, are the property of Alexander City Schools. All user-generated data, including email content and digital images, however, is implicitly understood to be representative of the author's individual point of view and not that of the school or school system. Students and their parents should be aware that the Board cannot assume any liability arising out of the illegal or inappropriate use of technology resources.

**Alexander City Schools**  
**Google Apps for Education Permission Form**

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

**Student Last Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Student First Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Homeroom Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, Student may have a Google Apps account\*

\_\_\_\_\_ **NO**, Student may NOT have a Google Apps account

**By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understand the information that follows and that I have talked with my child about the responsible use of this account.**

Under FERPA and corresponding Alabama law, a student's education records are protected from disclosure to third parties. I understand that by participating in Google Apps for Education, information about my child will be collected and stored electronically. I understand that my student's education records stored in Google Apps for Education may be accessible to someone other than my student and the Alexander City School System by virtue of this online environment. My signature below confirms my consent to allow my student's education record to be stored by Google and that I have read the privacy policies associated with use of Google Apps for Education.

<https://www.google.com/edu/trust/>

<https://support.google.com/a/answer/139019?hl=en>

***I understand that if I grant my permission that I may ask for my child's account to be removed at any time by notifying the school in writing.***

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

**Signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_