

Google Workspace for Education Notice

To parents and guardians,

At Heron Lake-Okabena Schools we use Google Workspace for Education, and we are seeking your permission to provide and manage a Google Workspace for Education account for your child. Google Workspace for Education is a set of education productivity tools from Google including Gmail, Calendar, Docs, Classroom, and more used by tens of millions of students and teachers around the world. At Heron Lake-Okabena, students will use their Google Workspace for Education accounts to complete assignments, communicate with their teachers, sign into their Chromebooks, and learn 21st century digital citizenship skills.

The notice posted on our website provides answers to common questions about what Google can and can't do with your child's personal information, including:

- What personal information does Google collect?
- How does Google use this information?
- Will Google disclose my child's personal information?
- Does Google use student personal information for users in K-12 schools to target advertising?
- Can my child share information with others using the Google Workspace for Education account?

Please read it carefully, let us know of any questions, and then sign below to indicate that you've read the notice and give your consent. If you don't provide your consent, we will not create a Google Workspace for Education account for your child.

Not providing consent to use Google services in an educational setting can significantly impact a student's experience in several ways:

1. **Limited Access to Assignments and Materials** – Many schools rely on Google Classroom, Docs, Slides, Drive for sharing assignments, lectures, resources like Google Maps and Chrome Remote Desktop. Students without access may need alternative ways to receive and submit work, such as email, printed materials, or different platforms.
2. **Collaboration Challenges** – Google services facilitate real-time collaboration through Docs, Sheets, and Meet. Without access, students may need to use other tools like Microsoft Office, Zoom, or local applications, which may not integrate as smoothly with school systems.
3. **Difficulty in Communication** – Many schools use Gmail or Google Chat for official communications. Without access, students may miss important announcements or need to rely on personal email accounts that might not be included in school-wide communications.
4. **Incompatibility with School Systems** – The school is heavily integrated with Google services, using alternative software might cause technical difficulties, such as formatting issues when submitting assignments or limited access to shared resources.
5. **Extra Burden on Teachers and Staff** – Educators may need to create separate workflows or provide different instructions and materials for students who cannot use Google services, which could lead to inconsistencies in learning experiences.
6. **Potential Exclusion from Group Activities** – Group projects and discussions often happen through Google Docs or Meet. Without access, students may have to rely on alternative methods, which could make participation more challenging.
7. **Access to Cloud-Based Tools** – Many Google services provide cloud storage and backup, ensuring that work is saved and accessible from anywhere. Students without access may have to manage their files manually, increasing the risk of lost or corrupted work.

While alternative tools exist, they may not integrate as seamlessly into the school's existing systems, potentially leading to additional challenges for both students and educators.