St. Mary's County Public Schools
Division of Instruction
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SMCPS Acceptable Use Policy and Online Platform Permission

As part of a global and digital world, it is recognized that technology and communication have changed dramatically. With these changes, it is imperative that students develop the research, fluency, technology and communication skills necessary to be successful in a digital world. This skill development requires that students are provided computer access privileges to facilitate their learning. These educational resources include access to the Internet, Gmail addresses, online learning platforms, eBooks, and electronic educational resources. Resources such as these are essential to teaching and learning in our ever-changing environment.

St. Mary's County Public Schools (SMCPS) recognizes that access to and use of the Internet is an appropriate tool for instruction. Precautions are taken to attempt to ensure that the Internet is a safe learning environment for students. In accordance with the SMCPS Network Usage Standards, all use of the network and email communications must be in support of education, research and professional usage that is consistent with the purposes of St. Mary's County Public Schools. In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), SMCPS utilizes filtering software in an attempt to block access to objectionable material. Students will be supervised while using the Internet and will be instructed in the appropriate and safe use, selections, and evaluation of information. Per COMAR, opting out of curriculum based resources is not an option.

Violations: The use of computer systems in school and access to the Internet is a privilege. Consequences for unacceptable use of the computer systems may result in the denial of access privileges and be held to the consequences in the Student Code of Conduct.

Responsibilities:

Students will:
- Learn the SMCPS procedures for ethical, responsible, courteous, and legal use of computer systems.
- Let a staff member know if inappropriate material is found online.
- Access only those network resources which align with an instructional activity.
- Agree never to meet with anyone with whom they have met while using the Internet without asking for permission from parents.
- Take precautions to protect school computer systems from damage and/or theft.
- Be responsible for transporting their SMCPS issued device and charger to and from school each day.
- Be held liable for any damages that occur as a result of misuse of their SMCPS issued devices, vandalism, or loss of SMCPS issued devices.

Students shall not:
- Reveal personally identifiable information except in specific circumstances where prior written consent has been given.
- Intentionally seek information (i.e. passwords, files, settings) about other users, or misrepresent other users on the network.
- Destroy, modify, or abuse hardware and software in any way.
- Use the network to develop programs that harass other users, or to infiltrate a computer or computer system. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other antisocial behaviors are prohibited.
- Install illegal copies of copyrighted software on school computers.
- Use the network to access obscene or pornographic material.

St. Mary's County Public School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, or disability in matters affecting employment or providing access to programs.

- Create, access, download, store, or print files, messages, or images that are abusive, harassing, libelous, obscene, offensive, profane, pornographic, depict gang affiliation, threatening, sexually explicit, or illegal material or that violate the SMCPS Code of Student Conduct and/or any SMCPS policy.
- Access online games without prior permission of a staff member.
- Circumvent and/or disable content filtering or other computer system protection measures.

GOOGLE APPS FOR EDUCATION

SMCPS works in a Google Apps for Education environment that allows students to utilize GSuite Apps such as: Google Sites, Google Drive, Google Maps, Google Forms, Google Meet, Google Live Stream and Google Calendar for instructional and collaborative activities. Google applications would be accessible anywhere the Internet is available. *During virtual learning SMCPS teachers will have the option to record live streaming lessons only featuring teacher presentation and screen sharing only. Students will be accessing the live stream through a weblink provided by the teacher and are not part of the recording or documented at all.*

Students under the age of 13 must have parent permission to access these accounts in the online learning environments. In order to utilize these applications, every student will be provided a Gmail account for instructional purposes. The login will be the student's network log-in @k12.smcps.org and the same network password. Students can only send email to and receive email from staff (staff@smcps.org).

SCHOOLOGY

Schoology is an integrated learning management solution that provides course management, mobile learning, and support for system-wide communication. Schoology enables our students, parents and teachers to engage with learning materials and their school community from the classroom and beyond. We look forward to using Schoology in our classrooms to enhance connectivity and communication across our school system.

With Schoology, students can digitally submit homework assignments, review grades, participate in interactive discussions, receive announcements and feedback, take tests, write academic blogs, and more. As a parent, you will be able to view your child's activity within the platform. We value your participation in your child's education, and we encourage you to read Schoology's Privacy Policy & Terms of Use at https://www.schoology.com/privacy. Student progress and activity will be monitored by faculty to ensure a safe, secure, and controlled environment.

Within Schoology there will be the option to embed links to outside resources such as our online textbook materials and properly vetted educational websites. Each of these websites and platforms have been thoroughly checked for compliance with all applicable Federal and State laws including COPPA and CIPA.

As with anything else, this access is governed by the SMCPS Network Usage Standards, as stated above, and can be found on the SMCPS website and in the SMCPS Student Handbook and misuse is subject to disciplinary action.