

Below are some of the main points for considering Google Apps for Education as a productivity suite, storage transport and communication platform.

### What is Google Apps?

Google Apps for Education is a free suite of web-based programs and services offered by Google to schools and universities. You can watch the following videos to get a good overview of the service:

What is Google Apps (4 minutes 35 seconds)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LgIki3cdetg>

Introducing a new Google Docs (1 minutes 46 seconds)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFem3cDqyDA>

Google Apps for Education Recorded Webinar (29 minutes 40 seconds)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ksK2uzDW-4&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ksK2uzDW-4&feature=player_embedded)

### Why are we considering implementing Google Apps?

Although there are many reasons (explained throughout this document) here are a few:

- It's free
- Access to Google Apps tools including email, calendar, chat (text, voice, video), word processor, spreadsheet, presentation program, web site builder, discussion groups (forums), video streaming, and more.
- Ability to share and collaborate live on documents
- Ability to administer surveys and assessments online through Google Forms
- Online access to word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation documents, with no need to access the student server space from home
- Ability to store any type of file (not just Google Docs files) online for easy access
- Ability to give school email accounts to students and parents for increased communication

### Is it really free?

Yes, currently Google Apps for education is free.

**I know it is free now, but as with many “free” applications in the future, whether it is four or ten years down the road, they will most likely start to charge? Is that a good choice for an already financially taxed district?**

Although there is no guarantee that Google Apps will stay free, here is Google's statement on the issue:

From: <https://www.google.com/support/a/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=139019>

*"Google Apps for Education is free. We plan to keep the core offering of Google Apps Education Edition free. This includes user accounts for incoming students in the future. As you may know,*

*Google was founded by a research project at Stanford University, and this is just one way we can give back to the educational community."*

### **Who else uses Google Apps?**

Google Apps is used by many schools and universities. Google Apps use for a productivity platform has become wide spread. You can read about other schools using Google Apps at: Customer Case Studies

<http://www.google.com/a/help/intl/en/edu/customers.html>

Oregon schools adopt Google Apps

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/2010/04/28/oregon-schools-adopt-google-apps-to-save-cash-exp-and-ed-tech-offerings/>

<http://mashable.com/2010/04/28/schools-google-apps/>

### **What timeline would we use for rolling out Google Apps?**

Roll out Google for Students to all 3-12th grade students for 2014-15 with the following constraints:

- Only Students with a Google Permission Slip on file will be provided an ID.
- Students will be able to share documents, but the default will be Private and not to share.
- Any email the filter finds to have "bad words" (profanity) will be sent to an administrator for review by an administrator

### **Will training be provided?**

Yes, professional development will be made available throughout the year to help cover many features of Google Apps.

### **Now I can seek help with technology problems from the tech staff in our district. Using Google docs will I be expected to contact Google with concerns/problems with the use of their applications?**

No, all technical support will continue to come from our district. For example, we currently use Microsoft Office, but we do not ask staff to call Microsoft with tech questions. Google Apps is just another tech tool that we would support just like all the other tech tools we provide as a district.

### **How would this affect our use of Microsoft Office?**

We are not getting rid of Microsoft Office. If we roll out Google Apps we will simply be adding Google Docs, not replacing Microsoft Office.

However, our hope would be that staff and students begin to use Google Apps when appropriate to take advantage of some of its specific benefits. This would include the following:

- Documents would be accessible through the web so users can work on their documents from anywhere without having to worry about Drive access to do so.
- Documents can be shared easily. This would give another way for staff to pass out documents, and for students to turn in work (which staff could then electronically grade).
- It is easy for groups of people to collaborate on documents at the same time, which would be good for student group work as well as for staff departments.
- Google Docs has an easy to use survey/quiz feature which staff could use for class feedback and assessment.

We plan to continue to use Microsoft Office in classes that specifically teach Office, such as our high school business and computer courses.

### **Is Google Apps as powerful as Microsoft Office?**

No, in most ways it is not. Microsoft Office is by far the most powerful suite of productivity tools available. However, there are a few points to consider when comparing Office and Google Apps:

- For the vast majority of what students need to do, Google Apps will meet their needs just fine.
- In some areas, Google Apps is actually more powerful than Office, such as in the ability to collaborate in real time on documents.

### **How “exchangeable” are Google Apps documents and documents already created with Microsoft Office?**

It depends on the situation. Three options are explained below:

Uploading and Storing - You are allowed to upload documents to Google Apps and choose not to convert them into Google Apps format. In this case the document is simply stored in its original form on Google's server. You can then share the document with others, who will be able to download it in its original form.

Uploading and Converting - Or you can choose to upload a document to Google Apps and have it converted into Google's format. In this case some formatting may be lost in the conversion, because Google Apps does not have as many formatting options and features as Microsoft Office. In general the simpler the document, the more accurately it will convert if you choose to convert it.

Exporting - Finally, if you choose to export a document from Google Apps back to Microsoft Office (or other program) you have many options. Google Apps can export documents in the following formats:

- For documents: HTML, RTF, Word, Open Office, PDF, Text
- For spreadsheets: CSV, HTML, ODS, PDF, XLS, TXT

- For presentations: PDF, PPT
- For drawings: PDF, PNG, SVG, JPG

### **Would we get rid of Student Drives if we have Google Apps?**

No, we would not make any changes to the students drives at this time. However we believe students will find Google Drive useful to access documents while off campus or at home.

### **Would we still own our data or would Google own it?**

We would still own all our data. Here is Google's answer on this question:

From: <http://www.google.com/support/a/bin/bin/answer.py?answer=106876>

To put it simply, Google does not own your data. We do not take a position on whether the data belongs to the institution signing up for Apps, or the individual user (that's between the two of you), but we know it doesn't belong to us!

The data which you put into our systems is yours, and we believe it should stay that way. We think that means three key things.

1. We won't share your data with others except as noted in our [Privacy Policy](#).
2. We keep your data as long as you require us to keep it.
3. Finally, you should be able to [take your data with you](#) if you choose to use external services in conjunction with Google Apps or stop using our services altogether.

### **What if we decide to stop using Google Apps at some point in the future? Can we get our data out?**

Yes. Here is Google's answer on that:

From: <http://www.google.com/support/a/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=100458>

If you've decided to use another solution for your organization's email, calendars, documents, and sites, don't forget to migrate your data to your new solution before deleting your Google Apps account.

Here's a list a data transfer options available for Google Apps:

- Email: Gmail accounts offer an option to download all mail to your computer via POP or IMAP access with a local desktop client, such as Microsoft Outlook or Mozilla Thunderbird. How to configure your mail client: [POP instructions](#) & [IMAP instructions](#)
- Contacts: Each email account allows users to export the contacts list in a CSV or vCard format. [Export details](#)
- Calendar: Google Calendar offers the ability to download an iCal file to your desktop (limited to calendars that are publicly shared), or you can visit <http://www.google.com/calendar/hosted/yourdomain/exportalzip> (Make sure to replace your domain with your actual domain name) to download all calendars in your 'My Calendars' list. [Export details](#)

- Docs: Google Docs lets you save your documents, spreadsheets and presentations to your hard drive in various formats. [Export details](#)
- Sites: The [Google Sites Data API](#) allows client applications to access, import, export and modify content within a Google Site.

The [Google Apps Marketplace](#) hosts partners with Google Apps expertise who can assist with migrations away from Google Apps.

Additionally, some advanced options include Google Data APIs for Calendar, Contacts, Docs, and Spreadsheets. [Data API details](#)

### **How can Google Apps work to assist students in the classroom and at home?**

The ultimate goal of using Google Apps for Education is to impact learning, communication, collaboration, and productivity in our District. Below are a few examples of how the various Google applications are being used in other districts. In addition, Google has a lesson plan database with lessons by application and subject area. To visit the Google Lesson database click on the link:

[http://www.google.com/a/help/intl/en/edu/lesson\\_plans.html](http://www.google.com/a/help/intl/en/edu/lesson_plans.html)

#### **Google Drive:**

The ability to store Documents and access them from multiple platforms at School or at home.

#### **Google Documents:**

Collaborative Student Note Taking during lectures, textbook review or group work

Shared Resource Repositories to assist in a paperless classroom

Readers workshop to collaborate with a shared document on the Book.

Writers workshop: Improve Student Writing Revision through revision history, peer editing, teacher comments all done electronically.

#### **Google Spreadsheets:**

Data collection to compare, analyze, and synthesize into a conclusion (scientific inquiry)

Graphing data

#### **Google Forms:**

Informal Classroom survey for understanding

Students can create a survey form to collect Data to learn graphing

Create a Ballot for student voting (Democratic Election Process)

#### **Google Drawing:**

Writers workshop for those students who are learning to write through visual representations.

**Google Presentation:**

Collaborate with classmates to create a presentation or topic  
Present research information in a digital format to share with ePals  
Create flash card for vocabulary and learning terms  
Digital Storytelling to create a digital book that can also be printed.

**Google Sites:**

Shared workspace for groups  
Electronic portfolios for student work  
Provide a safe platform for students to create a digital footprint where sharing and accessibility can be controlled.  
Create a website as a product for a science project, to represent a figure in history, or a classroom magazine of poems and essays.

**Google Mail:**

Provide a safe platform for online communication to learn Digital Citizenship  
ePals within the Ann Arbor District  
25 GB of email storage

**Google Calendar:**

Students can enter and monitor their tasks and calendars.