



March 22, 2020

Dear IMS Families,

During this time of Distance Learning, Island Montessori School is providing Google email accounts to our students, as well as other Google products such as Google Docs and Google Slides through Google Accounts for Education. Using this platform enables us to better communicate, share, and collaborate. Over 8 million other students and teachers use Google Apps at schools around the world.

A Gmail/Google Apps account allows some of our greatest Montessori essentials to continue despite the digital platform:

- Increases student access to each other and their teachers to collaborate and continue to build community.
- Allows student access to other Google products including Google Docs, Google Sites, Google Calendar for lessons and lesson follow-up work.
- Allows teachers to provide discreet and effective differentiated instruction within the three year cycle.
- Allows for independence, provides control of error, and curiosity!

Please be aware that we are turning on Google Classroom with Google Meet and Google Chat for grade first through 8th at Island Montessori. This is the only supported classroom application that should be used by students at this time. IMS would like to ensure that teachers, students, and parents are aware students can also use this tool to chat and video conference each other. Parents are responsible for monitoring their children while they are online at home.

The apps, Google Meet and Google Chat, are used for communication and lessons with school purposes only. IMS expects our digital citizens to utilize them to fulfill the Montessori philosophy's needs. Just as in the classroom, it is freedom within responsibility. We expect our IMS students to use these platforms as outlined below.

Teachers have been advised of IMS's expectations for students regarding these applications:

- **Google Meet and Zoom are IMS supported video conferencing platforms.** Assignments within the Google Classrooms may include others such as: Flip Grid, Edmodo, or those approved and referenced in the IMS Distance Learning Form. Other video conferencing platforms separate from those listed above or approved in the IMS Distance Learning Form, are not to be used without administration's approval.
- **Google MEET is used for lessons and group work collaborations.** IMS only permits the teacher to initiate a Google Meet. If student's need to use Google Meet to collaborate on a project, they **MUST** schedule this time with the teacher and have it approved. The teacher, TA, or school staff member should be invited and present to monitor the group meetings. As a reminder the children still have access, thus parents are equally responsible for monitoring their children while they are online at home.
- **Google CHAT is used to ask another classmate or teacher a question about their work, just as they might in the classroom.** IMS supports the use of chat for academic related



communication about works and school related assignments. Teachers may lead community discussion on this platform.

Not within the Google Suite is an additional online platform IMS will use:

- **Zoom- This will allow us to have large groups for lessons, community meetings** etc.
 - IMS will also use this for “Office Hours.”
 - The Zoom meeting will be set up by the teacher and children will be given access to it via a link.
 - If a student needs help. This allows the child to enter a “waiting room” and the teacher can admit them into the “room” when they are ready. Think of it in the Montessori Manner (hand on the shoulder of the teacher, until they are ready to give you full attention).
 - Students are not to have their own Zoom meetings. The only permitted Zoom meetings are initiated by the teacher.
 - Zoom Meetings are scheduled and placed **ONLY** in the Google Classroom Calendar. Parents are equally responsible for monitoring their children while they are online at home to ensure they are using Zoom properly.

As a guardian, IMS advises families of the expectations regarding these applications:

- Guardians are responsible for monitoring students while they are online at home.
- Teachers will monitor student progress and communication as reasonably as possible via office hours and content submitted through the Google Classroom.
- Parents should ensure that a teacher, TA, or IMS staff member are present if their child is using a Google Meet.
- You will receive notification on “Guardian Email Summaries” to assist with additional communication to see your child’s progress on work in Google Classroom. IMS asks that you accept this Guardian invitation.

As with any educational endeavor, we feel that a strong partnership with families is essential to a successful experience. Therefore, your permission is required for the use of the **Google Apps account** and **Google Classroom** for your child.

Parent/Guardian: At the beginning of the year, you and your child signed our technology and Internet Agreement terms and conditions. Your signature from that form acknowledges that you and your child understand this access is designed for educational purposes and will hold harmless Island Montessori School and the internet platforms for materials acquired by the above student from the online platform. Your signature also acknowledges your full responsibility for supervision of the student if and when usage is not within proper accordance with the IMS guidelines listed above.

Island Montessori **Student Google Apps/Internet Permission Form**

IMS has created accounts for all students to allow for collaborative sharing using Google Apps for Education. This account is housed on Google servers, thereby giving your student access to Google Docs (word processor, spreadsheet, and presentation software), im.school GMail addresses, calendar, plus



additional services. This will allow your student to collaborate with teachers and other students for intended educational purposes for distance learning.

Official Email Address Students are assigned an im.school student email account. This account will be considered the student's official IMS email address until such time as the student is no longer enrolled. The naming convention will be first initial and last name @im.school. For example: John Test could be jtest@im.school. In the event two students have the same first initial and last name, the middle initial follows the first.

Conduct Students are responsible for good behavior just as they are in a traditional Montessori environment. It is not permitted to use obscene, profane, threatening, or disrespectful language. Communication with others should always be course related and use Grace and Courtesy. Students should never say anything via Google Meet, Google Chat, or email that they wouldn't mind seeing on the school bulletin board or in the local newspaper. Students should notify the teacher of anything inappropriate or that makes them uncomfortable. Bullying will not be tolerated and the privacy of others should be respected at all times.

Access Restriction Access to and use of Google Apps for Education is considered a privilege. IMS maintains the right to immediately withdraw the access and use of the account when there is reason to believe that violations of law or School policies have occurred. In such cases, the alleged violation will be referred to the Head of School for further investigation. Alternative methods of instruction for Distance Learning will be implemented.

Security & Content Filtering IMS cannot and does not guarantee the security of electronic files located on Google's systems. Although Google does have a powerful content filter in place, IMS cannot assure that users will not be exposed to noneducational material.

Privacy As with any other school resource, IMS reserves the right to access and review content in the Google Apps for Education system at any time. IMS complies with all state and federal privacy laws.

Internet IMS assumes no responsibility for your at-home internet provider. We ask that you do what you can to reduce access to objectionable sites. However, please be aware that it is impossible to control all materials and an industrious student may accidentally discover controversial information.

Parents/guardians assume this risk by consenting to allow their children to participate in the use of Google Apps through their home internet provider. IMS firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that students may access materials inconsistent with educational goals of IMS.