



DASnewsrelease

Google Complies with Connecticut Student Privacy Law

Agreement helps protect school technology investments and commitment to innovation

(Hartford, CT) The Connecticut Commission for Educational Technology and Google announce today that the technology giant has adopted legal assurances allowing public schools to continue using its educational software and devices. The new addendum —aligning with the Commission’s Student Data Privacy Pledge and developed in close collaboration with the legal team of Connecticut’s Department of Administrative Services (DAS) — brings Google’s terms of service into compliance with state law. By July 1 of this year, that statute requires companies with access to, or in possession of, student data to provide specific assurances regarding records ownership, breach notifications, and other matters of concern to students, families, and schools.

The news comes as a huge relief to public school districts, virtually all of which rely on Google’s free software and low-cost Chromebook computers for teaching and learning. “Google tools and technology are woven into the fabric of how we prepare our students for college and career,” stated Charles Dumais, Superintendent of Amity (Region 5) Public Schools, member of the Commission for Educational Technology, and co-chair of the technology committee for the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS). “Not having this addendum and the all-clear to continue using Google would have forced districts to abandon their technology investments and start from scratch in running 21st-century schools.”

Most public school students have district-issued Google accounts, which provide access to the “G Suite” of authoring and collaboration tools. Teachers rely on that software as well as Google Classroom to deliver and manage digital learning resources, assignments, and tests. With most Connecticut high schools and middle schools issuing laptops — usually Chromebooks — to students, this combination of free software and affordable devices has made 24 X 7 digital learning a reality.

“Google’s compliance demonstrates a real commitment to protect student data, records, and content through reasonable assurances that we defined in the law,” offered State Representative Gail Lavielle (R), Ranking Member of the General Assembly’s Education Committee. “This news should encourage other educational technology providers to adopt similar terms,” added State Representative Cristin McCarthy Vahey (D), also of the Education Committee. “Schools depend on technology to innovate and scale personalized learning, which can happen at the same time we protect student information.”

Today’s announcement comes as part of a concerted effort by the Commission for Educational Technology to support districts and technology providers in complying with the state’s student data privacy law. In 2017, the Commission launched the Connecticut Educational Software Hub (StudentPrivacy.CT.gov), a searchable registry of software from companies that have signed the Connecticut Student Data Privacy Pledge. The Hub now lists more than 100 products, including those from other major educational technology companies such as Microsoft and PowerSchool.

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