

Dear Student and Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that several of our classes will begin using Web 2.0 tools this fall. This means that students may be asked to participate in a variety of interactive programs such as Weblogs, Wikis, Podcasts, RSS feeds and/or Moodle.

- A Weblog, or “blog,” is a special type of Web page that can be created and easily updated using a Web browser.
- A Wiki comes from the Hawaiian term meaning “quick.” Through this program students will write and edit a series of articles.¹
- Podcasts are audio media files that can be accessed by computers or portable devices.
- RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication, and allows a user to subscribe to online content.
- Moodle is course management software that allows for discussions, interactive tests and content delivery.

All of these tools are Web based; therefore if students have Internet access, they will be able to participate. If your child does not have Internet access at home, classroom time will be provided to complete assignments.

How it Works

During the school year, students may be asked to write responses on a Weblog (Blog), create or edit an article on a Wiki, create a sound file for a Podcast, or respond to topics in Moodle.

Security

Teachers will make every effort to monitor this subject matter to ensure appropriate content and behavior. For privacy, no personal information will be included in Blogs, Wikis or Podcasts. Students will be identified only by first name and the first initial of their last name. Students are allowed to post their ideas and opinions, but not their age, email address, photographs of themselves or others or other sensitive information. While several of these programs are password protected, it is possible that people from outside our school may have access to the work our students are doing. These Web 2.0 tools are an extension of the classroom, and appropriate behavior will be expected.

Assessment

The Blog and Wiki assignments may be part of your student’s grade this term at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

Permission

Before a student may start posting to school Weblogs, Wikis, Podcasts, or Moodle, we are asking parent(s)/guardian(s) and students to discuss, sign and turn in the following form.

¹ Richardson, Will. Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, and Other Powerfull Web Tools for Classrooms. Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA,2006.

Blogging/Wiki/Podcast/Moodle Terms and Conditions

1. Students accessing or using Weblogs, Wikis and Podcasts per teacher assignment are required to keep personal information out of their postings. Students will not post or give out photographs of themselves or others, their family name, password, user name, email address, home address, school name, city, country or other information that could help someone locate or contact them in person.
2. Students using Moodle will not share their user name or password with anyone other than their teachers and parents.
3. Students will not log in as another classmate.
4. Students using Weblogs, Wikis, Podcasts or Moodle will treat these tools as a classroom space. Speech that is inappropriate for class is not appropriate on Weblogs, Wikis, Podcasts or Moodle. Students are expected to treat others and their ideas on line with respect.
5. Assignments on Weblogs, Wikis, Podcasts or Moodle are like any other assignment in school. Students, in the course of completing assignments, are expected to abide by policies and procedures in the Student Handbook, including those policies regarding plagiarism and acceptable use of technology.
6. Student Blogs are to be a forum for student expression. However, they are first and foremost a tool for learning. The district may restrict speech for valid educational reasons as outlined in School Board Policy 5145.3.
7. Students shall not use the Internet, in connection with teacher assignments, to harass, discriminate or threaten the safety of others. If students receive a comment on a Blog or other Web 2.0 tool used in school that makes them feel uncomfortable or is not respectful, they must report this to a teacher, and must not respond to the comment.
8. Students accessing Blogs, Wikis, or Podcasts from school using school equipment shall not download or install any software without permission, and shall not click on ads or competitions.
9. School Board policies concerning acceptable use of technology include the use of these Web 2.0 tools for school activities; Board policy 6161.2 Acceptable Use Policy, Board Policy 6161.3 World Wide Web and Board Policy 6160 on Copyright.
10. Violation of the above guidelines will result in academic sanctions and/or in disciplinary action. The term "academic sanctions" includes, but is not limited to, the reduction or loss of grade, and applies regardless of a student's location at the time the violation occurred. The term "disciplinary action" includes, but is not limited to, notification of law enforcement officials, and may apply even if the violation occurs while a student is off-campus.

I have read and understood the policies regarding these Web 2.0 activities.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____ Date: _____

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