Mervin B. Daugherty, Ed.D.
Superintendent

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Chesterfield County Public Schools
Innovative. Engaging. Relevant.

Sept. 23, 2019

Team Chesterfield families,

Our work to create safe, supportive and nurturing learning environments is an ongoing partnership with students and parents. The work includes building trusting relationships, sharing concerns and monitoring student behaviors at home, in school and online.

Chesterfield County Public Schools' Acceptable Use Policy outlines expectations for appropriate behavior while students are accessing the school division's technology network and/or provided device. As part of our efforts to maintain a safe, secure online experience for students, Chesterfield County Public Schools uses a technology tool known as Gaggle at the middle and high school level. This scanning program reviews student Google files for inappropriate images and/or content identified by keywords that might signal concern. Gaggle representatives review Google files throughout the day, and send alerts to schools and the school division for investigation and response as necessary.

As they receive alerts regarding threats of self-harm, school administrative teams will contact parents directly. If a parent cannot be reached, local law enforcement will be requested to perform a well-check on the student. Information will be shared with the school's threat assessment team for action upon the student's return to school.

Alerts concerning sexual images or video of minors will be reported by Gaggle to school administrators and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. The school division will also contact the school SRO for investigation. Alerts about threats of violence against others also will be shared with the appropriate authorities.

All school rules apply to the content on a student's Google Drive. Students are encouraged to review what pictures and movies are stored. If a student connects a cell phone to the Chromebook and allows the phone to upload pictures and movies, they can be held accountable for inappropriate material.

Our school division has a moral, ethical and legal imperative to involve parents as soon as concerning information is found on our network. (Parents have access to these files through their children's Chromebook, and are encouraged to monitor their children's behavior while online.) Last year, Gaggle helped the school division connect families with mental health-related supports. It also has allowed the school division to intervene in potential conflicts between students.

We look forward to continuing to collaborate with families to support and meet our students' needs and to protect them while they are in our care. If you have questions about Gaggle, please contact ccpsinfo@ccpsnet.net. If you have questions about the student support services available to support our students, please contact your child's school.

Sincerely,

Dr. Merv Daugherty
Superintendent