



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Google and Zoom Permission

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In a time of uncertainty, rapid change, and the challenge of learning to use new technologies, parents are absolutely right to be concerned with protecting their children online—concerned about safeguarding their privacy, about keeping them in a safe and focused environment where they can learn, and about shielding them from the worst of human nature which always seems to be just a few clicks away on the internet.

1. How can I know G-Suite is safe?

Schools configure their user accounts and Google Classrooms so that only official school accounts for students, teachers, and administrators can access the Classroom. Student accounts do not have access to Gmail features, and Google Classroom does not contain any advertisements, so students should only access the curricular content provided by their teachers when they log in and begin using their Classroom. To help maintain the safety and security of student accounts, **never** share login information or display it somewhere others can access it, and be sure to change student account passwords when they first log in using a password that is not easy for someone else to guess.

2. How do we know Zoom is safe?

Students should not create Zoom accounts and should only join meetings with parental consent from the link provided by their teacher. We are following strict norms in our use of Zoom to keep our students safe, including the following:

- A prohibition on any recordings or screen-captures of students in a Zoom session
- Teacher control of video and audio feed
- Disabling of the “chat” function that would otherwise allow students to “pass notes” privately to each other
- Required teacher use of the “waiting room” feature to keep intruders out
- Disabling of file transfers through Zoom
- Only posting Zoom links in private spaces (i.e. Google Classroom or parent emails—no public websites)
- Ability to remove participants immediately from any session

Just as Great Hearts promises a safe and orderly classroom culture, we will ensure that the Zoom classroom or tutoring experience is the same.

3. How are G-Suite and Zoom FERPA or COPPA compliant?

G Suite for Education supports compliance with both FERPA and COPPA and has signed the Student Privacy Pledge. You can read more about how G Suite for Education secures information [here](#). Zoom provides features to help teachers maintain secure meeting spaces, protects data in transit and at rest, and does not monitor, view, or track the video or audio content of video meetings and webinars. You can read more about Zoom's compliance [here](#) and their FERPA compliance guide [here](#).

4. Why are we using Zoom instead of another platform?

Zoom allows our teachers to hold real-time meetings with students using video and audio conferencing that allows students and teachers to connect without the need for personal contact information. It stood out from other platforms for its superior range of meeting controls that allow the teacher to maintain a safe and orderly classroom.



5. **If we do not provide consent for G Suite, how will we access learning materials?**
Academies will work with families to exchange learning materials and completed student work outside the G Suite for Education platform; packets will be available at the academy for pickup and drop-off. However, parents must work with school administrators to work through a plan.
6. **Would it be possible to set the G Suite account up under my name rather than our child's name?**
In order to ensure proper security and privacy issues, we [Great Hearts] are setting up the accounts. They are set up using the students' names, but a parent may do the "logging in."
7. **If we consent, would the school be creating a Gmail account for our child?**
No. We have turned off access to Gmail for all student accounts.
8. **Who is the controlling entity of the account?**
Great Hearts maintains central control of all accounts. This is to prevent students from making changes that could be misleading, offensive, etc.
9. **Will we be required to log on at specific times throughout the day if we consent to Zoom? While we have no problem allowing our child to sit in front of a computer for 30 minutes occasionally, we certainly do not want her to be in front of a screen all day or for large portions of the day.**
The use of Zoom is specifically for synchronous events, meaning that there WILL be specific times students will be logged in so that they can dialog with their teacher and possibly other students. This varies quite a bit by grade-level, however. We are limiting the amount of time students will be expected to be in front of a screen.
10. **If I do not consent to using Zoom or if my child cannot attend a meeting, how will my child have access to the materials covered in the meetings?**
Live Zoom sessions will not be recorded. Most content, however, will be accessible through written work and/or asynchronous video. (The asynchronous videos will not contain any student information.) Students also have the option of setting up 1:1 tutoring for more support.
11. **Is it possible to CONSENT to Zoom and NOT agree to G Suite for Education?**
The consent form bundles the consent. If a parent wants to access the Zoom meetings but does not want to consent to a G Suite for Education account, we can accommodate that. A student would receive the Zoom links via an email to his/her parent. We will continue to support hard copy pick up and drop off of student learning packets. Please email your Headmaster to communicate your preference so we can develop a plan together.
12. **Is it possible to CONSENT to G Suite for Education and NOT agree to Zoom?**
The consent form bundles the consent. If a parent wants to access the Google Classroom but does not want to consent to Zoom, we can accommodate that—however, Headmasters might require certain synchronous learning activities, accessible via phone and video, that are essential to a Great Hearts education. If you want to opt-out of Zoom—outside of these important synchronous learning activities as defined by the Headmaster --, please email your Headmaster to communicate your preference so we can develop a plan together.
13. **What other online platforms will my student be encountering?**
Teachers will be utilizing a FERPA- and COPPA-compliant online video storage and sharing platform called Swivl to share asynchronous (recorded) videos. Within Google Classrooms, students will access secure weblinks to video content created by teachers. Those weblinks will take students to a Swivl tab outside Google Classroom to view the videos, but each weblink is unique to one specific video and does not provide opportunity for students to access additional content within the open tab. You can read more about Swivl's security features [here](#), their privacy policy [here](#), and their terms of service [here](#).