Dear Parents/Guardians of NKCPS Students:

This fall, all students in grades 6-12 were provided with Google Apps for Education accounts. The Fifth graders are now going to be provided with their accounts. Google Apps is a set of online tools for communication, collaboration, time-management, and document storage. These tools include:

- Gmail: a full functioning e-mail program
- Google Calendar: a customizable calendar and to-do list
- Contacts: a web-based address book
- GoogleDocs: a word processing, spreadsheet, presentation and drawing program that allows multi-user access and editing
- Google Drive: file storage that integrates with Google Docs
- Google Sites: website creation and editing
- Google continues to add new tools and the district will evaluate each for its educational potential

All of these tools are housed on the Internet and can be accessed from any Internet-connected computer with a web-browser. No special software is required.

Our primary reasons for supplying these tools to students are:

- To give our students practice in using current technology applications and tools
- To give students the ability to work with commonly-used, no-cost tools on their own documents both at school and outside of school
- To facilitate "paperless" transfer of work between students and teachers
- To provide adequate long-term storage space for student work
- To help students work collaboratively, to engage in peer-editing of documents, to learn to develop a safe and appropriate online presence, and to publish work and ideas for a wider audience

To ensure the safety of our students, Google Apps student domains are "closed." This means that students can only send and receive e-mail and share documents with their teachers and other students within the district. The applications also have spam filtering enabled.

Teachers will be reviewing our district's acceptable use policy and Internet safety guidelines when they introduce these tools to students. Using online tools responsibly will be an important part of the learning experience. Please take time to review these with your child as well and discuss with them the importance of responsible internet usage.

Please ask your student about this new resource and have him/her demonstrate to you how it works. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or school administration if you have questions about Google Apps and their usage in our schools.