



Derry Township School District

Administrative Office • 30A East Granada Avenue • P.O. Box 898 • Hershey, PA 17033
Phone (717) 534-2501 • Fax (717) 533-4357 • www.hershey.k12.pa.us

HERSHEY MIDDLE SCHOOL PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN ON-LINE COLLABORATION

The staff at Hershey Middle School feels that proper use of the Internet and its resources is an essential component of the learning process. Our mission statement states that one component of our belief is to “launch students successfully into the 21st Century is to work together to allow our students to become ‘global citizens. We also believe that “Global citizens require competencies in problem-solving, communication skills, technology, and teamwork”

We are working with a consultant order to fulfill these mission statements and effectively integrate the 21st century technologies. Students will be using wikis, blogs, social bookmarking, podcasts, discussion boards, and learning networks as online educational tools in many of our courses. The ability to use the Internet as a communication and learning tool is an essential life skill that all students should possess in the 21st century. As a result, we selected the tools identified for the following reasons:

- Wikis, blogs, social bookmarking, podcasts, learning networks, and discussion boards are often used in college courses and employment for the dissemination of information and assignments.
- Participation allows students to collaborate, communicate, create, and contextualize learning with their classmates and teachers in an authentic and respectful way.
- Creating, collaborating, and communicating online, in addition to on paper, allows students to express their thoughts and ideas, while having ready access to those of other students.
- Online forums serve as powerful records of students' academic progress, analytical thinking, and communication skills. They encourage students to engage in academic discourse in rigorous and relevant ways.
- Teacher monitoring of online learning serves to model appropriate and safe online behavior and encourages the academic implementation of online mediums.
- Middle school students throughout the country (and the world) have been using these tools successfully and we want to ensure that our students benefit from the same innovative instructional practices.

The staff at Hershey Middle School is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students. The Internet tools used are student-friendly. No personal information about students is disseminated or accessible by those outside the learning community when student work is published on-line. All services used at Hershey Middle School follow the safety guidelines outlined in the Children’s Online Privacy Protect Act (COPPA - <http://www.coppa.org/>) and student participation is closely monitored by the assigning teacher. The teachers using these tools will also share rules on acceptable use with his/her classes. In the event that, despite our best efforts, students encounter any inappropriate material while online, the teacher will use that as a learning opportunity to prepare students for appropriate reactions when they are online in less supervised situations.

Since the use of wikis, blogs, social bookmarking, podcasts, learning networks, and discussion boards is a way of differentiating instruction, there is always an alternative assignment for students/parents who wish not to participate in the online activity. To ensure that every student that participates in these online discussions does so with the consent of their parents, we ask that you sign this form giving or declining your consent. PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WITH YOUR CHILD TO THEIR HOMEROOM TEACHER.



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_____ Yes, I allow my student to use online tools to publish school assignments to the Internet.

_____ No, I do not allow my student to use online and would like to have him/her provided with alternative ways to publish work.

Student Name (PLEASE PRINT)

Homeroom Teacher/Room #

Parent Signature

Student Signature

Comments:

We are interested in any feedback or suggestions that you have as we begin this work. Please give me a call at school at (717) 531-2222 if you would like more information or to share your thoughts. I can also be reached via e-mail at sking@hershey.k12.pa.us. If you object to your student's participation in these types of activities, other options are available and I will assist you in seeing that your child's teacher provides them with alternative writing assignments or venues.

PARENT INFORMATION SESSIONS ABOUT THESE ONLINE TECHNOLOGY TOOLS WILL BE OFFERED SOON!

COPIES OF THIS INFORMATION WILL BE POSTED ON THE HERSHEY MIDDLE SCHOOL WEBSITE

Thank you

Sue King
Principal, Hershey Middle School