Dear Parents,

There are many different forms of communication used today that are taught in our schools. Email is one form that is quickly becoming the preferred method of communication for most adults, for both personal and business applications. It is important for students to become proficient in this tool in order to be successful adults, and our state education standards include technology and electronic communication. Using email will also provide students with extra practice using correct writing conventions, improving overall literacy.

In order to meet these standards, and give our students hands on experience with email, we have obtained safe email accounts through Gaggle.Net. Gaggle.Net is a safe, web-based Internet system for students where the teacher is always in control. They provide numerous tools that protect our students from the potential problems of email and social networking. The school controls what level of access the students have and whom they can communicate with, and can set it to be as restricted as necessary. All messages pass through a number of filters. Messages with offensive language, questionable domains, banned file types, or pornographic images are automatically rerouted to the student's teacher for review. Gaggle uses a unique Anti-Pornography Scanner, and Blocked Word lists that are customizable by our school.

In addition to email, Gaggle.net has many advanced features that will enhance students' educational experience.
- ➢ All users have a Digital Locker, which is an online file storage system. Files can be uploaded and accessed from anywhere, so students can work on documents or projects at home without needing a floppy disk or USB drive. Our teachers can also store files that can be accessible to students or parents.
- ➢ Teachers can create school or class Message Boards or Chat Rooms for ongoing discussions or homework help, and control which students have access. These are filtered in the same manner as emails, and postings blocked for offensive language and images will be rerouted to the teacher for review.
- ➢ Homework Drop Boxes can now be utilized to communicate via email what assignments have been given in the classroom and can provide access to homework information wherever the student has internet access. When students are absent from school, it is a great tool to log into to view missed assignments.
- ➢ Teachers and students can create a Blog as a personal webpage or journal. Unlike many of the popular blogging sites that have been in the news recently, Gaggle Blogs are safe because they are filtered for content and images. The teacher controls access, and entries can be reviewed at any time.
- ➢ Additional features include built-in Language Translation, Spell Check, and an Auditory Feedback System that will read emails and message boards aloud.

We are excited about providing email to our students, and confident that by using Gaggle.Net as our provider, we are putting safety first. You can visit www.gaggle.net for more information, or contact the school with any questions.

Parent Waiver (for students in grades 7 through 12)

I, _____ understand that my child will be given an email account by the Pike County School System. This account is provided by Gaggle.Net, and supports the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) and the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). I understand that the Pike County School System has determined what features my child has access to, which may include email, homework drop boxes, message boards, chat rooms, blogs, and digital storage lockers. I understand that all email messages and postings will be automatically filtered for inappropriate words and images, and that any messages determined to be questionable will be diverted to my student's email administrator for review. Consequences for misuse of email will be determined by the district, and may include restrictions, loss of privileges, or other disciplinary action. I further understand that my student's administrator or teacher can view my student's email account and digital locker at any time. While Gaggle and the district use a variety of measures to protect its users, no system will stop 100% of inappropriate content. Gaggle and the Pike County School System accept no responsibility for harm caused directly or indirectly by its use.

By signing this agreement, I and my son/daughter agree to use the provided email account in an appropriate manner and abide by the district's policies for use.

Student Name (**PRINT**):

_____Date:_____

Student Signature:

_____Date:_____

Parent/Guardian Signature:

_____Date:_____

School: _____

Grade: _____