



## Gilbert Intermediate School, Stephenville ISD

950 N. Dale Street, Stephenville, Texas 76401

Principal: Mary Laigle

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Dear Parents,

As you know our world is quickly moving into an age of technology. Everywhere we go we see a new device or technological advancement. Technology is changing as rapidly as our kids are growing. Part of our district's Strategic Plan is to help students be successful in contributing to a global society. Therefore, Gilbert Intermediate is very excited to incorporate technology in our teaching strategies within the classroom as well as out of the classroom.

These types of 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching strategies create new responsibilities for teachers, students, and parents. It is our role as educators and parents to help our students stay safe and teach them proper social media and cell phone etiquette when using electronic devices to communicate with one another. Being responsible when using electronic devices is part of the education process and should be taught at school and at home.

On the following this letter is a Parent/Child Media Agreement that will create an important discussion between you and your child about the electronic devices that you allow them to have. It will help you set boundaries with your child to keep them safe and also to help them learn appropriate behaviors when using these devices to communicate with peers.

Some of the social issues that we experienced as children in a face to face setting, our children are experiencing in the virtual world. As parents we need to be aware of these issues that our kids are facing and talk to our students regularly about social media and texting. Here are some tips that can help you talk with and monitor your child's technological growth.

- Encourage positive posting. Canvas, Facebook, Twitter, and Texting are all forms of social communication. From the earliest ages, kids need to know they can add positively or negatively to the online world.
- Remind kids that texts and posts may not stay in view, but they still have impact! Anything they say or do with their phones or messages may seem to disappear when the devices are off, but the impact on the others remains and can be retrieved at any time. –Good or Bad.
- Make sure your kids are using phones appropriately. That means no rude adult content texting, no embarrassing photos or videos. Monitoring messages sent and received is not a terrible idea (although your children will probably think so, YOU are the parent, it is your right).
- Tell your kids to apply the Golden Rule online. If kids wouldn't say something to someone's face, they shouldn't text it, Skype it, tweet it, Facebook it, IM it, or post it.
- Tell kids to respect your parenting wishes. Make sure that your child knows which games you feel are appropriate for them to play and expect them to follow these rules

even on other student's devices. If you don't want them to play it on their device, they shouldn't play it on a friend's device.

- Monitor your child's devices! Know all of our child's passwords and monitor all of your child's digital activity such as texting and posting. You have the right as a parent to know what your child is being exposed to in the virtual world and texting. They are just learning what is appropriate and what can get them into trouble and need your guidance on issues that will arise. They will thank you later for helping to keep them safe.

Our students are important to us and we want them to have all the educational advances that they need to be successful in life. Technology is a very important part of their learning. Thank you for helping us educate our children about the digital world.

# Parent/Child Media Agreement

## I will keep myself safe.

- I will not give out any personal information, like my age, last name, address or phone number, or meet someone I've met online, without my parents' permission.
- I will not upload or download photos or videos or fill out surveys without my parents' permission.
- I will block creepy messages from people I don't know.
- I will tell my parents or an adult I trust if anything happens online that makes me feel uncomfortable, upset or sad.
- I will not share my password with anyone other than my parents, even my best friend.
- I will set privacy controls and discuss with my parents when I want to create a social networking profile.

## I will keep a healthy balance.

- I will help my parents set time limits that make sense, and then I will follow them.
- I will recognize that my safety is more important to them than anything else.
- I will continue to enjoy the other things — and people — in my life.

## In exchange, my parents agree to:

- Recognize that media is a big part of my life, even if they don't always understand why.
- Before saying "no" talk with me about what worries them and why.
- Monitor all my media accounts including my text messaging, face book, twitter, and other social media networks.

## I will think first.

- I agree that not all TV shows, movies, games, music and Web sites are right for me. I will talk to my parents if I am not sure what's appropriate.
- If my family has rules about ratings, I will follow them.
- The rules are: \_\_\_\_\_
- I know that not everything I read or see is true, and I will think about whether a source is credible.
- I agree not to download anything or fill out surveys without my parents' permission.
- I know that the pictures and videos I post online, and everything that I write about myself and my friends, will likely be online forever. Therefore I will not put any-thing on my profile that I wouldn't want my parents, teachers, college admissions officers or future bosses to see.

## I will be a good digital citizen.

- I will not bully anyone online or on my cell phone by sending pictures, sharing videos, spreading gossip, setting up fake profiles or saying cruel things about people.
- I agree not to use technology to cheat in games or on schoolwork.
- I agree to tell my parents if I see something that is inappropriate.

Signed by Child

Signed by Parents