

Formal Report: Unveiling the ICT Obfuscation Structure in Chiba City's GIGA School Initiative

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To: Andrew Price, Director, Ethics & Business Integrity Division, Google

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Subject: Critical Deviation from Google Workspace Principles: Evidence of Systemic Transparency and Auditability Failures in Chiba City's Educational ICT Configuration

This report aims to formally notify Google, through the Ethics & Business Integrity Division, of serious systemic issues within Chiba City's GIGA School Program ICT implementation. Our findings indicate a significant deviation from the core principles of Google Workspace for Education, leading to a profound lack of transparency and auditability that misrepresents Google's services.

1. Complete Bypass of Google Vault Configuration

Chiba City's educational email and log management operate predominantly within its closed network, **CHAINS (Chiba City Administrative Information Network System)**. This configuration results in **no records being stored in Google Vault**, Google Workspace's dedicated e-discovery and compliance solution. This setup directly contradicts the fundamental principles of Google Workspace for Education, which are designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and the comprehensive auditability of educational activities and communications. The absence of Vault logs prevents the proper preservation of critical data and obstructs any legitimate audit or information disclosure process, undermining the very purpose of a transparent educational ICT environment.

2. SkyMenu's Fragmented and Deletable Log Structure

SkyMenu, the learning support system deployed in Chiba City, employs technologies such as Bloom filters and n-grams for efficient log search, which are technically sound for data retrieval. However, the management and storage of these logs present severe issues regarding transparency and auditability:

- **Log Segmentation:** Logs are segmented between teacher and student terminals, a standard privacy practice. However, this segmentation, combined with the overall lack of centralized, immutable storage, contributes to a fragmented audit trail.

- **School-Level Deletability:** Crucially, log retention policies and deletion capabilities are set at the individual school level, allowing for **manual deletion of specific logs**. This feature, without robust, independently verifiable audit trails (which are absent in Google Vault for these logs), creates a significant loophole for potential evidence tampering or the convenient disappearance of inconvenient records.
- **Absence from Vault & Untracked Exports:** SkyMenu logs are neither stored in Google Vault nor are their export histories verifiable by external auditors. This renders it impossible to ascertain the complete, original state of these records or to track who accessed or exported them, effectively making them a black box for any external oversight.

3. Structural Entanglement with NEC

Our investigation reveals a deep, structural entanglement between Chiba City's ICT infrastructure, NEC Corporation, and Sky Corporation.

- **CHAINS Operation by NEC:** The CHAINS network, which serves as the backbone for Chiba City's administrative and educational communications (including email routing and log isolation), is operated by NEC.
- **SkyMenu's Official NEC Compatibility:** SkyMenu officially lists NEC devices as supported hardware, demonstrating a tight integration at the device and software level.
- **Unified Control:** This consolidates control over the network, end-user devices, and crucial log storage entirely under the purview of NEC and Sky. This creates an ecosystem where Google Workspace is nominally adopted, but the actual data flow and governance remain outside of Google's intended framework, making true oversight impossible from Google's perspective or by external auditing bodies.

4. Incident of MP3 Evidence Blocking

A critical incident involved the attempted submission of an MP3 audio file, which was unilaterally rejected by Chiba City's email system. While PDF and MP4 files were successfully delivered, MP3s were consistently blocked. Despite official denials from Chiba City regarding any file-type-specific blocking policies, the Mail Delivery Subsystem unequivocally returned a 554 5.7.1 This message has been rejected because it contains prohibited content error. This confirms an intentional filter setting, highly likely implemented within the CHAINS network or by NEC-managed systems, designed to selectively prevent the submission of certain types of evidence. This practice directly obstructs the ability of citizens to provide critical information or evidence to city authorities.

5. Comprehensive Conclusion

The confluence of these four critical elements—SkyMenu’s fragmented and deletable log structure, its complete isolation from Google Vault, the closed-network isolation facilitated by CHAINS, and the pervasive structural entanglement with NEC—has resulted in an educational environment that operates **under the facade of Google Workspace while being fundamentally unauditable and lacking transparency.**

This configuration represents a severe deviation from the data governance and transparency standards expected of a public educational institution utilizing Google’s services. It not only undermines the integrity of Google Workspace for Education but also impedes the fundamental rights of parents and citizens to access information and hold their public institutions accountable. We believe this constitutes a major ethical and operational concern that warrants immediate and thorough investigation by Google.

Sincerely,

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