



# The Gaggle

Bringing you a Gaggle of News

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## Is Email Dead?

## Free Webinars

Ask most teenagers about email as a tool for communication, and they'll tell you it's outdated and for old people. They've moved on to texting as their preferred way to stay connected with their friends. So does email need to be a tool provided to students in schools today?

Over 15,000 schools using Gaggle would say yes! And for good reason. Email is still the primary communication tool for adults, particularly in business, and likely will be for the foreseeable future. A Ferris Research study estimated the number of business email users in 2007 at around 700 million. And according to a press release from The Radicati Group, Inc, "Worldwide email traffic will total 247 billion messages per day in 2009. By 2013, this figure will almost double to 507 billion messages per day."

So until a classroom full of kids

pulls out their cell phones to answer a pop quiz via text (already happening in a few cutting-edge classrooms but without any safeguards), and a CEO texts the quarterly sales report to his stockholders, email is an important tool for kids to have experience with. Teaching them to use friendly letter format and proper grammar and spelling in email will give them the basic skills to communicate effectively now and in the future.

And Gaggle is already so much more than email! Our other features like Digital Lockers, Blogs, Message Boards, and Homework Drop Boxes give students and teachers a collection of technology tools for communication and collaboration within our safe and controlled environment. Since safety is our first priority, you know everything we develop will be safe and secure.

So can Gaggle texting be far off?

Gaggle has been offering free webinars on a variety of topics over the last few months. We provide these to help teachers gain skills and ideas to better integrate Gaggle's many tools and features in to their daily curriculum.

Because of the difficulty in scheduling Webinars during the holidays, we will take a break for the month of December. We will again offer Webinars in January.

Please let us know what you would like to see offered. Do you need extra training in specific tools or features we offer? Would you like curriculum ideas by grade level or subject? Do you have a great Gaggle project to share and want to be a guest speaker?

Email us at [Webinars@gaggle.net](mailto:Webinars@gaggle.net) with your ideas and suggestions, then watch for new Webinars in January.

**[Click here to register!](#)**

## Curriculum Corner

The holidays are a great time to get in touch with family and friends, but there are many senior citizens who are lonely and in need of a little cheer. Engage students with a holiday writing project by email. Contact a local retirement or nursing home and have students write a letter to a resident. They can be emailed to the director for distribution via a shared computer or print. This could also be the start of an intergenerational key pal project!

**Gaggle.Net**

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## School Spotlight

### Smith Elementary, Alamance-Burlington Schools, NC

Alamance-Burlington Schools is in their second year with Gaggle, and thanks to a strong focus on 21<sup>st</sup> century technology skills, usage is growing. Nowhere is this more evident than at Smith Elementary, where their entire community is “committed to seamlessly integrating technology every day.”

Although Smith School has one of the poorest student populations in the district, they have been recognized as a School of Distinction eight of the last nine years! Wendy Gooch, Smith’s principal, credits technology for a large part of their success.

Ms. Gooch ensures a great deal of planning and research goes into any technology adoption. Her focus is removing barriers for the teachers and students, so she makes sure her teachers get the training they need to integrate Gaggle with their curriculum. She also knows access to computers is imperative, so the

school’s computer labs are open and accessible to students even before the first school bell rings each day. Frequently, Ms. Gooch asks students to “Gaggle” her with an answer to a question during the morning announcements. The first 10 responses make it on the Wall of Fame. The students are so excited to use their Gaggle accounts and send their principal an email; they don’t even realize they are practicing their writing skills!

Teachers at Smith use many of the Gaggle features in a variety of ways. For example, after a lesson on geometry, one teacher asked her students to email her that evening with examples of 2 and 3-dimensional figures around their home. Another teacher had her students use email to conduct a survey for a graphing project.

With Gaggle, communication and collaboration don’t stop when the dismissal bell rings.

## Tech Talk

### Portal Links

Are you taking advantage of Gaggle’s Portal Links? This feature lets you customize your Jump To menu with links to other web sites or web-based services your school is subscribed to. This increases the accessibility of those services since students don’t have to remember a bunch of web addresses, user names, and passwords. Once they are logged in to their Gaggle account, they can get there through their Jump To. Some examples of links being used by Gaggle schools are Moodle, World Book, and Tabula Digita.

School Admins and higher can create Portal Links from their Admin menu. A system link with a shared login is simple to do, but the user specified links, where every user has a unique login, can be a bit more complicated. You will need to determine the site’s specific login parameters in order to create the csv file you’ll need to upload into Gaggle. There’s a How To document link on the Edit Portal Links page, or contact your Gaggle account representative for assistance.

## ASK ADMIN...

**Question:** How can I send an email to all the students in my school?

**Answer:** Gaggle’s built-in address groups make it easy! Click To on your Compose screen, and use the drop down menu at the top to choose Built-In Address Groups. Your choices are determined by your access level, but teachers and above can send to all students, all teachers, or all users in the school. District level accounts have similar options to send to an entire school or the entire district.

Please don’t hesitate to contact Gaggle’s Sales or Customer Service staff if you have any questions!

**800-288-7750**  
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