

# The Gaggle

Bringing you a Gaggle of News

Volume 6

Issue 1

September 2010

## Collaborate Online!



## Free Webinars

Collaboration is an important part of student learning, and services that provide online editing of documents, spreadsheets, and presentations are a great way to accomplish it. But some of the online tools popular with adults and college students aren't a good fit for K-12 students. So Gaggle now has a solution! Our Zoho Docs, offer all of the functionality students need with either asynchronous or live collaboration, combined with the safety, access, and filtering that Gaggle has always been known for.

You can start a new file, or edit one you already have in your Digital Locker, and it's compatible with Microsoft files like Word, Excel, or PowerPoint. So students can work on a presentation at home, even if they don't have PowerPoint on their home computer. Zoho also allows exporting a document as another file type, like PDF.

Our recent improvements to file

sharing in the Locker mean you can choose specific users to view and/or edit a file, making it easy to do shared projects. And the ability to save directly to the Locker (just click the Save icon) eliminates the need to save to the desktop and upload to the locker as separate steps.

When students save their work, new or changed content goes through our filters, and any inappropriate words or images will be sent to their teacher for review. However, since most violations will likely be appropriate educational use, the student will continue to have access to their file. If a notification does show something inappropriate, you can drill in to the student's locker and delete that file.

We're sure you will love the new Zoho Editor as much as we do! And check out page 3 for more exciting new features.

Need a quick Gaggle training? Register for one of our many free webinars. Visit our Webinars blog at [www.gaggle.net/webinars](http://www.gaggle.net/webinars) or use the convenient Portal Link on the left panel in your account to see all of our upcoming offerings. Topics being offered currently include:

- *Welcome to Gaggle*
- *Welcome to Gaggle-Administrative Training*
- *Gaggle Apps-See What the Hype is all About!*

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

We're also in the process of creating new training videos for our Gaggle Apps and hope to have those available by the end of September. In the mean time, check out our new help icon (?) on the right side of your Gaggle screen for up-to-date information on our features.

## Curriculum Corner

Get your students collaborating with a back-to-school group presentation. Assign small groups to create a few slides about themselves, and what their goals are for the upcoming semester or school year. Run the slide shows at your Open House for parents. Then revisit them at the end of the semester or year to see if they accomplished their goals. You could also do a "before and after" slide show to see how your students have grown!

## School Spotlight

### Gust Elementary, Denver Public Schools

Denver Public Schools has been using Gaggle throughout their district for 3 years now, and has quite a few teachers who feel strongly that Gaggle has a huge impact on their students.

One of those teachers is Kyler Albert, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Gust Elementary. Kyler has long been a proponent of integrating technology in his classroom, and recognizes that students in the middle grades are not only highly capable, but also enthusiastic about using 21<sup>st</sup> century tools in their learning. When Gaggle asked Denver to beta test our new Gaggle Apps last spring, Kyler jumped at the chance to try the new features with his class.

The first App he introduced (after everyone set up their home page widgets and selected a cool new color scheme) was the Zoho Docs. Although collaboration is the main focus, he found the greatest benefit for his younger students was in the way the documents

are saved. Before Apps, students had to save on their computer then upload to the Digital Locker, and try to keep their versions organized by renaming the files. Now, they work in Zoho, and just click the save button, which automatically overwrites the older version in the Locker.

His students were already avid Gaggle bloggers, so they are comfortable using technology to express themselves. This summer, they also took advantage of the Social Wall to stay in touch. One student even posted to the wall that everyone needed to remember to check blogs, too!

We had the pleasure of meeting Kyler and one of his students at the ISTE conference this summer, when DPS participated with Gaggle in a multi-generational panel session about social networking. Kyler's passion for technology and teaching was obvious, and his student's enthusiasm for learning and technology was inspiring!

## ASK ADMIN...

**Question:** How do I edit something I have already uploaded to my Locker?

**Answer:** You can use Zoho to edit previously saved Word docs, Excel spreadsheets, and PowerPoints. Just open your Digital Locker and right click the file you want to edit. Select Edit in the sub-menu to open it in Zoho. We've also added two new photo editors, SumoPaint and FotoFlexer, so you can edit image files, too!

## Tech Talk

### Single Sign On

Did you know that Gaggle can integrate with your existing web portal to allow students to use their Gaggle accounts without entering a separate username and password? Using Gaggle's Trusted Server Authentication feature, you can easily allow your users to sign in to both your web system and their Gaggle accounts at the same time. This makes management of user credentials much easier, removing the need to manage separate passwords. In the coming months, Trusted Server Authentication will also be used to provide more direct integration with specific systems such as **Moodle**, **SharePoint** and **Blackboard**.

Contact a Gaggle customer service representative today for more information on the simple setup and implementation process for Gaggle's Trusted Server Authentication.

[Follow Gaggle on Facebook!](#)

Follow Gaggle on Facebook, Tell all of your friends and colleagues to "like" us and keep up on what's going on in Gaggle's world.

## Call for Student Submissions

### Guest Author

Calling all Gagglers! We want to hear from your students! How are they using Gaggle in school and at home? What are their favorite tools? How does Gaggle help them with their learning? What kind of projects have they done, and what would they like to do with Gaggle?

Would you like to give your students a chance to be featured in one of our Gaggle newsletters? If we select their article, it will be read by teachers all over the world! An article about Gaggle would be a great assignment to practice authentic writing for a public audience, meeting writing standards, as well as ISTE's NETS for Students. It could be a personal narrative, a persuasive piece, or a 3 paragraph essay. Articles should run between 300-500 words. You can select your best examples to submit for consideration for an upcoming

issue, or use our new Gaggle Office to have the students collaborate on a group article.

Just email your article to [articles@gaggle.net](mailto:articles@gaggle.net). Please include your own name, school name, district name, and the first name and grade of your student author. Gaggle will select a guest author each month, and reserves the right to edit the article for space and privacy considerations.



## A Gaggle Introduction

If you've called the Gaggle office in the last 4 years, you've probably talked to Sarah Maxwell. She started at Gaggle in 2006, and has worn a number of hats since then, including customer service, marketing, conference planning, and Erate coordination. She's currently our Customer Service Supervisor, though she's happy to jump in and help wherever she's needed. She probably knows Gaggle better than anyone, and has helped train every one of our fabulous customer service reps.

Sarah graduated from Southern Illinois University in Management Information Systems. Her favorite part of her job is being involved with the changes and improvements in our system. She is a big movie fan, and loves the color green. She's also a lot of fun, and has been instrumental in planning a number of our company's team-building activities, including weekend retreats and our latest event, a murder mystery!

## New in Gaggle

☞ Right click anywhere in the top header of Gaggle to select one of our cool new background colors or designs!

☞ You can create Classes on the User List to easily email, share files, or link to other Gaggle tools!

☞ Need to edit a photo? We now offer SumoPaint and FotoFlexer through your Digital Locker. Just right click an image file to edit or select New File>Image on the top tool bar.

☞ Check out the new filter box on the User List and Directory! Start typing a name to quickly find that user.

☞ Right click a Locker file to submit it directly to a Homework Drop Box Assignment Folder.

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

**800-288-7750**  
**admin@gaggle.net**