



# The Gaggle

Bringing you a Gaggle of News



Volume 5

Issue 3

November 2009

## New in Velocity!

Our programmers are constantly busy working on improvements to our interface. With regular updates, it's not unusual to log in and find a new feature or a change on an existing screen. We want your experience with Gaggle to be smooth and simple, so we listen to the feedback we receive from our users. Here are a few updates we've made in the last couple months.

The User List now has check boxes to make it easier to select multiple users. We've also added a new filter box on the User Groups tab that lets you type in letters or your name to just see those groups. These changes will make creating User Groups easier, as you check the names of your students, then drag and drop the whole set to your User Group folder at the bottom.

Another new feature allows users with staff or higher-level accounts share their address groups and contacts. That option is on each

address group, and shared contacts and groups can be accessed through a new option on the drop down menu when you click the To button on the Compose screen.

Back by popular demand is the display of the number of new Blocked messages next to your Blocked folder, so you'll know at a glance when you have new blocked messages.

Assignment folders in the Homework Drop Boxes can now be set to allow students to view each other's assignments. After you assess writing assignments, for example, you can right click the folder to allow viewing and have students read each other's work, or point out examples of good writing.

If you'd like to see these in action, sign up for our What's New? Webinar offered in November.

## Curriculum Corner

The political issues being debated now will have a significant impact on today's students. Get your students involved by encouraging them to voice their opinions to your legislators through email. It's an authentic writing experience that encourages them to formulate a thoughtful opinion and articulate it formally. You'll support writing, social studies, and technology standards while encouraging social awareness and activism!

## Free Webinars

Register for one or more of our free training webinars! Click the link below, choose your session(s), and fill out the registration information. You must use your Gaggle email address to register. You will be sent your personal webinar log in within 2 business days.

Webinars are approximately 40 minutes long, all times listed are Central Daylight Time.

### November Webinar Schedule

#### Blocked!

Learn about our filters and what you can do to minimize blocked messages.

Mon Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 pm CDT  
Thur. Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm CDT

#### What's New?

See the new features and improvements.

Thur. Nov 12<sup>th</sup>, 4:30pm CDT  
Tues. Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>, 3:30pm CDT

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

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## School Spotlight

### Tangipahoa Parish School Board, LA

Students in Tangipahoa Parish in Louisiana have been using Gaggle for 5 years now. The school district serves over 19,000 students, and Gaggle is available to for any class that wants it.

In the beginning, the students' accounts were created manually by one of their then instructional technologists; Vicki Blackwell. They later took advantage of Gaggle's offer to import the student accounts for the district. And just this year, they have moved to full data integration.

Gaggle's data integration allows the districts to automate the process of creating and managing users. The secure file transfer protects their student data and creates accounts for new students, moves accounts when students transfers to another Tangipahoa school, and deletes accounts when a student leaves the district.

Tangi's move to Gaggle's data

integration not only makes their tech department's job easy, it lets them integrate Gaggle with their Active Directory. The use of LDAP authentication means teachers and students can log in to their Gaggle account quickly from their school home page.

Tangipahoa Parish Schools have long recognized the value of student email as a communication tool, and data integration and LDAP authentication make it easy. Vicki Blackwell, now the Director of Technology for the district, says, "It offers a great opportunity for students to access email communication in a safe way. We know they are in a safe environment whether they are using it for virtual school, educational projects, or personal communication."

Contact us if you'd like to learn more about data integration for your Gaggle accounts!

## Tech Talk

### Velocity Updates

We are aware of a number of system issues in Velocity this school year, including slow loading, some freezing on the loading screen, and grid errors. We apologize for the inconvenience and frustration this has caused, and have been working diligently to address those problems we have been able to identify.

We have made numerous adjustments to increase loading times and decrease errors, and will continue to address issues as they arise. We believe some problems are a result of filters and/or proxies used by districts, and are working with some IT departments to try to determine how those can be addressed. Please note that IE 6 is an outdated browser that cannot fully support Velocity. If you see unusual slowness or errors in IE 7 or higher, please let us know so we can work to solve those problems or partner with your IT department to help them with adjustments on their end to improve performance.

## ASK ADMIN...

**Question** I'm trying to add accounts but I get a message saying "Exceeds maximum number of users." I need to add more students. What do I do?

**Answer:** If you are using the free version, contact us and we will be happy to allocate more accounts for you. If you are using the subscription service, your district may have additional accounts they can allocate to your school. Contact the person in your school or district who oversees Gaggle. Also keep in mind that if you delete a user, that account can then be used for someone else.

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

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