Bloomington District 87

Building a Culture of Care with Gaggle's Added Layer of Protection

FAST FACTS

District
Bloomington District 87

State
Illinois

Size
4,733 students

"Having done this for so many years, and having done well-being checks based on things that have come up in Gaggle on these students, I know for a fact and in my heart that they have saved lives."

RICHARD HIRSCH
DIRECTOR OF SAFETY AND SECURITY

Challenge

Many districts respond to student safety incidents after they occur. Bloomington District 87 saw that approach as a risk in itself. District leaders recognized early that no single tool, policy, or staff member could fully protect students alone. The real danger wasn't a lack of resources. It was a fragmented system that left gaps.

So the district set out to build something more intentional. They constructed a layered ecosystem where every piece worked in concert, and nothing was left to chance.

At the center of that effort was a harder question: how do you reach students who never ask for help out loud?

For many students, speaking openly about trauma, abuse, self-harm, or emotional distress feels impossible. Their struggles don't surface in counselor offices or staff conversations. They surface quietly, in digital spaces where adults rarely look.

Bloomington District 87 needed a way to find those silent moments, intervene before situations escalated, and build an environment where students felt safe, even when they were struggling most. The goal was protection with connection.

Solution

Bloomington District 87 implemented Gaggle as part of its broader student safety and wellness strategy. Richard Hirsch, Director of Safety and Security and former School Resource Officer, described Gaggle as an “invaluable tool” that adds another critical layer of protection for students and staff.

Using Gaggle’s alerts, district teams can identify concerning language and behaviors early, allowing counselors, administrators, and local law enforcement to coordinate wellness checks and timely interventions when needed. Rather than focusing on punishment, the district uses the platform to intervene proactively and provide support before situations escalate.

Hirsch noted that digital communication often gives students a more comfortable outlet to share what they may not be ready to say out loud. This allows school staff to respond with care while reducing the need for students to repeatedly relive traumatic experiences.

Impact

According to Hirsch, Gaggle has become an essential component of the district’s culture of care. The platform helps district staff ensure students receive support at critical moments.

One example involved a student who disclosed abuse through digital communication following a Gaggle alert. Because the district already had systems and relationships in place, staff were able to coordinate support services quickly and compassionately while minimizing additional emotional strain on the student.

District leaders believe the combination of proactive technology, trusted relationships, and coordinated intervention helps create a safer and more supportive environment for all students. Hirsch emphasized that while it is impossible to quantify every outcome, he is certain that Gaggle has played a role in saving lives and helping students get the help they need.

For Bloomington District 87, student safety is not about surveillance or discipline. It is about creating a culture where students feel supported, seen, and cared for. By combining proactive technology with human connection and coordinated intervention, Gaggle helps the district strengthen that culture every day.

gaggle

Gaggle’s mission is to help schools reach students before a moment becomes a crisis. Through real-time alerts and a human-centered approach to intervention, Gaggle gives district teams the tools to act early, respond with care, and build a culture where every student feels supported.

Learn more about the benefits.