

July 31, 2013

Re: Proceeding #02-6

To Whom It May Concern:

The vision of Henderson County Public Schools states that *“Every student will achieve success and graduate as a life-long learner, globally competitive, prepared for career, college and life.”* With the ever-changing world of technology, our students should be able to communicate and collaborate in ways that break down the walls that separate them from the global society around them. It is our belief that we need to provide our students with the most appropriate and safest tools to make this possible. We must carefully navigate the offerings of these abundant tools while balancing the challenges of our decreasing education budgets.

HCPS has utilized the innovative and standards-aligned tools provided by Gaggle. These tools are meeting our goals to make students future-ready and fit within our financial constraints. Aligning to the standards set for national, state and local technology plans, Gaggle’s tools allow us to meet our goals and power student learning. In addition, these collaborative tools meet the federal requirements of online safety outlined in CIPA and COPPA, confidently providing us with the security our students deserve that other online tools do not provide.

Making decisions on behalf of our students, we must balance the demands of our budgets and student safety while ensuring students are prepared for being successful in the world around them. For this reason, we diligently looked at all submitted vendors through an E-rate approved process, weighing each element of the products in order to determine the best vendor at the best price. Confidently and fairly we chose Gaggle, knowing it was best suited for educational and financial needs.

Our district needs this funding in order to maintain the use of Gaggle’s tools. If we were to lose funding, we would not be able to continue to provide these safe, online resources as this would be outside the limits of our budget. For this reason, we are asking that the FCC not force us to abandon Gaggle’s online tools because they do not offer web hosting. Also, we believe that since email was the original online collaboration tool it should not be separated from these newer online collaborative tools which allow our students to reach even further, connecting with the world around them. Please consider offering these collaborative tools under the email category if they will no longer be eligible as standalone under the web hosting category.

We should be able to make decisions for our district which allow us to choose what is best for our student safety, what is most appropriate for our web hosting and utilize collaboration tools

from any provider as needed. Thank you for your consideration in this matter and for helping us to best meet federal guidelines, national/state/local curricular goals, and support our students in the safest and most cost-effective way possible.

Sincerely,

The Technology Department
Henderson County Public Schools