

A Streamlined Solution in Sunnyside

Content warning: This article contains references to suicide and self-harm.



Sunnyside, Washington



8 schools



6,541 students

For Sunnyside, GoGuardian Meets Device Management Needs – and so Much More

At Sunnyside School District in Washington, teachers and administrators knew the right technology would enrich their students' educational journeys. When the district began rolling out a 1:1 model in 2017, the product they initially selected to manage their school-issued devices was not user friendly. The district's IT department needed a new solution that allowed them to meet growing technology needs more efficiently.

When Alex Edwards started working for Sunnyside as a network technician, her first assignment from Dave Peterson, the district's IT coordinator, was to find the right product to administer the schools' Chromebooks. "I knew it had to be strong enough to manage our large fleet of devices while ensuring they were being used effectively and safely," Edwards noted.

When Edwards started searching online for school device management platforms, she found many options. When comparing features, GoGuardian was the clear leader — and not only for device management. Edwards discovered GoGuardian's wealth of capabilities that make teaching more dynamic and learning more engaging. Once the team selected and implemented GoGuardian solutions at Sunnyside schools, it didn't take long for teachers to start seeing the benefits in the classroom.

Enhancing Learning and Supporting Student Engagement

"Why didn't we start using this sooner?" That's what teachers said to Peterson and Edwards when they first started using GoGuardian Teacher. With GoGuardian Teacher, educators can open or close tabs on student's devices to guide them towards

helpful content. Using the Scenes feature, teachers can tailor lessons for individual students or groups by creating personalized learning environments with access to resources specific to students' learning needs. Teachers can also see their students' work in real time and offer help as soon as it is needed. GoGuardian Teacher helps educators identify students who may need extra guidance and ensures learners are on track and engaged in classroom lessons.

"I'd frequently heard teachers say they wished there was a way to manage how students use their school-issued devices," Peterson said. "GoGuardian Teacher's Scenes feature offers just that. It gives educators tools to keep students focused on learning. That was a huge selling point because it addressed a need we hadn't been able to meet before."

Improving Communication with Parents and Caregivers

Sunnyside educators were pleasantly surprised when they realized just how much GoGuardian could help with parent and caregiver communications as well.

"Many parents and caregivers of Sunnyside students work jobs with non-traditional hours, meaning scheduling in-person, after-school conferences can be difficult," Peterson said.

GoGuardian Teacher's video conferencing allows teachers to use a platform they're familiar with to schedule virtual conferences that parents or caregivers can attend via cellphones.

"I've had two teachers say to me, 'I wish I knew about GoGuardian Teacher video conferencing sooner!'" he continued. "I used it last night for parent-teacher conferences, and it completely changed how I was able to interface with families."

Helping Keep Students Safe

Initially, Peterson and Edwards weren't searching for a student safety solution. However, Beacon turned out to be what Peterson calls "GoGuardian's biggest bonus." Beacon, which is intended to be one part of a school's overall crisis prevention program, processes online activity that indicates a risk of self-harm or suicide and provides timely alerts to designated staff so they can assess risk level and respond appropriately.

"I believe GoGuardian Beacon has saved lives," Peterson said. "School mental health professionals have enormous caseloads, and they can't possibly monitor every student. GoGuardian Beacon alerts are sent to them as soon the system detects at-risk behavior, so staff can intervene when they are needed most."

Committing to Student Data Privacy

Peterson was also impressed when he learned GoGuardian is a recognized leader in student data privacy. GoGuardian is certified as compliant with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a law that protects the privacy of student education records and gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. GoGuardian is also a proud signatory of the Student Privacy Pledge, which outlines commitments regarding the responsible collection and handling of student data.

"Our department is charged with keeping student data secure," Peterson said. "With GoGuardian, I know our district is complying with all federal and state regulations, and that means a lot. When our executives ask about student privacy, I say, 'We've got GoGuardian, so that's covered.' But most importantly, GoGuardian's attention to data privacy makes our students' families feel safer."

So Much More Than a Device Management Solution

Five years later, Sunnyside continues to utilize GoGuardian Admin, Teacher, and Beacon to harness the power of technology in the classroom.

"The internet is a vast and varied place. With GoGuardian, it becomes an incredible place to learn."

Alex Edwards

Network Technician
Sunnyside School District

If you or someone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide, you are not alone. Help is always available.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
(800) 273-8255

