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Lyon County School District
Board Memo

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Date: November 18, 2025

To: Board of School Trustees

From: Jim Gianotti, Executive Director of Educational Services
                     Harman Bains, Executive Director of Operations

Re: GoGuardian

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<u>Recommendation:</u>
That the Board of Trustees provide further guidance on GoGuardian.

<u>Background Information:</u>
At the September Board Meeting, Trustee Whisler requested an informational agenda item on a student monitoring software called GoGuardian. The district has researched the platform and compiled the following information.

GoGuardian Teacher is a browser-based classroom management and monitoring tool designed for in-person learning environments where students use school-managed Chromebooks. It allows teachers to monitor student browser activity, communicate through chat, control website access, and share their screens. While these features support classroom management in traditional settings, the platform is not effective for online programs or virtual instruction. It functions best in supervised, on-campus lab environments where all devices are owned and managed by the district.

One of the main concerns with GoGuardian is its dependency on district-managed devices and Google accounts. It performs reliably only when students are logged into school-issued Chromebooks using their school credentials. When students use personal laptops or Chromebooks, monitoring becomes inconsistent or stops altogether. Students can easily bypass the system by signing out of their school account or switching to a personal device. The software does not function on cell phones, further reducing its reach in remote or bring-your-own-device environments.

GoGuardian also requires a constant and stable internet connection. In areas where home Wi-Fi connections are weak or unreliable, performance issues arise, resulting in lag and disconnections. This constant network demand can also strain district bandwidth during peak usage periods.

From a teacher perspective, GoGuardian can be very cumbersome and demands ongoing setup and maintenance. Teachers must create and update custom class settings called Scenes, ensure their rosters are synced, and monitor activity logs and chat communications. This process takes time and is not efficient for instructors managing online classes where students log in at different times. The platform does not allow teachers to require students to turn on their cameras, which makes verifying participation and engagement more difficult. The viewing interface itself is also challenging when large numbers of students are online. Teachers must scan through dozens or even

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hundreds of small thumbnail screens at once, which is visually overwhelming and impractical for large-scale remote programs such as LyOnline.

GoGuardian is also not compatible with testing environments that use Kiosk Mode. Kiosk Mode is a secure setting built into Chromebooks that locks students into a single testing application such as i-Ready, MAP Growth, or other standardized testing platforms. It prevents students from opening new tabs, visiting other websites, or searching for answers online. Because Kiosk Mode already ensures testing integrity and security, adding GoGuardian offers no additional benefit. In fact, GoGuardian cannot function while Kiosk Mode is active, rendering it ineffective during standardized testing sessions.

Jim Gianotti met with LyOnline staff on October 16th and discussed some of the concerns with GoGuardian and the staff agreed that they typically do not work with a "class" of students at once and typically do more one to one interaction that would not require GoGuardian. LyOnline staff expressed a desire to have it during testing periods during their semester exams to monitor large numbers of students testing at once. These non-Kiosk mode semester exams only occur twice a year and therefore the cost may not be practical with regards to the usage.

District implementation and management costs are unknown. Per student costs vary within $5.00 to $7.14 per student. Additional concerns include the time and effort required for ongoing management, potential frustration for teacher, and the platform's limited flexibility for asynchronous or remote learning.

Budget Considerations:
District implementation and management costs are unknown. Per student costs vary within $5.00 to $7.14 per student.

Discussed at Previous Meeting:
September 2025

Attachment(s):
N/A

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