



# 5 Things You Don't Know About Google Apps For Education

August 2013



## Google Apps is Catching on in Education

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Google Apps for Education is free to schools and universities, and they're taking advantage of it in droves. It's simple to use, it's familiar to most people who are already using Gmail at home, and it provides great collaboration capabilities that work beautifully in educational environments. It's no wonder that so many schools are signing up to use it. But there are some things that most people don't know about using Google Apps for Education - and what you don't know can harm you.

### 1. Google Apps Needs Backup

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Something that a lot of educators haven't considered is the need to back up Google Apps. There's a common misperception that Google has ways to help you get your data back if it ever gets lost, but that is simply not the case. Before you get nervous about using Google Apps though, let us be clear: Google has full disaster recovery capabilities. But that's recovery from their disasters, not yours. You're not protected from accidental deletions, botched syncs, malicious acts, file corruption, or other data loss scenarios.

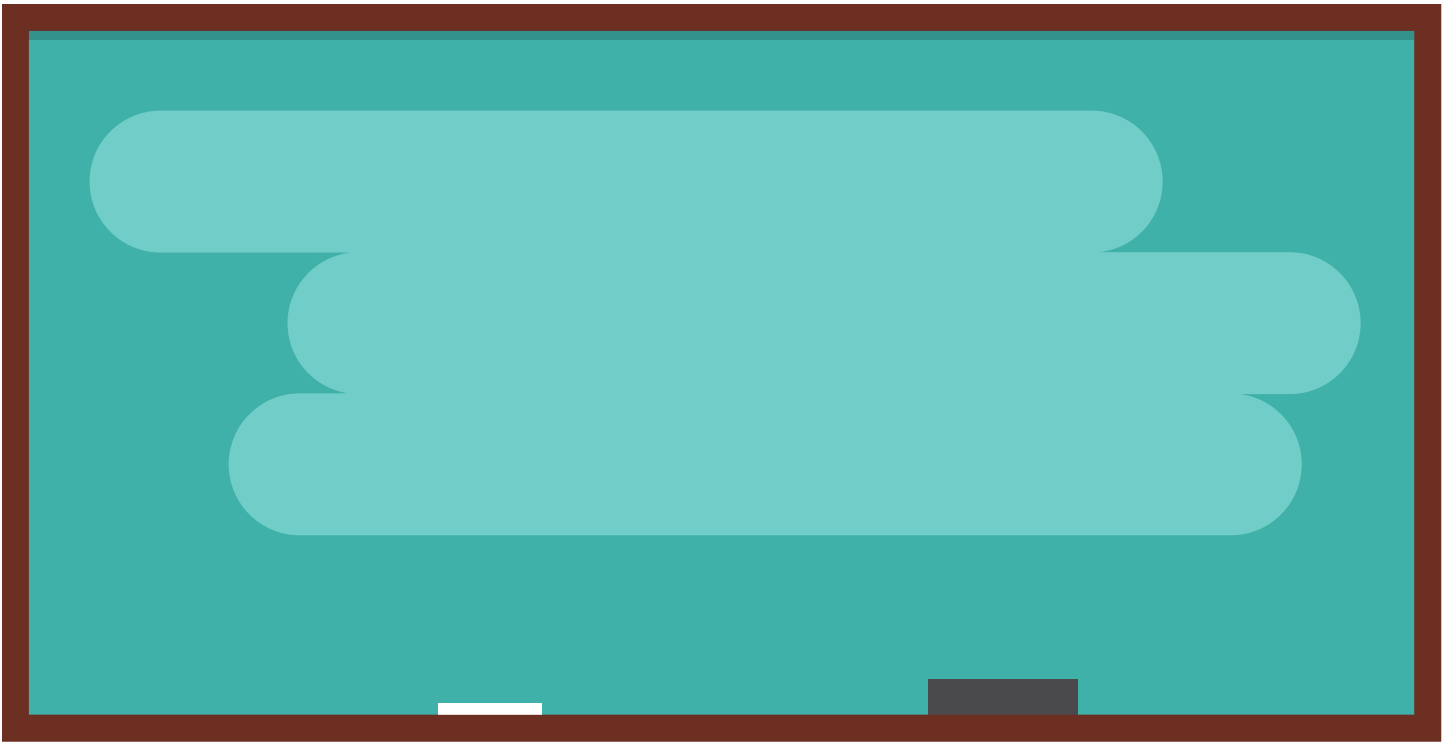
### 2. Backup Helps Administrators and Teachers

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Imagine accidentally deleting a spreadsheet that has all of your grades for the semester. Imagine a document with all of your lesson plans is suddenly empty because the file got corrupted. Imagine the syllabus you've shared with all of your classes gets deleted by a student. Imagine the class schedules, calendars and budget info for your entire school are suddenly wiped out. How would you get them back? How much time would it take? Is it even possible? How much time would it take to recreate all of those documents from scratch if you couldn't get them back?

These are scary scenarios to think about, but unfortunately, they are all possible. These are situations that have happened to real people in real life. And if one of these scenarios happens in your school, your primary mission - educating students - is going to come to a screeching halt. Schools need to make sure that this doesn't happen by implementing a robust, easy-to-use backup and recovery solution for Google Apps.





### 3. Backup is Important for Students

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Google Apps offers students a great way to collaborate with their classmates and teachers on assignments, but they're not immune from data loss. Although there is no paper to lose, it's easy to accidentally delete a virtual assignment with the click of a mouse, and it can take much more than a click to get it back. And with the collaborative classroom technologies that are still being figured out, it's easy for a shared document in a group project to get overwritten by someone else's changes with no real way to step back in time to the previous version. And between bad syncs and malware, a file might suddenly decide to change or disappear for no apparent reason. In all of these scenarios, the student has the same recourse as before: accept a bad grade or start over from scratch.

Backing up education data makes sense for students too, even though most don't think about backing up student files. Lost data for a student means lower grades. And lower grades have been connected to lower self-esteem, lower motivation, higher anxiety, and a general decrease in their ability to succeed in school and in life.

It's one thing if a student makes a poor grade because they didn't study. But it's quite another for them to suffer one because of a technical glitch that wiped out their hard work — work that may be an A+.

## 4. Schools are Responsible for Backing Up Students

If students need to have their data backed up (and I think most students who've ever lost an assignment online would welcome it), then whose responsibility is it to provide the backup?

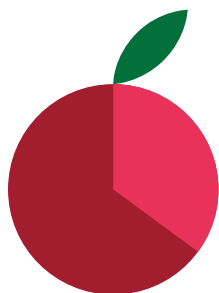
Ideally, students would take care of this themselves. Students aren't generally known for their heavy focus on preparing for future catastrophes however (kindergartners almost never purchase life insurance), and besides, searching for a proper backup solution is probably over most of their heads.

If we're talking about K-12 education, maybe parents? Increased parental involvement in their child's education is always a good thing, and parents should advocate to have their children's data backed up so that they can focus on getting good grades instead of hunting for things that they may have accidentally deleted. But not every parent is a seasoned IT professional capable of properly evaluating a backup solution.

So it falls to the schools then? Well, most schools now have technology systems in place that they require the students to work with. And since they're providing the framework for the data to

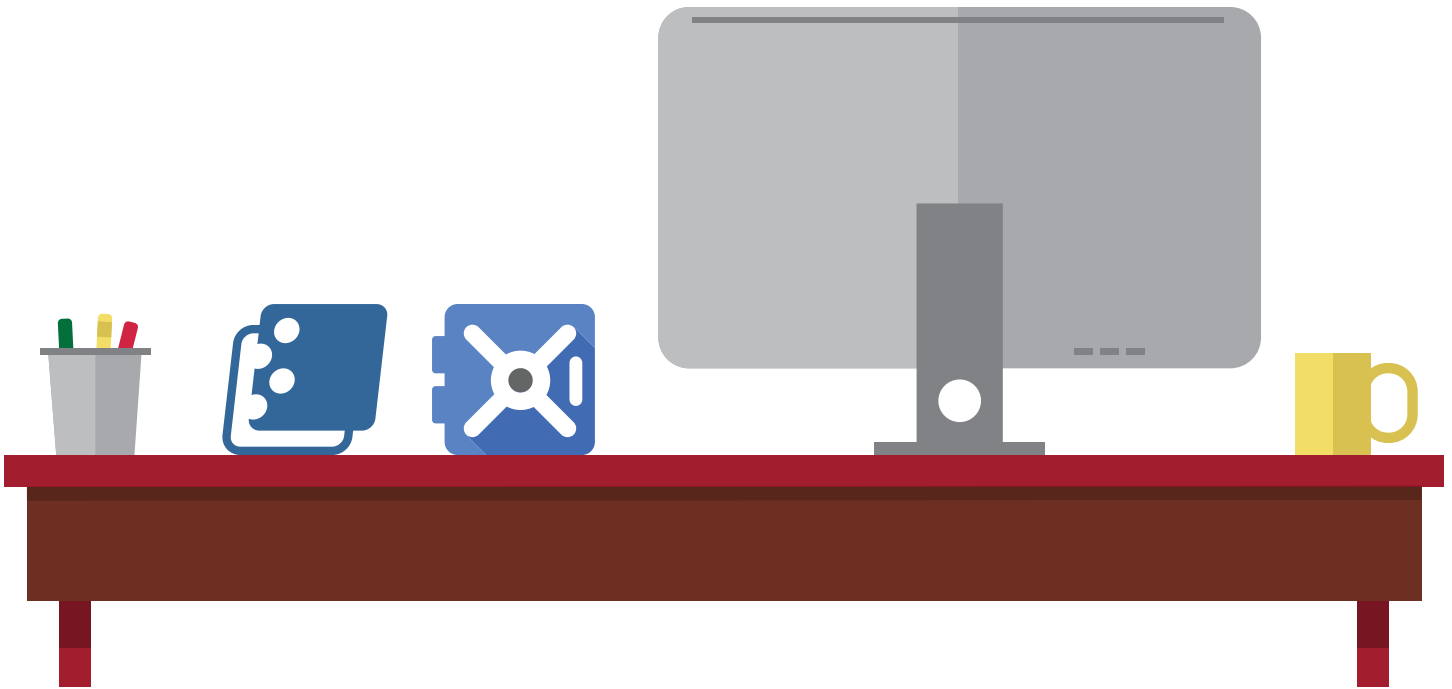
live in, it only makes sense that they make sure the data is safe. You see, data loss isn't just a problem for the students and their GPAs. It's a problem for teachers, who have to figure out what the plan is when a student comes to them upset about losing something they worked really hard on. It's a problem for the IT departments who are then going to get the requests from teachers wondering how to get a student's work back so they don't have to give a bad grade to a good kid for something that's maybe not all their fault. It's a problem for administrators who may have to step in and get involved with these cases and it's a problem for the parents who may get called in for a conference. It's a pain in the neck for everyone, and it's perfectly avoidable with a little bit of backup.

Backing up student work often isn't on the radar for most schools, and with the long and constantly growing list of needs in education, it's easy to see why. But now that education is taking place more often in the cloud, schools who are taking advantage of the cloud in the classroom need to know the risks of using it and safeguard against them, not just for their sake but for the sake of their students.



**32% of users have experienced data loss in cloud applications like Google Apps for Education**





## 5. Vault is not a Backup and Restore Tool

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Vault is a great product, and we'd recommend it to anyone. But there's a common misperception about what Vault is. Here's a list of what you can do with Vault, a product designed for organizations looking to ease the collection and review of documents in preparation for litigation:

- Search your domain's email data
- Place user email accounts (and related data) on litigation hold to preserve email data
- Manage litigation holds
- Set email retention policies for your domain

These are all great things to be able to do, necessary things, important things. And Vault is a great solution to help you do them. But if you need to backup and restore Google Apps on a daily basis, if you need to make sure that you can get your school back up and running as quickly as possible after a minor or major disaster, Vault is not the tool you need.

Google Vault is a powerful tool for lawyers. What it is not is a backup-and-restore system for users and administrators to protect against accidental or malicious data loss from Google Apps. Vault will not backup your files. It will only recover certain files if they've been deleted, and only the admin will be able to do so, not any of the users. For these things, you need Spanning Backup for Google Apps. At Spanning, we have many customers who've implemented Spanning Backup for backup-and-restore alongside an e-discovery system like Vault. They're two great products for two very different purposes.

## In conclusion

Google Apps is a natural choice for education. But just because your data lives in Google Apps doesn't mean it's bulletproof; in fact, just like all data, it needs to be protected from loss and corruption by a first-class backup and recovery solution. And it's not just teachers and administrators that have important data - students have important data too, and they also deserve to have their hard work protected. Many Google Apps users think that Vault is the solution for data protection, but Vault is not a backup solution and doesn't cover anything but email. Spanning Backup is the best choice for Google Apps backup and recovery. It's the highest-rated Google Apps backup product on the market and it's simple for anyone to use. If you don't want to lose your hard work while you're trying to educate students, try Spanning Backup free for 14 days and see if it's right for you.

## For more information

To find out more information about Spanning Backup for Google Apps, please contact us at [info@spanning.com](mailto:info@spanning.com). You can also find and follow us here:

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