First Presbyterian Day School's
1 TO 1
INITIATIVE
PARENT GUIDE

FPD Internet Filtering System

What internet access does FPD filter and how does that work?

FPD uses a content filter made by Barracuda that filters internet access of the school-owned devices wherever they connect to the internet on or off campus. Barracuda uses three methods. The first is a category-based filter that the company updates multiple times each day. For example, one category may be "pornography." Barracuda regularly adds websites as they find them and the system blocks all websites included in that category. Second, the system has a "black list" that we can add websites to for blocking. Third, we have a "white list" on which we can list websites to allow. Also, our filter forces search engines into "safe search" mode which should block inadvertent objectionable images from appearing in search results.

What happens if my student tries to access a blocked website?

The access is blocked and the attempt is logged. A notification or report is sent to the principals, Dean Rabun and the IT staff. We also have Safe Search in order to help block inappropriate content from showing up in search results.

My student accessed an objectionable site. Why was it not blocked?

New objectionable sites are constantly being created. A new site is not blocked until the filtering company finds it and adds it to the category or our staff adds it to the blacklist. Also, filtering systems cannot block images selectively in an otherwise unobjectionable webpage. For example, if a student makes an inappropriate search in Google, the student will not be able to follow the links to blocked websites, but objectionable thumbnail images could still appear in the search results. Our filter does force search engines into safe search mode which should avoid most inadvertent objectionable images.

Games & Applications

Is it ok for my child to download games onto their tablet?

That is up to the parents. Parents are welcome to prohibit students from downloading games. We leave the tablets open for downloads since different classes may use different software and there may be valuable software that individual students or student groups may want to use.

Can you block students from playing games?

Web-based games are blocked for students in grades 5-8 during school hours. The filtering system only filters internet access, so it does not control programs the student installs on their computer. Individual teachers can control the use of installed programs while the students are in their class with DyKnow. You may wish to establish your own rules for your student's game-playing activity at home.

Can parents block certain applications and programs from being downloaded to the tablet?

FPD has a filtering system that is controlled by our Technology Department staff. In consultation with our principals, the Technology Department sets up access rules that differ from grade to grade. Parents can request that certain programs be blocked by contacting their respective school principal who will then consult with the Technology Department as needed. However, parents should be aware that the more that is blocked, the better the chance the filter will inadvertently block needed programs as well. FPD's Technology Department maintains control of the filtering system in order to help prevent this and maintain a uniform application of policies on the tablets.


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Internet Monitoring at Home

Should I install a filtering system like Net Nanny on my student's computer?

You should not install a competing filter on your student's computer. Filtering systems like Net Nanny perform basically the same way as Barracuda by using categories and blacklists. Having two systems on the same computer can cause conflicts that may affect the functionality of the computer and the ability of the student to use FPD resources.

Are there other ways I can provide internet filtering at home that works along with the FPD system?

We recommend that you install a router-based system like OpenDNS that filters your home internet and any device that connects to it (e.g., iPads, laptops, desktops, Smartphones). There are free and fee-based services. Setting up this service can be somewhat complicated and you may want to use a company like ACS to help set up the system for a reasonable fee. Your internet service provider may also be able to help.
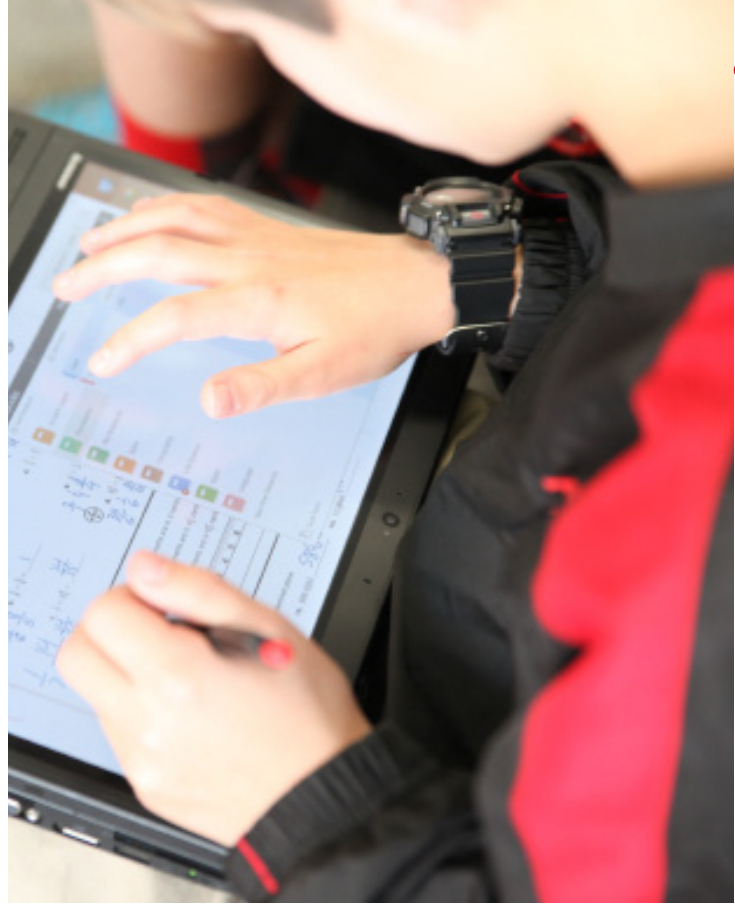
Do you have suggestions for managing my student's use of the computer at home?

The school-owned tablet is provided for your student's educational use as prescribed by our teachers for your student's classes. Use for other purposes may place the functionality of the computer at risk and cause problems with your student's ability to access and use resources needed for classes. Common recommendations for monitoring student's computer use at home should apply to the use of school tablets (as well as any other web-connected device). The following list is from Focus on the Family. When it mentions "computer" think about how these ideas apply to ALL web-connected devices –

1. Have open, honest discussions with your child about online safety and responsibility.

2. Put in place rules for being online (e.g., when, how long, where) and consider signing an Internet Safety Contract with your child.

3. Keep the computer in a centralized location so that you know when your child is online.

4. Remind your son or daughter not to give out personal information or send personal materials on the Internet. This includes address, telephone number, name or location of their school, their parents' names or photographs.

5. Help your child to choose gender-neutral online names to mask their actual name and gender.

6. Inform your child that people online may not be who they say they are. Maintain a healthy level of suspicion.

7. Tell your child to inform you when they come across anything that makes them uncomfortable. You can then contact your Internet Service Provider (ISP) to report any suspicious activity.

8. Let your child know that they should never respond to messages or posts that are sexually obscene, threatening or make them uncomfortable in any way. They should ignore the message and alert an adult to the situation.

9. Be sure that they know that they should never, under any circumstance, agree to meet face-to-face with a stranger that was met online.

10. For any home computer your student uses, invest in Internet Filtering Software, such as Net Nanny, that allows you to know where your child is going online, who they are talking to and what they are saying.

Troubleshooting

How can parents retrieve passwords?

Managing passwords is an important skill for students. Each student has been given or has created passwords that access the FPD network, their computer, the DyKnow classroom management system, and the Moodle course management system. FPD's Instructional Technology Department can reset these passwords. The student or the parent can contact the IT Department to request that the password be reset.

Students also have passwords for their e-texts. For texts published by Pearson, McGraw-Hill/Glencoe, or Houghton/Mifflin/Harcourt/Holt, teachers can recover or reset the passwords. For texts published by Cengage (college-level and AP titles), students need to be very careful in setting up their accounts. They may request their passwords be sent by e-mail, but they must have set up their account with an e-mail that can receive external messages. Students' FPD e-mails may only receive messages from other FPD e-mails at this point.

If my child tells me that he/she cannot get on the tablet programs, as a parent how can I troubleshoot?

If your child is having trouble getting on the tablet programs, the IT Helpdesk is here to help. Parents are not alone when it comes to navigating the world of the tablet technology. Students are welcome to stop by if they need help with their equipment. We also have a Direct Access and WiFi Help Sheet with some useful tips.

Note that the course management system, Moodle, and all e-texts are web-based and can be accessed from any computer. The URL for Moodle is http://moodle.fpdmacon.org. The URL for each textbook is listed in the individual course's Moodle page. So if a student's tablet is unavailable, students still have access to everything except their MS OneNote notebooks and files saved on the FPD servers.

Homework

Is homework posted on any other programs beside NetClassroom?

All assignments are posted on NetClassroom. Teachers may also post on Moodle, but will always post on NetClassroom. NetClassroom is geared toward parents. Moodle is geared toward students.

Piracy Issues

I have heard about issues with illegally downloading music and streaming TV shows and movies. What is going on here and what can I or FPD do about this practice?

Illegally accessing digital media is a major problem today and one that many of our students are involved in. Around the country, families and internet service providers have been successfully sued by owners of the content for this type of activity. Unfortunately, the content is readily accessible. The sites that provide the illegal content regularly change URLs so it is impossible for any filter to completely block the content. At FPD, we block these websites as they are discovered. It is important for parents to have discussions with kids about theft of digital property and related illegal activity and to monitor students' use of computers for these purposes while at home. It is also important for students to realize that these illegal sites are a MAJOR source of "malware" – harmful software – that can cause problems with their computers and impact their ability to use the computers for educational purposes.

Glossary

Connectivity – This is a general term describing the connection your computer has to a home, work or public network and can included the Direct Access connection to the campus.

Direct Access – A Microsoft network technology that creates a private secure connection to the FPD campus whenever you are connected to WiFi. It allows you to connect to your Outlook and FPD network shared resources wherever you go.

Dropbox – A system to share files digitally over the Internet. It is an electronic folder that can be accessed by an authorized user.

DyKnow – An application that allows teachers to manage their classrooms. Using DyKnow, teachers can broadcast and gather information wirelessly in the classroom. They can transmit information from their tablet to all of the students' tablets and to the classroom wireless projector. Furthermore, using Dyknow, teachers can monitor and control the tablets in their classroom and control the applications and websites the students can access.

eTexts – A digital version of a textbook.

Hotspot – A Hotspot or Access Point (AP) is a device that broadcasts WiFi so that people nearby can connect to the internet.

Moodle – A web based application teachers use to manage their courses. This entails issuing assignments, reviewing submitted assignments, and answering questions submitted electronically. It is also has a variety of useful links and documents that help teachers and other students collaborate online.

OneNote – An Microsoft Office electronic notebook organization application. Students take notes using a stylus, voice recognition software, or their keyboard. All notes are stored electronically in the OneNote system. OneNote is a modern, electronic version of a spiral-bound notebook that is infinitely expandable.

Stylus – A high precision, active digital writing instrument for the computer. A stylus replaces a pen, highlighter or pencil when taking notes or performing operations on a tablet.

Web Filtering – A process of blocking access to websites that are deemed inappropriate using criteria the organization sets up in advance.

For any other questions, please contact FPD's IT Department at 478.477.6505 ext. 106 or submit your question online at www.fpdmacon. org/1-to-1-faqs/