

IT Policy & Audit 601
Master's Proposal to the Ne Metro 916 Career & Technical Center
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An issue that has been encompassing teachers at the Ne Metro Career and Technical Center (CTC) is the ability to have access to Internet sites to gain up-to-date teaching tools. As of now the way our network is set up is that teachers are prohibited from accessing websites on the Internet that may seem detrimental to the school's network and data. Teachers have the same access rights as students.

I understand the importance of keeping people off of websites that may have a negative affect on the infrastructure of the network, our data, bandwidth, and a distraction to having the ability to access information that should not be accessed while in school or at work. But the knowledge and insight to information that is out there on the web is an absolute must for our students to see and obtain through a guided learning environment.

I know there can be a problem where you will have a handful of people that will try and use the Internet for personal use while they should be working. Because of network monitoring software and awareness through communication and training, these numbers should have decreased.

Why can't instructors/staff be set up with different privileges and access rights compared to students?

Identified Problem:

Teachers/Instructors would like to have access to Internet sites, examples like YouTube and Google images, that our blocked to be able to utilize them for instructional purposes and learning experiences for the students.

Proposed Solution:

Establish different access rights to the Internet by identifying teachers/staff as different users, giving them access to the blocked sites, separating them from the students' Internet rights and user accounts.

Current Solution:

If an instructor/staff person wants to have access to specific site or webcast a form needs to be filled out ahead of time and sent to an upper-management person to be signed off for approval. The problem with this is it takes time to get the access.

What happens if we get an invitation to a webcast that is happening today or tomorrow, the chance of getting that access approved is probably zero. Teachers and staff could prepare ahead of time for obtaining access to specific websites, but then again, this brings more paperwork and time to prepare for your class. Also, students may bring ideas to class, pertaining to the curriculum, which they found through the Internet, but if we don't

have access to those sites the student is not going to be able to receive the benefit of having the class see that information. More than likely with the type of sites they have access to we would probably not be able to use it in class. Again, the waiting process comes into play which is a downfall to the student.

School District's (K-12) Responsibilities (Yvonne Anderson-Ne Metro 916 Intermediate School District MIS Manager):

School districts need to follow strict guidelines when it comes to the use of the Internet and keeping students safe. Procedures are created and outlined by CIPA (Child Internet Protection Act). In order for the district to get funding for telecommunications, Internet, and fiber services, the district needs to follow these guidelines.

The age of our students is the determining factor in how the Internet needs to be enforced. This is why there is so much more freedom on the Internet found within a college setting.

According to Yvonne, the district is currently working on a process that would allow staff to have access to websites by using a bypass account.

Internet User Agreement:

<http://www.nemetro.k12.mn.us/20221061793025453/lib/20221061793025453/Files/524-InternetAcceptableUse&SafetyPolicy.pdf>

The Internet User Agreement is a form that staff and students sign off on saying they understand how to use and what the Internet can be used for in school. Students also need to have their parents or guardians sign also.

Ne Metro 916 Intermediate School District Technology Plan:

http://www.nemetro.k12.mn.us/202210112410473853/lib/202210112410473853/2008-2011_Technology_Plan_submission_for_Dept_of_Ed.pdf

The plan outlines the goals and expectations of the school district. In fact, the plan touches on information that we have been discussing in IT Policy and Audit. Internet safety and CIPA are discussed and are enforced by the district within the plan. There is no information for making changes at this point to separating access rights between staff and students.

CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act):

A federal law established by Congress to act on offensive material that is found on the Internet on computers used in schools and libraries.

<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/cipa.html>

iPrism:

I found this product online that is made specifically for schools for the conflict I am trying to resolve. It is a filtering appliance that allows IT management to separate users into groups and then grant each group its own level of access. The benefit is to give staff the access they need to utilize the Internet to gather information, without a waiting period, to provide online learning experiences to the students.

http://www.stbernard.com/docs/datasheet/iPrism_Edu.pdf