Galesburg CUSD #205 Technology & Learning

Technology & Professional Development Update

December 11, 2014

"After School" Social Media App can be used for cyber-bullying

Superintendent Arthur issued **this statement** to parents/guardians on Friday, December 5, 2014, regarding an app called "After School." The app allows users to post messages to local groups anonymously. The app was taken down briefly Thursday (12/04) but reappeared by the end of the business day.

Unfortunately, After School is only the latest addition to a number of apps allowing similar interactions. Others, like YikYak, Whisper, Ask.fm, etc., have age restrictions and reporting features to help curb inappropriate use, which the re-spawned version of After School now has, too. However, students can be very skilled at circumventing these safeguards.

After School is currently only available for Apple devices. However, some of the others mentioned above are also available for Android devices, too. None of these should be able to operate on a school-owned Chromebook, at least not to our knowledge at this time. If you have information to the contrary, please let us know. If you find that students in your classroom are using personal devices, including smartphones, tablets, or even some iPods & MP3 players, to access apps like this during class, follow school and/or classroom disciplinary procedures first, or contact your building administrator.

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Teaching Appropriate Use of Internet Resources - It's The Law

- Since the 2009-2010 school year, the State of Illinois has mandated that every student in grades 3-12 receive instruction in Internet Safety Topics every school year.
  - Read the law, here
- With the growing availability of internet accessible devices, including Chromebooks, everyone can help students to learn how to learn with Internet resources safely and responsibly.
  - Resources to help teach Internet Safety Topics
    - K-5
    - 6-8
    - 9-12
  - Internet Safety Resources for Parents
  - Share your ideas, here!

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Reporting Cyberbullying

If you are aware of a student who is being bullied using electronic resources ("cyber bullying"), report it to your building administrator immediately! Cyber bullying can take place over email, text messages, social media posts, electronic bulletin boards, chat rooms, etc. School leaders approach cyber bullying just like any other form of bullying, but they may need your assistance in collecting evidence, helping the student save or archive the offending email or text messages, etc.

If the bullying behavior occurs using personal resources, private email accounts, etc., the school may have only limited abilities to pursue the bully if it is clear that the behavior is affecting the student at school, etc. Be patient, though, because this can be a very time-consuming process.

Repeated, severe, and/or relentless instances of bullying using electronic resources can be considered cyber harassment or cyber stalking. Cyber stalking can be considered a felony punishable by several years in prison and/or fines of several thousand dollars.

The Illinois Attorney General's office can assist in helping students and their parents during and after the cyber bully situation. Teach kids when to call the Illinois eInfo Hotline to report cases of cyber bullying with resources from the **Illinois Attorney General's Stop Cyber Bullying Website**. The Illinois eInfo Hotline is 1-888-414-7678

The most effective way to deal with cyber bullies or any bullying behavior is through education. Teaching awareness of how to recognize and report a cyber bully is a great first step in fighting against this behavior. Teach page of our Internet Safety Web Site has ready-to-teach lessons on recognizing & reporting cyber bullies and identifying & reporting illegal online activities or communication. Activities include both paper/pencil and tech-enabled lessons.

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Creating a STRONG Password

Creating passwords and keeping them secret are not behaviors that many students develop on their own. For some reason, students often think it is okay to share passwords with their friends. It is important to advise students at every grade level that student that passwords should never be shared with anyone besides a parent or school personnel.

School passwords can be changed as often as desired. Please teach students how to create complex passwords, and provide time on a regular basis (once a quarter, once a semester, etc.) to change these passwords to something unique each time. It is important to instruct students to make sure their school password is nothing like passwords for other services, like gaming, music services, etc.

Please work with students to develop a unique & strong password that will be very hard for others to guess. Here's an example, but don't use this exact password:
- Complex passwords are not found in the dictionary, are 8 characters or more, and use a combination of caps, lowercase, numbers & special characters
  - Start with a phrase, perhaps from a song or poem, like **"O say can you see by the dawn's early light"**
  - Just use the first letters of each word: **oscysbtdel**
  - Capitalize some of the letters: **OscYsbtDel**
  - Change other letters to numbers or special characters that look similar: **O$cY5btD3!**

Passwords Are Like Underwear: Best When Changed Often

Once a strong new password has been developed, here's how to use it with school resources:

When the student knows the old password
- District Web Page
- Point to **Internal Links**
- Click **Password Change Tool**
- In the first field, type the letters **ghs** then use the forward slash it looks like this \ and it lives **on the key between Backspace & Enter**, NOT with the question mark.
- Type the old password
- Type the new password
- Type it again, exactly
- Click **Submit**

When the student has forgotten the old password, or it just isn't working
- [District Web Page](#)
- Point to **Internal Links**
- Select **Intranet Web Page**
- Select **Student Password Reset Tool**
- Enter your network credentials (login & password)
- Enter them again
- Enter the student's ID number (from their ID card, etc.)
  - **BE CAREFUL!** If you mistype a number you could unknowingly reset some random student's password!
  - DO NOT allow students to do this!
- Click the **Reset Student Password and Log This Activity** button
- A random password will be generated write it down and give it to the student.
- The student can then change the password to something meaningful to them using the instructions above.

Updating a Chromebook

When you see a small upward-pointing arrow like this [icon] in the lower-right corner of your Chromebook screen - near the clock - it's time to install an update. Here's how it works:

1. When you see the arrow, click on it.
2. Click the words **Restart to Update**
3. Let the machine restart, then log in again.
    ○ [Watch a video about this simple process on YouTube](#)
    ○ Read a Google Support article about this process

And that's it! This process is simple, safe, and takes about 30 seconds or less. It's a good thing to teach students to do as well. In fact, you are encouraged to include this periodically as part of your regular classroom activities.

Updates are scheduled by Google about every 6 weeks - we don't control this locally. Users are notified automatically, but it requires a very brief manual restart to apply the changes.

As a building, please have a conversation about how to ensure that students' Chromebooks remain up-to-date. This might be a good activity to schedule into Advisory, Homeroom, Morning Meetings, or at the beginning of a certain class or period. Installing updates is an essential part of using our Chromebooks, as it helps us keep up with changes, prevent or deal with hacks, etc.

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Google Classroom Tips

If you haven't tried Google Classroom yet, you might give it a try after the upcoming holiday! (Visit [classroom.google.com](#) to learn more, or [download the app from the Chrome Store](#).) It is extremely easy to get you and your students started - all you have to do is give kids a simple code to "enroll" them!

Here are few simple tips to consider that might help streamline your workflow in Google Classroom.

● **Add a 3-digit number** to the front of each document name as you distribute them to students. This will help organize your folders chronologically within the class folder in Google Drive.

- **Click the NOT DONE number.** This will display a list of students who have not completed the assignment. Then click the checkboxes to send them a reminder through GMail!
- **Try Google Slides.** Share a Slides Presentation, allowing all students to edit (instead of giving individual copies). Have kids add a single slide to your presentation. Each student has their own "blank slate" to work on, and you only have 1 file to keep track of!
- **Use the Send Feedback button.** Google staffers really do read these! Users are encouraged to offer feedback to help Google improve the product & meet teachers' needs. (It's the question mark in the lower right corner of the screen inside Classroom.)
- **Revision History is always available.** A new update was released today - If you have created the document and pushed it out to kids using Classroom, you can access the document's Revision History (File menu -> See Revision History) at any time, even before a student uses the Turn In button to hand it back to you! You can then see who has changed or added what elements, shown in different colors. Click Restore This Version to remove those changes if needed.

Professional Development Opportunities

Dec 11:   8am - 3pm Vertical Math Curriculum Meeting, Board Room

Dec 12:   10am - 1230pm Reading Recovery, Lit Lessons, Comprehensive Intervention Administrators' Meeting; Preschool Family Education Center, Pekin, IL

Dec 16-19:   PARCC Testing at GHS (Selected Alg II/Eng III courses only)

Dec 17:   4pm-5pm NTLT end-of-semester meeting; McGillicuddys

Dec 19:   55-minute early dismissal

Jan 5, 2015:   School Resumes