

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is Lightspeed Classroom Management™?**

A web-based service, Lightspeed Classroom Management™ is just one of the solutions offered by Lightspeed and the only solution currently being evaluated by the TPS district. Helping teachers to keep students safe and on track, Lightspeed Classroom Management allows teachers to minimize distractions, increase overall instruction time, and most importantly, keep students focused during tests and quizzes.

### **What is the purpose of the program?**

Operating on our school's Google Workspace for Education Suite (i.e., when a student is logged onto a school district Chromebook or using the school email address to log into Chrome from any laptop or computer), Lightspeed Classroom Management helps teachers to keep their students logged in, participating, and focused. Lightspeed is like having the teacher right next to a student in the classroom. It enables educators to safely message a distracted student, redirect their browser, close windows and tabs, and share screens for collaboration between students.

### **Why are we pursuing Lightspeed Classroom Management now?**

We are committed to ensuring that our students have a safe online learning environment, and Lightspeed Classroom Management helps us do just this. Lightspeed Classroom Management and similar tools are employed by districts nationwide to keep students focused and engaged in the classroom, especially during test time. As the use of devices continues to increase, tools like Lightspeed Classroom Management give teachers the tools they need to send information to students in real time and on screen, get students' attention, and control internet access.

### **What about the other options offered by Lightspeed?**

Although Lightspeed offers other products, we are interested only in the Lightspeed Classroom Management solution, which focuses on maintaining student engagement during lessons and tests and individualizing the educational experience for all students. Our goals in employing Lightspeed Classroom Management were to improve virtual teaching capabilities, keep students focused during tests and quizzes, help teachers and students identify areas of struggle or excellence, and bring the focus to the subject, lesson, or even specific problem being discussed.

## **How will teachers be involved in the process?**

The introduction and exploration of the Lightspeed Classroom Management software was requested and driven by teacher request. Pilot teachers have been involved in the discussions and process. The purpose of the pilot is to ensure that teachers find value in the program, it works as expected, and helps - not hinders - learning in the classroom, student progress, and student comfort with content and activities.

## **What are the benefits of Lightspeed Classroom Management?**

Lightspeed Classroom Management provides students and teachers with several advantages that enable better student-teacher interactions in the classroom:

- URL Selection (optional): Done at a class level, teachers can specify one or more specific internet sites that students are permitted to access during class time. If a student attempts to access a non-approved site, it is blocked. Only teacher-specified sites are allowed during class time.
- Screen Lock: When a teacher needs the entire class's focused attention, i.e., during test time, the Classroom's Screen Lock option locks the students' browser and prevents the use of the internet, keeping students' attention on the current task.
- Targeted Resource Sharing: Teachers can provide easy, secure access to the sites and pages directly related to the subject being taught. This prevents unnecessary internet searches and ensures that students only access trusted, reliable resources during class.
- Auto-generated real-time Zoom link: Teachers can work with small groups of students while also being able to see how other students in the class are progressing through an assignment. The on-demand Zoom feature enables teachers to virtually meet with one or several students on a video conference in real time.
- Shared Screen: Viewing a student's screen enables teachers to assist students online in real time, even if the student is virtual. The teacher can see where the student is struggling, taking a long time to solve or answer a problem, or the reverse, identifying when a student is quickly navigating through the material. In addition, if a student loses their place, the teacher can quickly guide them to where they need to be on screen. The shared screen also minimizes or even eliminates the need for a student to use voice/text to explain their needs or questions to a teacher.
- Security: Teachers have the ability to select Lightspeed Classroom Management's lockdown browser option, similar to the process used by the district to lock browsers during Naglieri (Gifted/Talented) Testing, NJSLA testing, or any state-mandated testing.

## What are the disadvantages to Lightspeed Classroom Management?

There are very few disadvantages to using Lightspeed Classroom Management, however, this is the actual purpose of a pilot, to identify the advantages, disadvantages, pros, and cons.

- Potentially, when a teacher employs the on-demand Zoom option, it might result in a slower response time during the call. This will be tested during the pilot.
- From a student perspective, they are being more closely monitored. If a teacher can see when a student goes off topic by visiting unrelated web pages, seems to linger on question 2 when the class is on question 7, or has prematurely moved on to the next section, the teacher can reach out to that student, pulling them back or up to the current topic, initiate an on-demand Zoom call, or simply know to follow up with that student at a later time.
- Also, Lightspeed Classroom Management will not work on non-district owned devices unless the student signs into Chrome using a Tenaflly email id. Students can go directly to Google Classroom, bypassing the management software.\*

*\*If a student uses a personal device on which no one is signed into Chrome, then a sign in to any Google service automatically initiates a sign-in to Chrome using that same sign-in id. To avoid this scenario, a non-district id sign in to Chrome should be done prior to a student's Google access.*

## What steps has the district taken to create a safe online learning environment for my child?

The district has taken the following steps to create a safe online learning environment for our students.

- Allowed search engines are forced into "Safe Search Mode" and searches or url entries that contain inappropriate words or phrases are blocked using the iBoss software.\*
- Lightspeed Classroom Management provides a real-time log of all internet activity currently occurring. This is a live log, viewable as it happens, and is **not** accessible post-class.

*\*As long as TPS receives funding from the state, we are required by law to have a filtering software such as iBoss.*

## Can teachers see what students are doing all the time?

Teachers can only see what students are doing during school hours. During the pilot, teachers can use the program in their classes only during school hours from 8:00am -1:30pm, Monday through Friday. Post pilot, teachers can use the program for each class during that class's specific time slot.

### **Do teachers have control of when and how they monitor students?**

To some degree, yes, teachers can control when and how they monitor students, but only during the school day. Teachers can select the days of the week and enter a Start and End time that corresponds to their teaching time. However, teachers **cannot** see a student's screen or activity outside of the school day hours.

If teachers need students' attention, they can use Classroom's **Screen Lock** option. When your students' screens are locked, their browsers will show a lock screen that prevents them from using the internet and takes their attention off of their computers and on to the teachers.

### **Who has access to view student screens?**

During the pilot, only in-class teachers can view the screens and only during the school day. Post pilot, the screen viewing capability may be limited to a class-by-class timeframe. The pilot will identify if other staff such as paraprofessionals or in-class support staff will need access, but they will not have access during the pilot.

### **Does Lightspeed Classroom Management block WiFi?**

No, Lightspeed Classroom Management does not have access to nor does it interfere with your personal WiFi or the district WiFi.

### **Does Lightspeed track my phone and other personal device activity?**

No, Lightspeed only works on computer laptops and desktops when the student is signed into a school-supplied Chromebook or signed into Chrome using a school-provided id (i.e., an @tenafly.k12.nj.us id).

### **What if I really don't want to participate in the pilot?**

Parents do have the option of opting out their child(ren). However, we encourage all parents to realize the benefits of the program, including student focus and participation, personalized help, and break-out sessions. If you are uncomfortable with the program, we strongly encourage you to use school-provided devices for school-related activities and access to alleviate these concerns and help to ensure that our students stay focused on the lessons and work at hand.

### **When will the Lightspeed Classroom Management pilot end and the program be live for all students and teachers?**

We do not have a rollout date at this time. We want to see the pros and cons that come out of the pilot and ensure that we are experiencing the expected benefits before committing to a live implementation date.

### **What about the concern and discontent related to data privacy on the computer?**

Although the district has no intention and honestly no capability to look at anything on the computers outside of what is accessed when the student is signed into our network during school hours, we strongly suggest that families take advantage of the district-provided devices. It remains the recommendation of the district that all students use district-issued devices when completing school work/activities. Use of a district device also serves as a physical reminder that the student is doing school work, during school hours, and confidentiality is waived when the student or staff member is on the district's network. This is honestly no different from any corporation's or company's usage agreement and will help prepare our students for when they move on to college and eventually the workforce. All companies have their employees sign Internet Usage Agreements that are similar if not the same as what we are doing here.

### **What about when we use a personal device?**

If a student continues to use a personal/family device for schoolwork, Lightspeed Classroom Management will not work on their device UNLESS they are signed into Chrome with a district-provided id. The exception to this is when the personal device is a Chromebook **and** the student signs into the Chromebook using the TPS network at login. However, even with school-provided devices, we would remind students that as long as only schoolwork is done during school hours, and only class-designated sites and information are accessed when signed into the district's network, then there should be no concerns about privacy or access to non-school material. Adhering to these simple rules should eliminate any fear of privacy loss. This is consistent with Policy 2361 - Acceptable Use of Computer Networks/Computers and Resources. All non-school related activities should be done on their home network.

### **How do we know that the vendor is not capturing and sharing data?**

Privacy is always a top priority when considering software that will be used for and by our students, staff, and administrators. Tenaflly Public Schools researched the vendor thoroughly and spoke to other districts using this or similar solutions. All Lightspeed solutions are backed by a stringent company privacy policy. For complete details, visit their site to review the entire policy: <https://www.lightspeedsystems.com/privacy-policy/>.

### **Are other alternatives being discussed?**

The administrators, teachers, and Tenaflly Education Association have discussed the various software options available, speaking with other school districts, and reviewing the features and benefits of each. We believe that Lightspeed is the best match for our needs, but in light of the concerns raised, we will continue to evaluate the program, the best way to implement the program, and provide detailed information to everyone who may be involved once the software is rolled out.

## **Conclusion**

To support Tenafly's outstanding reputation of instruction, we must advance our tools to match the advances in technology, to ensure that each student is getting what they need regardless of physical or virtual participation, and to gain as much data as possible so that we might assess the areas specific to each student.

It is so easy for a student to be distracted, whether on-site or virtual. It is human nature to become distracted, shy away from the unknown or what may not seem interesting to us, and gravitate towards those activities that are more in tune with our interests. By providing a tool that assists students and teachers with staying on track and connected, we are helping to ensure the success of our students.

In addition, by granting teachers tools that provide analytics, which can further assist them in fostering each student's development, is imperative to the growth process, and giving teachers tools to send information, get students' attention, and control internet access is imperative to successful classroom management.

It is important to note again that Lightspeed Classroom Management will not work on non-district owned devices unless the student signs into Chrome using a district id. The one exception to this is if the personal device is a Chromebook **and** the student has logged into the device using their TPS-provided id and password.

In closing, we are committed to ensuring that our students have a safe online learning environment. It is part of our job. And we need to be mindful of the technology guidelines and rules that, even in the absence of Lightspeed, enables oversight of the school-operated systems and devices.

## **Lightspeed Classroom Management Extensions**

There are certain extensions that reside on the district domain, not the actual device, and these extensions will be visible whenever a student is logged into Chrome on our domain (i.e., the student has logged into Chrome using the @tenafly.k12.nj user id). These extensions are required and necessary to ensure that our students do not access inappropriate content on our network and are not exposed to content deemed inappropriate for in-school access. As long as we receive state funding, we are required by law to have this software. To understand when these extensions are in use and when they are not, please refer to the following table.