

LET'S TALK ABOUT:

# MCSD CONTENT FILTERING

## WHAT IS CONTENT FILTERING?

The process of blocking sites that have been deemed inappropriate. Sites are either on an allowed list or on a blocked list according to the categories they fall into.

## FILTERING AT HOME? WHY YES!

- Students' Chromebooks are even receiving filtering when they are at home and on other non-district Wi-Fi networks.
- Two layers of filtering are occurring off-network.

## HOW DOES FILTERING WORK?

The filters are set up on our network with pre-determined categories already blocked. From here, the Division of Information Services leadership determines what other categories need to be blocked.

## GOOGLE SAFE SEARCH AND YOUTUBE

- Additionally, we rely on filtering from Google Safe Search. Google Safe Search is used to filter Youtube videos and search results in Google searches.
- This filtering level is set at an appropriate level to ensure educational content is accessible.
- This level is identified by the Division of Information Services leadership.

## FOUR LAYERS!

*Did you know?*

- When on the MCSD network, student Chromebooks are going through **FOUR layers** of content filtering.
- Let's repeat that: **FOUR layers** of content filtering

## ONLY THE BEST! AWARD-WINNING FILTERING

In fact, the first layer of filtering is an award-winning filter. It is also the most restrictive filtering of all the four layers of filters.

## HOW FILTERING WORKS

- If a site is categorized in one of the inappropriate categories, then the site will be blocked.
- The filtering companies are constantly reviewing categories, and the filter parameters are constantly updated as new sites are created and categorized.

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## DID YOU KNOW?

- You can improve the quality of the Google Safe Search.
- Improve the quality by reporting results that are questionable or inappropriate.

## WHAT ABOUT THOSE QUESTIONABLE YOUTUBE VIDEOS?

YouTube videos can be reported.

- Google Safe Search filters YouTube results.
- Some videos have poor titles, but the content is not inappropriate.
- When something inappropriate does show, report it by clicking on the report flag on the video.
- This will also help improve how Google Safe Search filtering works in YouTube.

## CAN I IDENTIFY A RESTRICTED SITE BEFORE USING IT WITH STUDENTS?

There are two ways to attempt this.

- You can check the sites with one of the filter checkers.
- This will allow you to see the site's category assignment, which potentially may be blocked.

## WHAT IF I NEED A SITE OR ELEMENT UNBLOCKED?

- Submit a work order with the site link.
- The request will be reviewed by two teams for both safety (is it malware/spyware) and instructional (is it appropriate for all educational settings) value.
- Consideration is given to what is best for the district as a whole prior to unblocking a site.

## HOW DO I DO IT?

Just use this link:

<https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/safesearch>

## A NOTE ABOUT BLOCKED ITEMS

- Sometimes sites are not blocked.
- However, there may be an element on the site that originates at a blocked source.
- For example:  
The Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) website is not blocked, but a video embedded on their site may not play because it originated from a site that is in a blocked category.

## FILTER CHECKERS

- <https://urlfiltering.paloaltonetworks.com/>
- <https://archive.lightspeedsystems.com/>

## WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

- Use proximity and classroom design to view screens
- Lanschol - use the "Allow List" and Blank screen feature
- Plan with your schools' Learning Innovation Specialist (LIS)