Lightspeed Systems®

CASE STUDY

Three Simple Ways One District is Protecting Students and Their Data with Lightspeed Analytics™

Safeguarding student data is a primary responsibility for today's school districts. Just one moment's lapse in data security can result in a host of serious consequences for students: **compromised safety, stolen identity, a ruined credit score, and more.**

Because data breaches can have costly impacts for students well into adulthood, many states are supplementing the national Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) with robust local privacy laws. Bloomington Public Schools (BPS), a district serving approximately 6,000 students in rural Illinois, is integrating data analytics tools to help meet the standards of Illinois's new Student Online Personal Protection Act (SOPPA).

ACHIEVING SOPPA COMPLIANCE

As Jim Peterson, Technology Director for BPS, explains below, the district uses CatchOn® [Lightspeed Analytics], an expansive data analytics tool, to ensure his students' safety and to promote effective instruction. He is now leveraging the system to prepare his district for full SOPPA-compliance in these three ways.

Data Security Tip 1:
Find out what apps your school district is actually using

When districts deploy Lightspeed Analytics, administrators are immediately surprised to see the vast amount and types of apps being used: unapproved or unknown apps used widely, expensive apps going neglected, and effective apps used sparingly.

> *We had six or seven quiz applications in use, that's highly inefficient. Educators might be logging in, downloading their class lists, and uploading in many systems without anybody's knowledge. It's scary stuff.*
>
> **– Jim Peterson,** Technology Director, Bloomington Public Schools

Data Security Tip 2:
Use Lightspeed Analytics to foster a security dialogue with teachers

Mr. Peterson has found that much of Bloomington's app sprawl has resulted from his teachers' eagerness to get new, effective apps to students. In order to foster this practice without jeopardizing student data security, Mr. Peterson created a forum where teachers could submit apps they would like to use. **"We have to get teachers what they want when they want it, but we also have to protect our kids,"** he said. Thanks to this process, BPS has not only been able to protect its students, but also to disseminate the most effective apps district-wide.

> *We now have a committee that meets every month to evaluate apps from curriculum, privacy, and technology perspectives.*
>
> **– Jim Peterson,** Technology Director, Bloomington Public Schools

Recently, Mr. Peterson has improved this dialogue with teachers by using Lightspeed Analytics. Because the forum is now linked to the analytics tool, teachers can see what apps the district has already approved for use when they nominate a new one for approval. **"CatchOn [Lightspeed Analytics] doesn't just share all the apps approved in our district,"** explained Mr. Peterson.

Data Security Tip 3:
Include other stakeholders in your security dialogue

As districts nationwide are navigating security challenges, they're finding ways of helping each other do so successfully. Mr. Peterson has been using Lightspeed Analytics to expedite BPS's process of evaluating new apps. **"CatchOn [Lightspeed Analytics] lets us see what other apps districts are tracking and which ones they have approved,"** he said. **"Plus, the system includes each app's licensing agreement, which makes it easier to monitor those kinds of things."**

Mr. Peterson and his team also use Lightspeed Analytics to communicate critical data privacy information to parents. The tool simplifies compliance with new legislation requiring disclosure of all data policies and breaches: districts simply need to upload to Lightspeed's platform a document detailing the breach and send out a notification to parents. In this way, Lightspeed empowers Bloomington to promote student success without putting critical data at risk.

Whatever your district's current regulatory landscape, following these three simple steps can help you protect students while boosting education results.

> *The tool also shows how teachers can best roll out and begin using each app, while showing parents what apps we're actually using. CatchOn [Lightspeed Analytics] has really helped us.*
>
> **– Jim Peterson,** Technology Director, Bloomington Public Schools

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