Lightspeed Systems®

CASE STUDY

DeKalb County School District Trusts Lightspeed Systems® Solutions for Effective Online Learning and Safety

CHALLENGE

With a vision to inspire learners to achieve educational excellence, DeKalb County School District (DCSD) set a mission to ensure student success within every classroom throughout the district. To accomplish this mission DCSD implemented a district-wide 1:1 student device program. As DCSD's edtech program grew, and online instruction became necessary, new challenges were brought to light:

1. Operating on a hardware-based web filter meant their students were only protected while on school grounds. DeKalb needed to ensure students were safe when they took devices off-campus.

2. Teachers lacked visibility of student online activity during classroom instruction especially in virtual and hybrid settings.

3. District technology leaders needed data on investments and app usage for more effective edtech decision-making.

4. More time was being invested into student mental health, and the Division of Equity and Student Empowerment and Public Safety Department needed more support for investigating safety incidents.

SOLUTION

Together, Chief Information Officer Monika Davis and her team compared vendors and ultimately chose Lightspeed Systems as their trusted partner because of the ecosystem of solutions offered. DCSD utilized ESSER funds to build out their full digital learning environment to keep their learning safe and effective.

To remain CIPA compliant and provide 24/7/365 online protection DeKalb made the switch from the Lightspeed Systems hardware web filter to their cloud-based solution, Lightspeed Filter—putting the power of the filter inside each device. Davis credits this as being the deciding factor, "it's one thing to filter at the network level, but it's a next level win to filter at the device level."

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>
> — Monika Davis, Chief Information Officer, DeKalb County School District

DeKalb County School District implemented Lightspeed Alert to support their Student Empowerment Team, giving them historical timelines of student incidents needed to conduct more thorough student safety and mental health investigations. With real-time, early-warning threat detection, Lightspeed Alert prevents self-harm, cyberbullying, suicide, and school violence. AI technology flags concerning indicators within educational apps, browsers, documents, and more, and sends alerts to DCSD safety personnel and Lightspeed Safety Specialists, who conduct a threat assessment to determine sentiment and intent of violence, self-harm, and suicide. Lightspeed Safety Specialists escalate the alert to DCSD safety personnel allowing for quick intervention.

With Lightspeed Classroom Management DCSD teachers can keep their students logged in, participating, and focused—no matter the environment they're in. DeKalb County School District teachers now have full visibility of students' screens and can identify those who are distracted during class. System dashboards allow DCSD teachers to record live browsing behaviors for more productive interventions.

Lightspeed Analytics provides granular reporting and data allowing for informed long-term decision making. For administrative data requests, Davis can leverage charts and reports to track ROI, educational technology adoption, usage trends, and student engagement.

DCSD now has the peace of mind of one vendor, budget, contract, invoice, account manager, all with one implementation. Data and records flow between the solutions, enabling efficient and effortless management of online learning and safety.

RESULTS

"We've been able to keep students safe online and CIPA compliant for years with Lightspeed Filter. With these new products, we can pull data to see what apps students are using, identify where our investments are going, and support teachers with their classroom management and instruction. We like being able to partner with one vendor for multiple solutions for efficiency and data sharing. The data and functions are integrated for ease of use, and we love the concept of being able to access and integrate everything from one dashboard. Our intervention team now have a powerful solution to aid in conducting mental health checks with students in need," Davis explains.

Lightspeed Filter has met and surpassed DCSD's goal of keeping every student safe and compliant on and off the district network. With cloud-based, device-level protection DCSD students are safeguarded from dangerous and inappropriate online content anywhere their learning takes place.

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The implementation of Lightspeed Alert and Lightspeed Analytics lightened DeKalb County School District staff's workload. The Student Enablement Team can now focus more time on social emotional learning curriculum knowing that Lightspeed Safety Specialists are reviewing alerts 24/7/365. Lightspeed Analytics allows Davis to make data-driven decisions and support effective teaching in her district. She explains, "In order to engage students, you have to use teaching tools that students enjoy. With this new software, I can bring data to the administration, and we can make informed decisions to support our teachers and engage our students."

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