

PA Meeting Notes

October 8, 2009

Cole Room

Attendance: approx. 25

**Speakers: Tracy Sockalosky, Educational Technology Specialist;
Larry Brown; Susan Kingman; Linda Blanco**

Subject: Internet Safety: Keeping Students Safe Online

The Internet is not the problem, but it changes the equation for all of us in the following ways:

- Persistence & Searchability: the Net is a permanent archive
- Replicability: the ability to copy and paste from anywhere on the Net, to anywhere online.
- Scalability: high potential visibility beyond the intended audience.
- Invisible audiences: never knowing who is reading what you post
- Blurring of public and private

Digital Natives vs. Digital Immigrants:

- Our children are digital natives and parents are digital immigrants.

Is it better to keep technology away from them or teach our children how to use it appropriately?

Similar to teaching them how to become independent, we need to teach our children how to be safe on the Internet.

One parent commented that cell phones give us a false sense of security. Cell phones make us think we can stretch our kids' independence.

Web 1.0 to Web 2.0:

- Web 1.0 was one-way, the information was created by others and was read only
- Web 2.0 is two-way, read and write. Anyone can create and anyone can comment, it is also the conception of social networking

Web 2.0 creates concerns regarding authenticity.

What is out there now?

- Social Networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace. Social networking is a vehicle to create and share content, YouTube, Flickr.

- Blogs – the new journalism. People create content based on fact, fiction, and opinion. Others can comment
- Wikis - “anyone can add” space.
- Podcasts – blogs with audio and /or video, consumed on demand

Tracy estimates that 90% of the 8th graders are on Facebook, 80% of the 7th graders, 60% of the 6th graders, and 50% of the 5th graders

A parent suggested that Carroll take a survey among Carroll Middle School students to see how many are on Facebook or MySpace.

When our children go online to read blogs or do research, they need to know if they are reading opinion or fact. Because many Carroll students have difficulties with expressive and receptive language, understanding the difference between fact and opinion can be more difficult for our children than for the general population.

Social Networking is not all bad:

- Teens can gather online to meet friends.
- Most ignore strangers and adults
- Most go online to do good things, not cause harm.
- Physically safe
- Develop identities
- Develop 21st Century Skills - creativity, collaboration, online communication

What are the threats?

- Cyberbullying.
- Inappropriate Sharing
- Sexting
- Fraud and Identity Theft
- Predators and Stalkers
- Perception and Misunderstanding

Carroll’s Efforts?

- Implementing direct instruction on issues of internet safety and digital ethics.
- Campus network filtering blocks inappropriate sites
- iSite cameras are disabled on MacBooks.
- MacBook parental controls automatically logs students off the computer between 10pm and 6am.
- Teachers using technology more and more in the classroom so direct instruction of participating appropriately will occur.

One parent mentioned that his child’s laptop iSite camera was not disabled. Please contact The Carroll School tech department if your child’s laptop camera is not disabled.

What to do at home?

- Technical options.
- Discuss, Engage and Teach

Technical Option 1

- Filter at the router; contact your internet service provider for options.
- Purchase a special router such as [Home Network Defender](#)
- [OpenDNS](#) – a free software for router or computer filter

Technical Option 2

- Filter and monitor using software available for purchase, such as [NetNanny.com](#), [SafeEyes](#), [K9 Web Protection](#)

Tracy's personal favorite is [NetNanny.com](#)

Technical Option 3

Kidzui – internet browser for kids 13 and under

- Designed for kids so extremely helpful in research and teaching kids to navigate the web data collection
- Kids can share contact with other kids but cannot email, chat or text
- Parent controls that send a weekly report to parents detailing where children have been, allows for blocking of sites and blocking of friends

Engage, Discuss & Teach

- Set safe passwords
- Never share passwords
- Set privacy settings on social networking sites
- Once it is out there, can't get it back. Do not allow Facebook photos to be tagged.

Parent Questions and Answers

A parent spoke about how technology –keyboarding, online research, voice recognition software, etc- would be a huge help to her son as he moves forward with his education.

Larry Brown concurred and added that the introduction of laptops to Carroll Middle School students has shown to be very successful in leveling the educational playing field for our students in High School.