



Tips for Parents Concerned About Student Privacy

If you're concerned about the privacy implications of a cloud-based education platform in your child's school, consider the following steps.

DEVICE SETTINGS

- If your child has received a device, check out our advice on **configuring privacy settings**.
- If your child uses Firefox or Chrome to browse the web, **Install HTTPS Everywhere** and **Privacy Badger**.



ASK QUESTIONS

As a parent of an enrolled student, you're in the strongest position to ascertain your district's or school's current policies and practices. Collecting the following facts from district or school administrators will help us determine whether and how EFF can help.

Questions to explore with the student:

- What kind of device has your child received (e.g., Apple iPad, Google Chromebook, Microsoft Surface, other tablet, other laptop)?
- Which application(s) is your child using (e.g., Google Apps for Education; Microsoft in Education; other cloud-based services; other applications)?
- Were you or your child given the option to opt out of using the technology?
- Was your child offered an alternative technology option?
- Did you or your child authorize a corporation to collect information from your child and used outside the context of their education-focused application?

Questions to explore with the district or school:

- Which grade(s) are participating in the technology program?
- What information about students is provided to the corporate service provider(s)?

- Did you receive a privacy policy? If so, please share it with EFF so we can evaluate potential gaps. If not, contact the district or school administrators and ask for a copy.
- Were you provided with any other terms of service or other notice about what data is being collected from students and how it is being used? If not, contact the district or school administrators and ask for a copy of the contract(s) with the corporate service provider(s).

People to approach:

- District technology director
- District superintendent
- District public information officer
- District parent liaison
- Your child's teacher(s)
- School principal
- School Technology Advisory Committee
- Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

You can also submit your district's practices through **our survey** for concerned parents.

REACH OUT

You can **Find Allies** with whom to connect elsewhere through national networks of other concerned parents. Here are some tips for connecting with parents locally:

- Raise your concerns with parents you already know well. Don't try to convince anyone – just look for two or three others who already share your concerns.
- If you can't easily find at least two other parents who share your concerns:
 - Approach your student's teacher(s) and ask whether they know any other parents who might share your concerns.
 - Ask your child if any of his/her peers and classmates have raised concerns; ask to speak with their parents.
 - Ask leaders of any community organizations in which you participate if they know any concerned parents.
- Invite a small group of parents to a documentary screening, then facilitate an informal discussion:
 - The best venue for this sort of discussion is your home, with three or four families.
 - Consider convening the discussion around a meal or potluck.
 - Consider inviting the students to attend and participate in the discussion.
 - Questions to raise:

- Why does privacy matter?
- What roles do schools play in constructing your students' expectations of privacy?
- What information have other parents received from your school or district? See the **Ask Questions** section above for specific questions to ask
- Which other parents here share your concerns and want to work together?
- Relevant documentaries include **Terms and Conditions May Apply**, **America's Surveillance State**, and **Citizenfour**

TAKE ACTION

Once you've identified a small group of parents with whom to work:

- Attend a PTA meeting together and raise your concerns.
 - Make sure everyone in your group speaks.
 - Collect contact information from any other parents with whom your message resonates and follow up with them.
- Contact your district and/or school administrators and seek a meeting including all the parents in your group.
 - Make sure everyone in your group speaks.
 - Ask district or school officials to explain the process through which the current technology and policy was adopted, and how it might be changed.
 - Ask district or school officials to provide training to teachers, administrators, and potentially students about best practices for protecting student privacy and digital literacy generally.
 - Ask district or school officials what other solutions they would propose.
- Contact a member of your school board and seek a meeting.
 - Make sure everyone in your group speaks.
 - Ask the school board member whether they would consider sponsoring a measure in the school board constraining school or district contracts with corporate data collectors.

Share your progress and any updates with us at info@eff.org with "Student Privacy" in the subject line.

EFF is a member-supported non-profit. Join today at eff.org/join

Learn more about the Student Privacy campaign at eff.org/issues/student-privacy