

NetRef Makes It Easier for Teachers to Monitor and Manage Digital Learning



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“I don’t know that I’ve ever come across a program that supports us quite this well.”

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Learn how teachers in Walton County School District (GA) are taking advantage of NetRef’s comprehensive tools and responsive team to maximize EdTech use.

As the Director of Educational Technology, Duane Embry knows how important it is that EdTech works well for students, teachers, and the district. After a year of using NetRef, he’s found that this device and classroom management tool does just that.



Keep It Simple, and Effective

Before implementing NetRef, Walton teachers were struggling to manage students’ activity on their devices. The district had an EdTech monitoring and management tool in place, but it wasn’t doing what teachers needed or wanted it to.

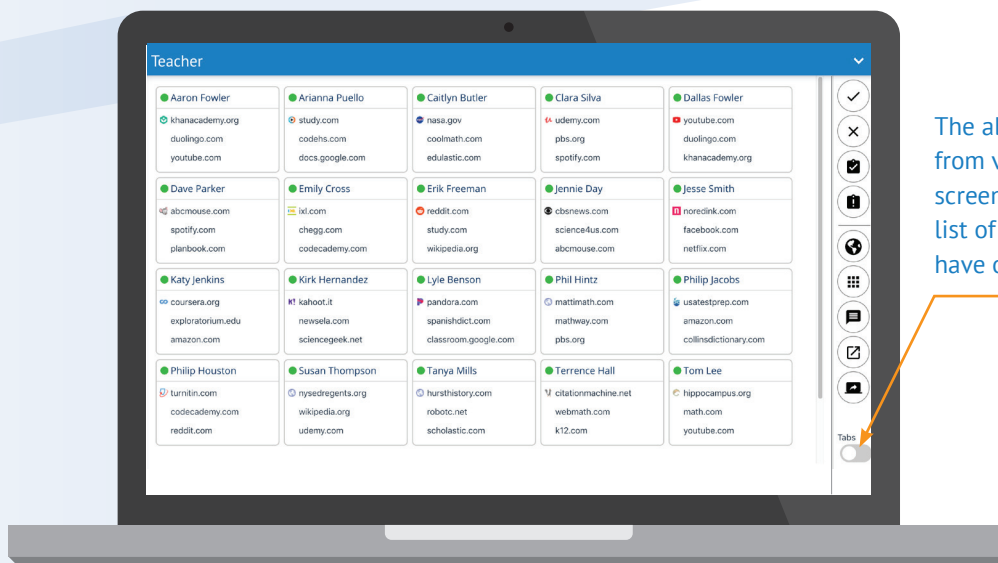
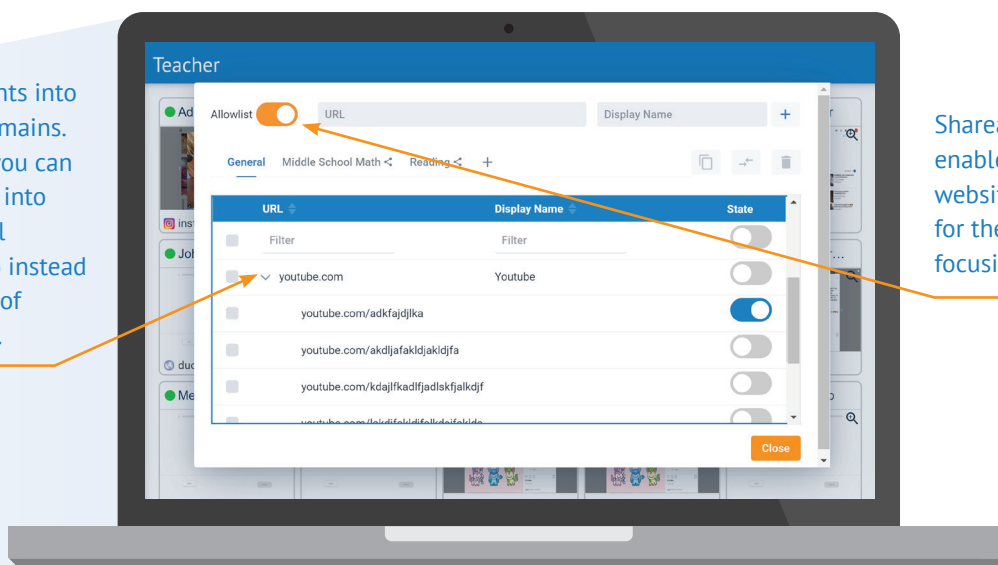
The district decided to search for an easier-to-use, more effective solution. When they implemented NetRef last year, they found a host of useful features that teachers wanted, from the ability to rename classes and sort by students’ names to seeing a website’s name as opposed to just a base URL. In other words, “little things that made it easier for teachers to use the program,” says Embry.

Customize Your EdTech

These “little things” have made a big difference. And when there were features missing that teachers wanted, NetRef simply added them. “I was kind of surprised,” Embry comments. “I gave them a big, long list.” That enhancement list included:

Locking students into specific subdomains. For example, you can lock a student into an educational YouTube video instead of keeping all of YouTube open.

Shareable Allowlists that enable teachers to share websites that work well for their instruction and focusing attention.



The ability to toggle from viewing students' screens to view a list of the URLs they have open

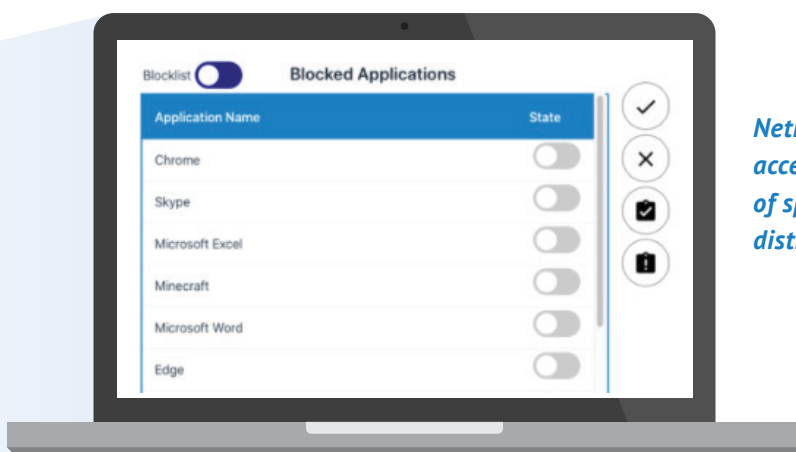
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“Anything that we ask for ... they come back in about a week and say ‘OK, it’s in there.’”

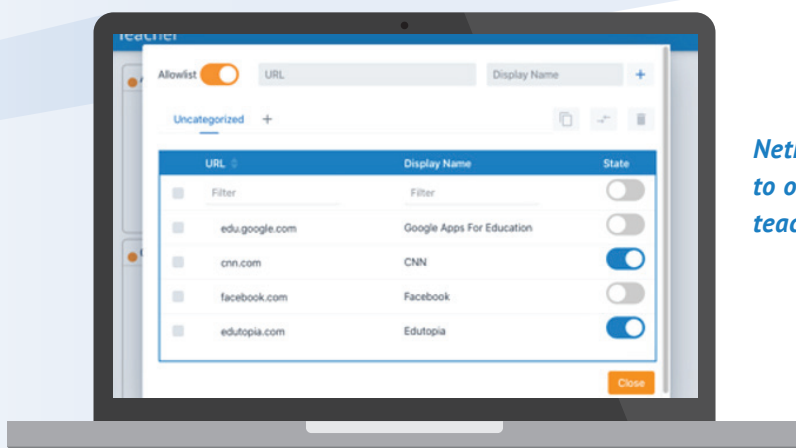
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Something for Everybody

Walton's teachers mostly utilize NetRef to monitor website usage using the screenshot histories available for each student and to direct student learning using the Allow and Blocklists. The Blocklist keeps access to the Internet wide open except for specific websites, subdomains and apps that the district or a teacher selects. The Allowlist, on the other hand, limits student access to only teacher-selected websites and apps. The Allowlist is particularly useful to keep students locked into a testing site and unable to access other sites to look up answers. It has also been helpful when substitute teachers are filling in. The regular teacher can create an Allowlist that the substitute teacher can activate for all the students in a class. This makes it easier for substitute teachers to conduct lessons and keep students on task. Walton also uses NetRef to customize device access for different grade levels, during school assemblies, and during in-school suspensions.



NetRef's Blocklist gives students full access to the Internet with the exception of specific sites and apps selected by the district or a teacher.



NetRef's Allowlist restricts student access to only select sites determined by their teacher or school.

At a district level, Embry explains that NetRef serves as an extra layer of protection and offers the ability to monitor EdTech use systemically, easily identifying where they have high usage and where they have gaps. In short, Embry has had “nothing but a positive experience” with NetRef.