

Keeping Students Engaged Wherever They're Learning



NetRef's device monitoring and management tools help Alexandria School District (MN) teachers maintain high-quality instruction when teaching in person or remotely.

In his job as Technology Integration Specialist for Alexandria, a district with 4,200 students, Lukas Gotto is constantly asking himself, "how do we use new instructional technologies to enhance engagement with our kids?"

With the district's transition to fully remote learning due to the pandemic, that question got even more challenging. One way Gotto is supporting student engagement at home is with NetRef. The district adopted NetRef in the spring of 2020 just as instruction was moving remote. The solution's device monitoring and management tools offer ways for teachers to stay connected to students, focus learning, and know what students are doing on their devices, no matter where they're learning.

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Interviewer:

“What’s working better for you with NetRef than your prior program?”

Gotto:

“Everything.”

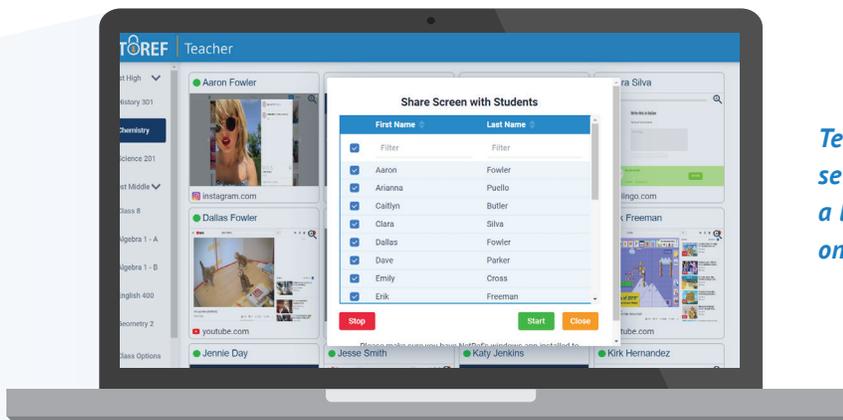
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NetRef + Tech Champs = Learning Success

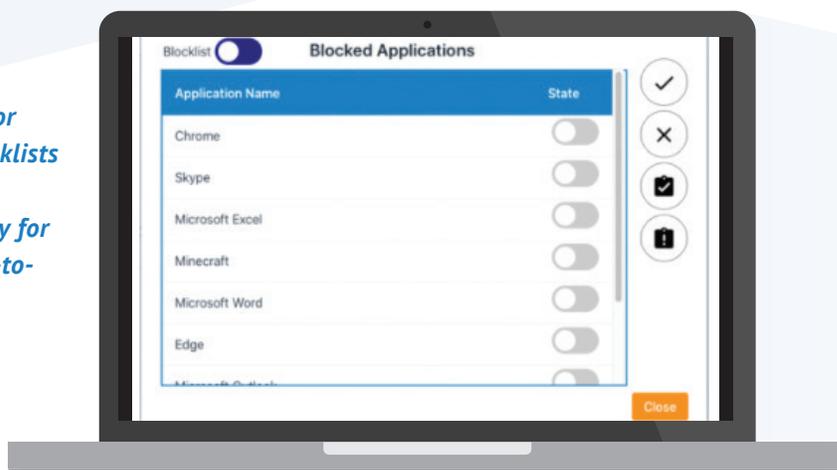
In the district's first full year of implementing NetRef, Gotto leads a group called Tech Champs which includes one representative from every grade and building. Gotto is training the Tech Champs to be NetRef experts so they can train the other educators in their buildings on how to use the system to minimize distractions and maximize learning – at home and in classrooms.

Here's a glimpse at some of the ways Alexandria Tech Champs are coaching teachers to use NetRef:

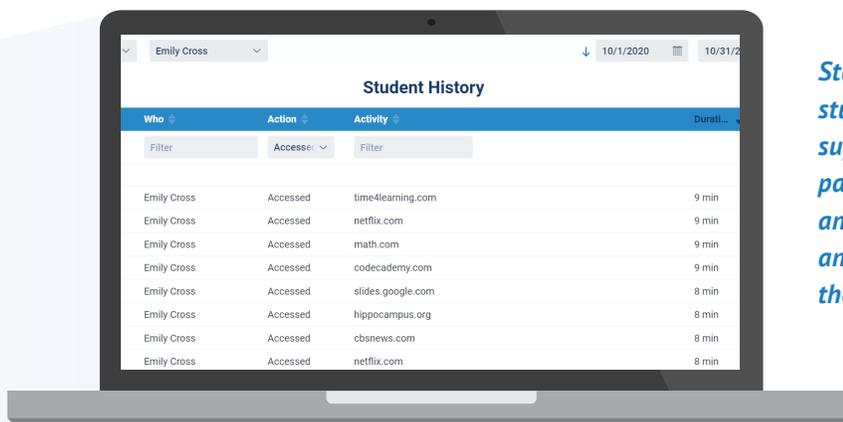


Teachers in distance learning settings can demonstrate a lesson by sharing their screen on all student devices.

A teacher can apply a Blocklist to prevent access to certain websites for one student or the entire class. Blocklists can be turned on and off easily and modified quickly, providing flexibility for teachers as their needs change day-to-day and class-by-class.



Staff can create a report of a student's site visit history to support conversations with parents about their child's in and out of class time device use and how that may be affecting their learning.



Special Requests, Custom Solutions

While teachers find that NetRef's built-in tools can help them keep most students focused on learning, there are a few students who have a harder time staying on track, and who find ways to access websites they shouldn't be on. Gotto reached out to NetRef to see if tighter restrictions could be created for just this small group of students at Discovery Middle School.

NetRef immediately got to work creating "Discovery Middle School 2," a kind of "second school within a school" for those few who need additional limits on Internet access. According to Gotto, "[NetRef] has been flexible and really great to work with."

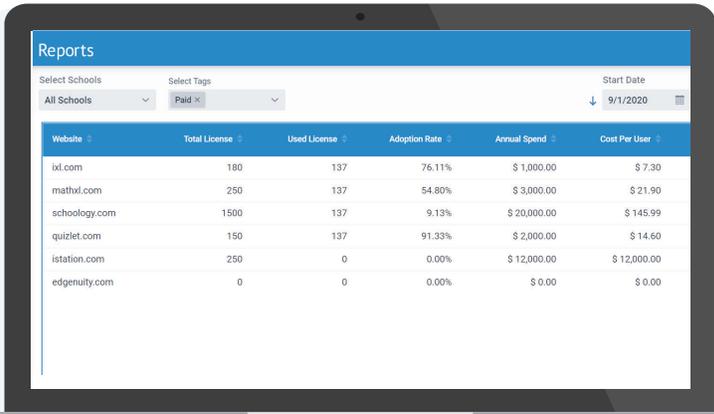
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"It's been really awesome to reach out to (NetRef) and hear them say 'We can certainly make that happen.'"

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At-Your-Fingertips EdTech Use and ROI Data Makes Budgeting Easier

Even though this is Alexandria's first year using NetRef, they're already using the system's ROI reports. Gotto appreciates being able to break down the top used websites by percentages. Looking ahead to next year, "We're going to have to make some tough (budget) decisions and not be able to keep everything ... Having that data of percentages of websites that are used is really, really helpful for us and gives us a bird's eye view of district EdTech use."



The screenshot shows the 'Reports' section of the NetRef interface. It includes filters for 'Select Schools' (All Schools) and 'Select Tags' (Paid). The main table displays the following data:

| Website | Total License | Used License | Adoption Rate | Annual Spend | Cost Per User |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| ixl.com | 180 | 137 | 76.11% | \$ 1,000.00 | \$ 7.30 |
| mathxl.com | 250 | 137 | 54.80% | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 21.90 |
| schoolology.com | 1500 | 137 | 9.13% | \$ 20,000.00 | \$ 145.99 |
| quizlet.com | 150 | 137 | 91.33% | \$ 2,000.00 | \$ 14.60 |
| istation.com | 250 | 0 | 0.00% | \$ 12,000.00 | \$ 12,000.00 |
| edgenuity.com | 0 | 0 | 0.00% | \$ 0.00 | \$ 0.00 |

The district uses NetRef's ROI report to track EdTech usage and inform budget decisions.

Alexandria staff are still discovering new ways to use NetRef to support their students. Gotto knows that NetRef will continue to support them in their new remote environment and when students and teachers return to the classroom.