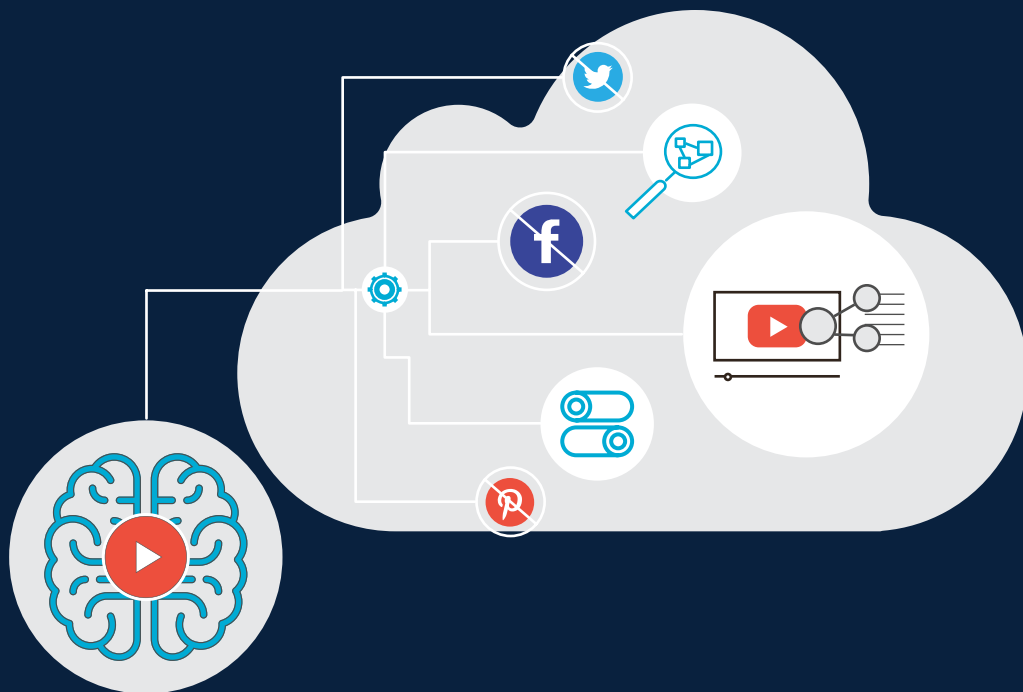# Lightspeed Systems

Safe YouTube Access in Schools

ENSURE SAFE, EASY ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL VIDEOS

Be confident in what you use.

Video streaming sites like YouTube are increasingly important to education, especially for K-12 students. Online video content can help reach visual learners; engage students at a variety of grade and reading comprehension levels; and make important educational concepts real for young people who are already accustomed to consuming information in a multimedia format.

These are just a few of the reasons why YouTube's Education channel is one of its most popular. To wit, Forbes recently reported that videos in the Education category are viewed twice as often as those in the ever-popular Pets & Animals category.

Dig into some of the channels creating educational video content and you can see why students and educators alike love using these resources for learning. Consider Khan Academy's channel, which boasts 3.4 million subscribers; 1.27 billion (and counting) views; and a plethora of videos on math, science, economics, computing and the arts.

Although video streaming sites have plenty to offer in the mobile-learning age, they also create plenty of challenges for teachers, administrators and school IT departments. Video content sites are rife with pornography, extremist propaganda, violence, profanity and other disturbing and inappropriate content.

Although such videos often violate acceptable use policies, YouTube relies on users to flag unsafe content so it can be removed — if it's removed at all. Video categories are also user-selected, making it easy for explicit videos to fly under the radar.

With so much user-generated video content available online, how can you protect your schools, keep students focused, comply with policies like the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), manage your limited bandwidth, and also give students access to the multimedia learning opportunities they need?

These common challenges are why Lightspeed Systems developed Smart Play, the one-click solution for providing access to safe, educational videos in K-12 schools.

If you're employing one of the following five ways to manage YouTube access at your school, Lightspeed Systems is here to empower you with a better, more advanced method. Keep reading to see how those methods don't work for K-12 and how you can overcome your challenges with YouTube in just a click.

1. BLOCK YOUTUBE

Some school district IT departments choose to fully block YouTube, which can be achieved through a content filtering solution. This drastically limits the chances that students will encounter inappropriate video content.

The drawbacks to this option are obvious: Teachers won't be able to use online videos for their lessons, and students won't be able to access videos for their own research. IT departments who employ this solution can expect questions and pushback from these stakeholders, who are probably used to having this educational tool at their disposal.

PROS
- Greatly reduces students' ability to access harmful or distracting videos
- Eases compliance with CIPA
- Less of a burden on staff to reinforce digital citizenship

CONS
- Severely limits educational opportunities
- Frustrates teachers and students

2. ALLOW ALL OF YOUTUBE

There are advocates for giving children free, open access to the internet when they're at school. This option ensures teachers and students won't be curtailed when they attempt to access educational video material.

That said, allowing all streaming content isn't a viable option for the vast majority of schools. Curious students are bound to come across sexual, violent and dangerous content, whether or not they're looking for it. It also opens students up to distractions, and is bound to tax your limited bandwidth.

Also, this option puts parents, administrators and teachers in the position of identifying and correcting students who seek out inappropriate material — if they even have the tools or time to identify it. IT departments can expect to get plenty of emails and calls from other staff members and parents who don't want their kids having unfettered access to obscene and dangerous content.

PROS
- Educational videos won't be blocked for teachers and students
- IT departments have fewer blocked sites to manage

CONS
- Explicit and distracting videos are freely available to students
- Makes CIPA compliance impossible
- Inevitable blowback from parents, teachers and administrators
- Puts a major burden on educators and parents to police unsafe student behavior
- Very difficult and time-consuming to monitor unsafe video consumption

3. CREATE LISTS OF WHITELISTED AND BLACKLISTED VIDEOS

If schools want total control over the videos that students access, they can use their content filtering solutions to create their own block/allow lists with specific video URLs. IT staff members can create a list of allowed videos, blocking the rest; or create a list of blocked videos, allowing the rest.

Having granular control of video access can be alluring to school district employees who are wary of student misuse. But this option is the most time-consuming of them all.

With this system, teachers and students have to request individual video URLs to be blocked or unblocked. At best, this will delay learning opportunities and make spontaneous access to educational videos nearly impossible. At worst, it will prevent lessons from happening, waste teachers' time, and allow students to access a plethora of inappropriate videos that haven't been blocked.

PROS
- Admins have granular control over video access, making CIPA compliance easy
- Administrators spend less time identifying/correcting misuse

CONS
- Most time-consuming option
- IT resources must shift to accommodate manual entry of URLs
- Community must request individual URLs be unblocked, causing delay
- Spontaneous access of educational video material is impossible
- Educational videos will inevitably be blocked, causing complaints

4. CREATE BLACKLISTS AND WHITELISTS OF SPECIFIC VIDEO CATEGORIES

Lots of schools want control over the videos their students watch, but they don't have the personnel or resources to manage whitelists and blacklists. An obvious solution to this is blocking or allowing YouTube videos by category.

With this method, IT can use a solution to block video categories rife with distractions and adult content (like Comedy, Gaming and Unlisted) and allow categories such as Education and News & Politics.

The problem with this alternative is that it relies on YouTube's videos to be accurately categorized. Abusers of YouTube's acceptable use policies often deliberately miscategorize content to avoid removal; others just choose a category randomly, not maliciously. Even if harmful videos are identified and quickly removed, YouTube is slow to remove the abusive channels that post those videos.

PROS
- Easier for IT to maintain than whitelisting and blacklisting individual videos
- Makes a wide selection of videos available instantly

CONS
- YouTube categories are user-reported and often inaccurate
- Many blocked URLs for IT to manage

5. ENABLE YOUTUBE MODERATE RESTRICTED MODE OR STRICT RESTRICTED MODE

You may already know that YouTube has its own "safety" modes for controlling video access on school networks.

An obvious perk of YouTube's restricted modes is that they're fast to enable with a content filter or G Suite. (Admins can activate either Moderate Restricted Mode or Strict Restricted Mode.)

Although YouTube's safety modes have improved quite a bit in recent years, they are still imperfect, leading to over-blocking of safe content and under-blocking of unsafe content. The YouTube user community still bears a large share of responsibility for flagging inappropriate videos for removal.

In addition, YouTube restricted mode creates challenges for teachers who have their own channels. Enabling those channels is not straightforward and typically requires a Google login and adjustment to Google's settings, which isn't practical for most teachers.

PROS
- Management time and effort are light
- Can hide YouTube video comments and sidebars

CONS
- Modes are often too restrictive and over-block good content
- YouTube safeguards are easy to circumvent
- YouTube categories are user-reported and often inaccurate
- Not transparent, and difficult to know what will and won't be allowed
- Difficult to allow student access to teacher channels

NOW THERE'S A BETTER WAY TO MANAGE YOUTUBE IN SCHOOLS, SMART PLAY

6. USE SMART PLAY BY LIGHTSPEED SYSTEMS

There's a better way to deal with YouTube in schools: Smart Play. A new feature in Lightspeed Systems Web Filter and Lightspeed Systems Relay, Smart Play lets K-12 schools easily enable safe YouTube access.

Here are 10 reasons why schools are turning to Smart Play for appropriate video streaming access.

1. **Smart Play enables access to millions of videos.**
   Smart Play uses proprietary, machine-learning technology to find YouTube videos that are appropriate for education. (These videos are available from YouTube.com and are also accessible if they're embedded on other websites.) Smart Play identifies and opens access to 38 million videos.

2. **Smart Play's database gains hundreds of thousands more videos each day.**
   The more videos we add to Smart Play's database, the smarter it gets at identifying appropriate content, and the faster it grows. Lightspeed Systems' database is the most comprehensive and accurate content filter database available. We use a combination of artificial intelligence, robots, machine learning, customer feedback, and human review to categorize the internet for schools. All these powerful, proprietary forces come into play with Smart Play and YouTube categorization. We've analyzed top educational videos, school sites, video descriptions, and statistics, and we know which videos your teachers and students need. Then we back up our machine-learning processes with human review and transparency. Best of all, as YouTube continues to grow, Smart Play also continues to learn and categorize.

3. **Smart Play is low-maintenance.**
   You don't need to maintain a list of all educational videos and channels. We do that for you. But you can easily add teacher channels and district channels, and new videos added to them will become accessible.
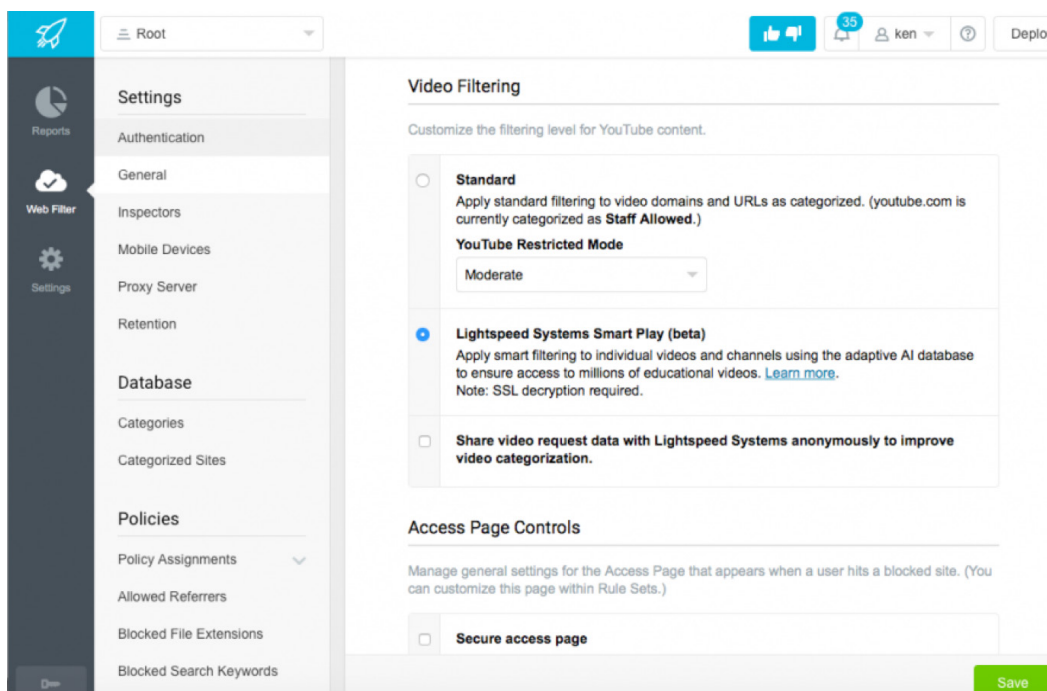
4. You don't need YouTube restricted modes.
Unlike YouTube's restricted modes, Smart Play is transparent and flexible. You can see how videos and channels are categorized to know if they'll be accessible — and you can adjust those settings easily.

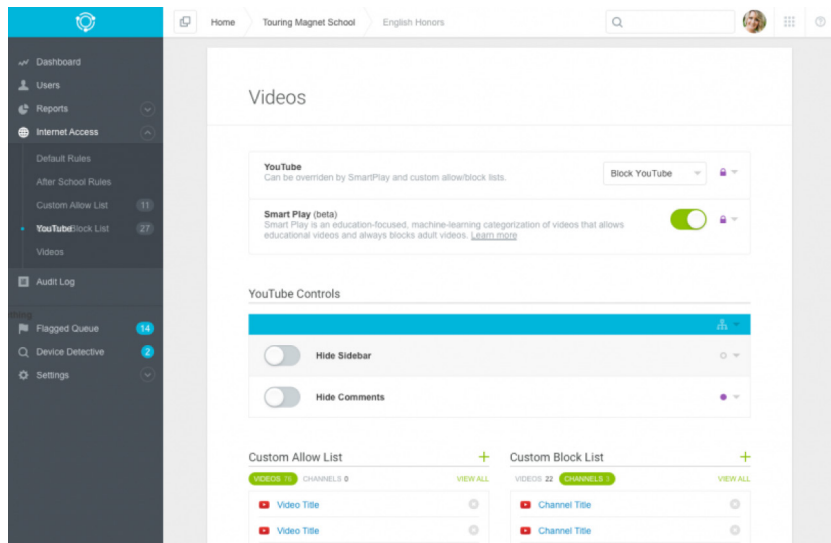| YouTube Restricted Mode	Smart Play
Does not work with the Chrome Mobile Filter	Works with the Chrome Mobile Filter
Does not require SSL decryption.	Requires SSL decryption.
Is Tier-based.	Can be differentiated by Rule Set
Cannot be easily customized.	Can be easily customized with local recategorization.
Channel and video classification handled by YouTube.	Channel and video classification handled by Lightspeed's dedicated team
Limited individual video/channel classification control	Full individual video/channel classification control with Categorized Sites
Cannot specifically block uncategorized videos.	Can specifically block uncategorized videos.
Limited category control	Full category control based on our Database Categories.
No reporting functions.	Ability to run reports that directly show YouTube activity.

5. You can enable Smart Play in just one click!
Whether you license Relay for Chrome or Web Filter, turning on Smart Play couldn't be faster. Through Web Filter, click Web Filter on the left navigation, and select General under Settings. Scroll down and you'll see Lightspeed Systems Smart Play under Video Filtering; click the radio button next to it, and hit save. (SSL decryption is required.)

If you have Relay, select Internet Access from the left navigation and click YouTube Block List on the drop-down menu. Toggle the button to the right of Smart Play.

6. **You can customize video access if you so choose.**
Enabling Smart Play takes about a second, but you can customize the access on a granular level, too. Web Filter and Relay enable you to allow and block specific channels and videos and differentiate access by user type, group and time of day.

7. **Smart Play makes it easy to add teacher channels.**
One of the biggest challenges school IT departments have is ensuring seamless access to teacher and district channels. Smart Play makes it easy: Just add those channels to your custom allow list. Any new videos added to the channel will be automatically allowed.

8. **You can differentiate access after school.**
Many schools adjust filtering policies after school, and YouTube is one of the top sites they open during evenings and weekends. The gaming videos or entertainment clips that are distractions during school hours may be acceptable when students are at home. With Smart Play, it's easy to open additional content while ensuring that adult content is blocked.
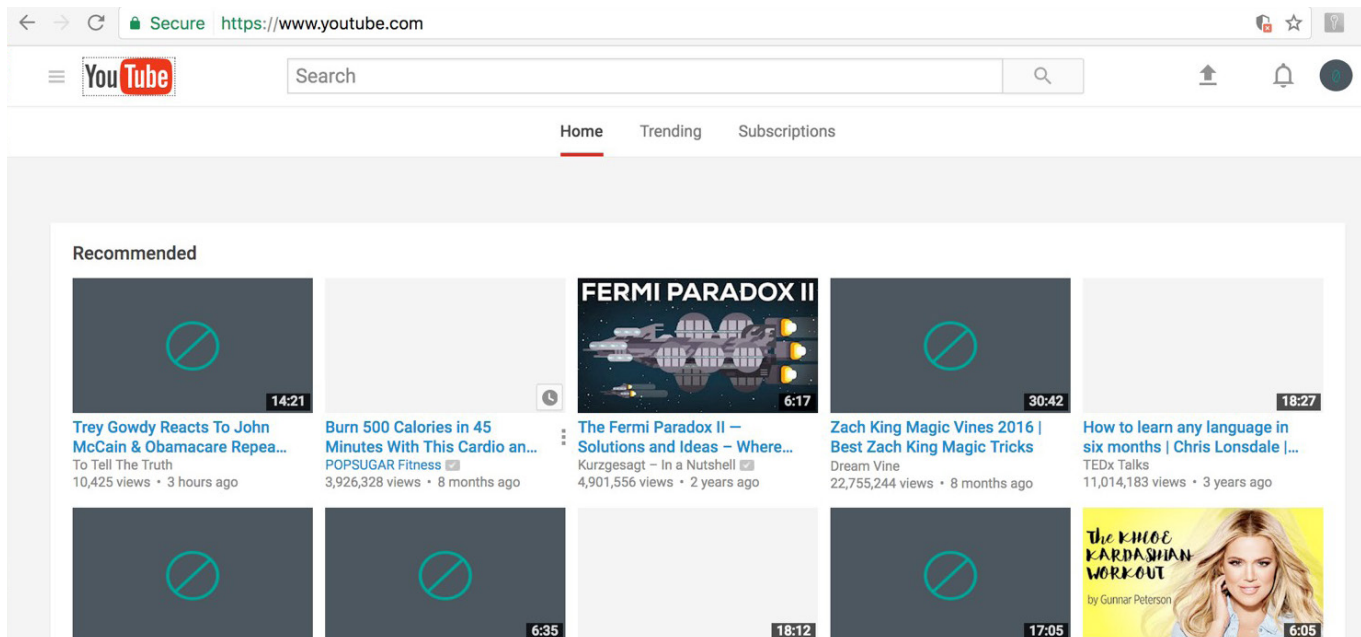
9. **It makes easy work of SSL content.**
Like much of the Web, YouTube is a secured site and its traffic is encrypted. This has historically made it difficult for schools to report on YouTube access and to allow or block individual videos. With Smart Play in Relay, it's seamless. YouTube access is filtered and reported without the hassles of a proxy, trust certificates or PAC files.

SAFE YOUTUBE ACCESS IN SCHOOLS

10. Students get the best and safest learning experience.

With Smart Play, students can browse, search and research naturally, right on YouTube.com — and the experience is safe. Students can clearly see which videos are allowed and blocked, which provides great learning opportunities on what's considered appropriate in school.

Smart Play solves all the challenges schools have with YouTube so your students can enjoy the benefits of video without the risks. Easily allow the educational content and teacher channels — and block the rest. You also get powerful reporting on exactly how your users are using YouTube.

> SMART PLAY MAKES IT EASY AND SAFE TO GIVE YOUR USERS ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL YOUTUBE VIDEOS.

See it for yourself!
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