Oh no!

I am all for students collaborating but I like to have control over the conversations taking place online in my classroom.  For that reason, I use Edmodo with my classes.  It takes a few tries and diligence before students learn appropriate online conversation, but in the end I think it is a fantastic tool.  There are so many other Web 2.0 tools created just for schools that give all the collaborative benefits of Facebook but without the risks associated with students having private conversations in class.  I don't allow them to pass notes in class; nor will I allow them to use Facebook.

I have conducted several Professional Development sessions on Edmodo and use it in my own classes.  I can teach them responsible online habits by modeling proper etiquette and deleting inappropriate responses.  No student wants to be "deleted" and they quickly learn to follow the rules set in class.

I have accessed Facebook before I had a district iPad and can continue to do so without using my district iPad.  This is what I have told my students.

I am not comfortable with my students having the ability to use Facebook in class when I am not able to see the conversations that are being posted.  I am worried about  inappropriate conversation and student focus on Facebook, not on my science class.

I am excited about using technology in class, and have studied 1:1 programs in depth in my graduate program.  I am all for technology, but do not feel that my students are currently ready to use Facebook at school and stay focused on their studies.  I do think that in the future they may be able to discriminate the proper time for its use, but as we are rolling out the iPads and there is so much to learn I strongly think that this is one thing that we can regulate.  I was very impressed with the ability to regulate it outside of school; why not start with it and then gradually open things up.

We are teaching the students that this is a district owned device designed to help them learn.  Not a plaything.  I am afraid that the students will be getting a mixed message with the freedom to use facebook at school.

Is there any way to block Facebook at school or block it just for students?  In time, students might be able to handle it, but at this time I am very hesitant.

I have many parents who have not yet given permission for their students.  I have tried hard to stress that the technology will be educationally based and school safe.  I am afraid that Facebook access will just fuel their hesitations.

Thank you for listening,

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