Sacred Heart School BYOD Setup for Minimizing Distractions

At SHS, 5th-8th grade students use their devices to access class materials and activities during the school day. Our teachers are strategic about device use in class and do their best to monitor students as they are using the computers. Additionally, our network is set up to block inappropriate content and games. Even with these practices in place, it is still easy for students to get distracted by things on their computers. Here are some suggestions for families to help minimize the potential for distractions.

Use Parental Control Programs

Many families use Microsoft Family Safety to filter content and monitor screen time.

- The app is free and easy to use on Surface devices.
- It can be set up to allow certain apps to be used during specific hours of the day.
- It can filter web content on Microsoft Edge only, not on other web browsers like Google Chrome.
- It should be used in conjunction with regular conversations with your child and "spot checks" of their devices.

Directions to set up Microsoft Family Safety

Remove Distracting/Problematic Apps

1) Look at the apps and programs installed on your student's device.

   Select **Start** > **Settings** > **Apps** > **Apps & features**

2) We recommend not installing gaming apps, like Roblox. In addition to causing a distraction, they can take up a lot of space on the computer and slow it down.
3) Other apps that can be distracting to students are chat apps like Skype, Teams for Home, and Discord.
   - These programs are not used for school. (Teams for Home is a separate app from Teams for School, which we do use.)
   - Skype and Teams for Home are programs that come with the device but can be uninstalled.
4) Another kind of app to look out for are VPN apps.
   - VPN stands for Virtual Private Network.
   - They allow users to bypass network restrictions and other controls. Read more here.
   - It is against Sacred Heart's BYOD policy for students to install VPNs on their school devices, but they are not always easy for the school to catch.
   - If you see any app that has to do with a VPN, you should uninstall it and also run a virus scan on the device. It's common for free VPN software to hide malware.

Directions for Uninstalling Apps and Programs

Prevent Apps from Opening Unintentionally

1) Some apps are set up to show notifications and seeing those notifications in class can be hard for students to ignore. If you decide an app is okay for your student to use outside of class time, consider changing the notifications settings.

Change notifications settings

2) Other apps are set up to open on start, meaning when your child signs onto the computer, they open automatically.

Stop apps from opening automatically on start

Check on Browser Extensions

Browser extensions (also called plug-ins) are software applications that add features to a web browser (Edge, Chrome, Firefox, etc.) Just like apps, they have the potential to cause distractions for your student but can be easier for adults to miss because they live within the web browser itself.

1) Check the extensions currently installed on your child's device.
   - Check Extensions in Microsoft Edge
   - Check Extensions in Google Chrome
   - Check Extensions in Mozilla Firefox
   - Looking for another browser? Search "check browser extensions + *the name of the browser*."
2) Look for VPN browser extensions and games. These tend to cause the most problems here at school.