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The New Trier News

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NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL, 385 WINNETKA AVENUE, WINNETKA, IL 60093

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The question of internet safety

by Sarah Wong

Recent hacking into celebrities' online information as well as into businesses such as Home Depot and J.P. Morgan has raised questions about how secure New Trier's network is.

According to Director of Technology Christopher Johnson and Assistant Network Manager Daniel Chu, the technology department protects confidential student and teacher records, as well as ensures that external applications such as Canvas are safe and reliable for student use.

"Security is always a major focus, so when we are looking at how our network is designed, security is a key factor," said Johnson.

Johnson explained that it is important that second-party hosts like Google have a secure infrastructure to support student log-in and to save and back up all documents.

The school's internal servers regularly save students' computer data and all the files within New Trier. These are backed up every night to ensure documents are not lost and that files are saved for a number of years so that old information is available if needed.

An unnecessary concern students have is the amount of information the school can see on their iPads or phones. The limited tracking and logging from personal devices does

include Internet usage, browsing history, the calls made to and from a cellular phone, and Mac Addresses, which is a unique identifier assigned to a particular device. However, the school does not scrutinize this data, according to Johnson. "The purpose of keeping logs is to make sure things are functioning properly so that if something happens, we can go back and take a look at it," said Johnson.

Incidents that might warrant investigation are student misconduct online or missing technology. Lost student iPads can be tracked and returned to the owners in the school based on their Mac Addresses.

Although the school has access to protected information, administrators and technologists are not permitted to look at them under most circumstances.

According to Johnson, saved files online are restricted from viewing unless a school related problem is being investigated. In this case, technology specialists would be notified by an adviser chair or assistant principal about a disciplinary issue before looking into a student's information.

Last year, student postings on the anonymous "Yik Yak" application caused administrators to question its effect on the learning environment. From there, the technology department was asked to block the site within the school.



Sophomores Jen Fairclough and Paris Silverman get homework done on their iPads in the field house | Minturn

Johnson said, "A lot of the student disciplinary investigations involve something that was posted on Twitter or social media, so they'll say, 'Can you help us track down who this was?'"

This is limited to information that either had been posted during school or that affects someone's ability to attend school, according to Johnson.

New Trier's internal network has not recently been hacked; however, in 2008, a student was caught hacking into the school records on a personal

laptop in order to see the New Trier class ranks. This was done through an external program the school subscribes to and uses to keep track of grades.

Even though the technology department's work is behind the scenes, the decisions and policies they create impact the entire school.

Students may have noticed a change in the guest Wi-Fi this year. One must hit an "accept" button in order to access guest wireless connection on their personal device, similar to that offered in a restaurant

or airport.

The reason is that complaints were voiced last year about slow Internet connection while connected to the guest network. Chu said, "We were struggling with an influx of devices [on that network]." They took measures to ensure everyone can have access to Wi-Fi when needed. According to Chu, the new implementation is designed to allow cell phones and other devices to stay connected until idle, while iPads remain connected to the higher-capacity student Wi-Fi all day.

Traffic dangers evoke concerns

by Katherine Rhea

On the third day of school, Kevin Hendren, a junior advisor and AP Chemistry teacher, was hit by a car while crossing Winnetka Avenue.

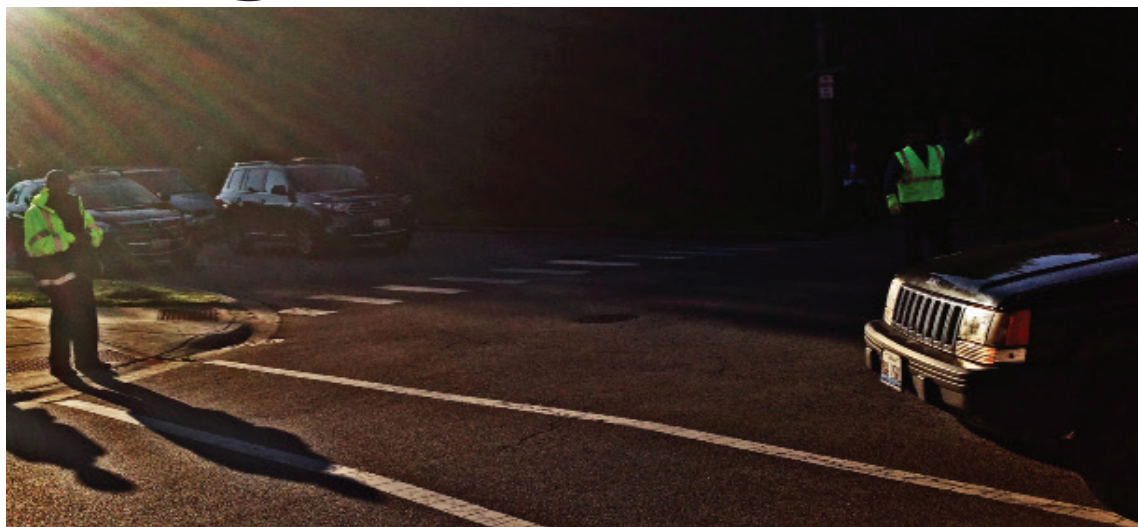
According to Hendren, the vehicle turned into the crosswalk as he was walking and struck him. While Hendren was not severely hurt, he did suffer bruising and shoulder pain.

"The accident seemed surreal," said Hendren. "That is not how you want to start your school year."

When asked if he felt there needed to be more precautions taken at crosswalks around the school, Hendren replied, "the signs are adequate, and it really is up to the individual responsibility of the driver."

Hendren also urged students and staff to be aware of their surroundings when walking to school. He said that accidents can happen to anyone, and the effects of being in an accident linger.

Athena Arvanitis, Director of Student Life, explained that the school's main challenge in ensuring traffic safety lies in prioritization. There are approximately 3,000



PPS staff members direct traffic before school on Winnetka Avenue, one of New Trier's busiest streets | Minturn

students and 700 employees who step in to and out of New Trier each day, during school hours. This creates a huge task for PPS staff and traffic controllers.

According to Arvanitis, New Trier focuses its staff on Winnetka Avenue because the street is considered to be the main artery for traffic flow.

Traffic controllers and Physical Plant Services (PPS) staff are posted at three locations along the street, and

are always in contact with each other. They are responsible for informing the PPS staff as to when to allow pedestrians to cross the street safely.

Arvanitis urged parents and students to be aware of pedestrian traffic.

"New Trier does not have a designated drop off area. We try to promote to parents to use the Indian Hill parking lot for pick up and drop off to help reduce the amount of cars on Winnetka Avenue," said Arvanitis.

The accident came on the heels of a nine-year, \$650,000 project to improve the safety of the Green Bay Road/Winnetka Avenue intersection that included adding a left turn lane northbound and traffic turn signals in all directions.

The crosswalks were also consolidated to be better coordinated with the traffic signals, and the Pace bus stop was moved to the north side of Winnetka Avenue.

According to the Village of

Winnetka, the renovations were necessary. There have been numerous pedestrian and car accidents in and around the intersection, and many of them have been caused by the confusing walking paths and turn signals.

Most notable was a hit-and-run incident that occurred right after school in 2011 in which a sophomore was critically injured.

"The previous configuration allowed numerous pedestrian movements through the intersection that were not always clear," said Steve Saunders, Winnetka Village Engineer, in an interview in September 2013.

Arvanitis also reminded all drivers to be a little more aware of pedestrian traffic during high traffic hours.

"It's a big operation each day to ensure the safety of all who travel to New Trier each day. The traffic signs are posted clearly along the crosswalks. I only hope that people read and respect them."

Grateful that Hendren was not hurt seriously, Arvanitis urged students and staff to be aware of pedestrian traffic.