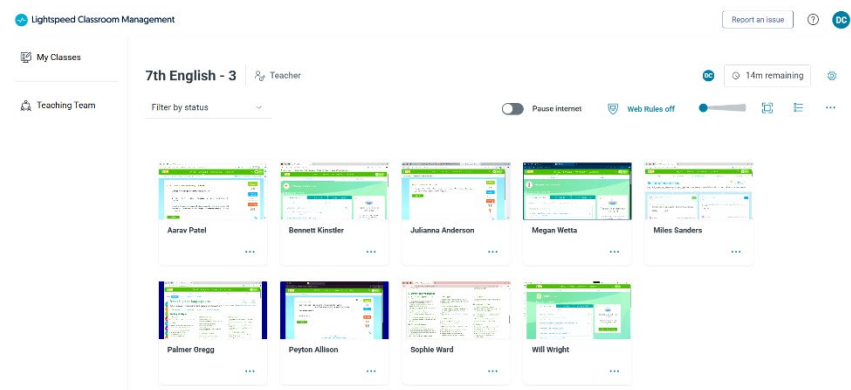# Screen-Monitoring Software Being Piloted Set To Go School-Wide Next Year
By Lottie Kanter

For many years, Altamont students have had relatively limited restrictions and surveillance on their school computers. Now, however, the school is implementing a new program called Lightspeed Classroom Management, which will allow teachers to monitor students' screens in class.

Beginning on February 11, the system was piloted in grades seven and eleven and is currently available to any seventh or eleventh grade teacher. According to a school email addressed to seventh and eleventh grade parents, the program is expected to be employed in all grade levels in the upcoming 2025-2026 school year.

According to Eddy Dunn, Director of Technology, teachers can view the screens of *all* the students in their classes. At first, he says, "It's just a thumbnail view, so ... [teachers] can see enough of an image to go, 'they're not doing what I am expecting them to be doing.'" Teachers can then focus and enlarge their view in order to have a "readable detail of what is on a student's screen."

To address privacy and other concerns, Mr. Dunn explained the limits on what teachers can do with the new system. "They can't control the screen. They can lock it, they can limit what [students] can access, and they can send a note to a student. But they can't control the mouse." And, he says, it operates "only between the hours of 7:45 and 3:45...[and] a teacher can only see the students that they have. They can't go out and just select students at random. So it has to be students that they have in some class...[and] two teachers cannot be looking at the same student at one time."

While teachers have access to only students they have in a class, Mr. Dunn says that they do have the power to "put together a random class at any time during the day."
Regarding the reasons for adopting the new software, Lauren Garrett, the Upper-School Student Assistance Counselor, says, "Part of our responsibility as educators with a one-to-one [laptop] program is to help students develop self-control skills. If we don't know what's happening on their computers, then it's hard to help them develop those skills."

Ms. Garrett says the software is mainly used to help students build responsibility and integrity and to help teachers teach more effectively, since they will be able to monitor students' computers without taking constant breaks in their lessons.

"From parents' perspectives, it has had a positive reception," says Ms. Garrett.

Dan Carsen, who teaches seventh-grade English, grades seven and eight Creative Writing, and upper-school Media & Journalism, shares his experience with the software:

"So far, I like the new system. I tend to be skeptical of technology 'upgrades,' which are sometimes more trouble than they're worth, but as of now, a couple weeks in, it's been reliable and helpful. I'm usually on my feet during English classes anyway, but when students are doing independent online work and I need to do something on my own computer, it takes some pressure off me. And they know about the system, which probably decreases what little temptation they had before to go 'off task.'"

Starting in the 2025-2026 school year, the Lightspeed Classroom Management program will change technology use and management at Altamont. As Ms. Garrett puts it, the hope is for these changes to have a positive impact on Altamont by improving the "responsibility and integrity [of students] and the availability of teachers."