



Faronics Insight and Palmdale High School
Case Study

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Teachers Needed Control Of The Classroom Computers

Leonard Moreno is an Information Technology Instructor at California’s Palmdale High School. As part of the Computer Science department, it is Leonard’s job to prepare students for the modern and technical workplace with skills needed to be successful in any occupation. He does this by teaching students in a computer classroom lab of 32 computers. Mr. Moreno was not always a teacher; in fact he used to be one of the school’s network administrators. Leonard recognized that when used properly technology could significantly enhance the instructional effectiveness of a teacher and allow students to more quickly learn class concepts. As a result, he made a career change and became a career technical teacher in the computer science department. Mr. Moreno’s classes cover many subjects, including computer repair, networking, 3D and game design.

While Leonard recognized that having computers in the classroom provided an array of teaching topic possibilities, it also came with its problems. For one, many of his students were often off task. They would use the computers for playing games and surfing the Internet, which created a management and logistical distraction to his teaching. “My classroom is diverse and always available to students,” says Leonard. “I need each class to have only access to what I wanted. For example, my computer repair class only needs access to their training software and classroom homepage while my video game design class requires access to multimedia software, specific video games, and websites.” Also, the computer lab is open during lunchtime for students to play video games and surf the Internet, but printing or copying software is not allowed during this time.

“Faronics Insight gives teachers the control they need in their labs to teach more effectively and quickly.”

Leonard had heard about classroom computer management solutions that provided teachers will full control over the classroom computers. He realized that such a solution would allow him to stop the classroom distractions from taking place right at the source—the student workstations.

Unfortunately, his initial trials with classroom computer management software did not go as planned. “I tried the classroom computer management software of several different companies,” says Leonard. “They all suffered from the same fate; students were able to hack, bypass, and uninstall the software which removed my control of the student computers. Even worse, the classroom management software I tried would take down our network and crash the systems which created another pile of headaches for me to repair.”

Mr. Moreno was frustrated with how many problems the school’s classroom computer management software was creating. “It was supposed to simplify classroom computing for the teachers and not complicate it,” says Leonard. He knew the benefits were tangible and achievable, but the quality of the software solutions he tried were just not up to the task. It was then that he came to learn about Faronics Insight from Faronics’ Quarterly Newsletter, which he was subscribed to as a Faronics Deep Freeze customer. “We already use and trust Faronics’ products. Once I saw Faronics had a classroom management solution called Insight, I knew it was something I had to try because it was going to work.”

And it did.

Faronics Insight Empowered Teachers With Total Control Of The Classroom

“I evaluated Faronics Insight and immediately purchased it after my attempts to bypass it failed. When I saw that students could not figure a way around it, I knew I had a solution that truly put me in control. The previous software solutions we tried did not give teachers the control they wanted, the constantly crashing computers and network lag impacted the students, and IT did not like the amount of network bandwidth that was being generated. I am happy to say that none of these issues exist with Faronics Insight.”

Faronics Insight is now deployed on all of Palmdale High School’s desktop and laptop computers.

Here’s why:

Student Proof—“The students cannot bypass it. Previously, students were able to circumvent the classroom control software via the task manager, unplugging the network cable, changing the workstation’s IP address, restarting computers, renaming files. One solution even let students uninstall it by simply downloading the demo version from the website and using its uninstaller!”

Competitive Pricing—“The price was perfect. I did not have to buy a license per computer as the other software solution required. If I added a computer, I had to find the money to purchase a license for it which meant months of that computer being unprotected. With Faronics, I was able to cover my entire lab for under a thousand dollars—even if I decide to add 30 more computers. You simply cannot put a price tag on something that takes the place of a security guard, administrator, or another teacher.”

Student Training—“Students in each class rotate to be the ‘leader’ of the classroom for the day. Students watch another student creating the work instead of them watching me. I put their screen through the projector as I walk the student leader through the daily project while the rest of the class watches. This helps in so many ways. It allows me to help foster student leadership in the class while being available to assist quickly should the student leader need assistance. I also find that students participate more in class as it is one of their peers leading the class and they have a desire to help. Each student knows that it will eventually be their turn so they pay attention more. Finally, it provides students with confidence and recognition by their peers when they do a good job.”

Web Limiting—“Like many schools we have a firewall in place at the district level that takes care of 95% of trouble Internet sites. Faronics Insight picks up the other 5% that becomes a classroom distraction. For the most part these are personal email, shopping and photo searching sites. I like the ability to have a blacklist or whitelist that I can activate at my discretion. I can block the entire Internet if I want to or I can choose to allow access to selected websites.”

Application Limiting—“Insight’s ability to limit student access to applications was another reason we purchased it. The students in my design classes need access to software that I did not want my tech classes to have. I also wanted video games on the computers for use during lunch and after school, but not during class time of course. Before we had Insight, students had to install the software they needed for the day’s class which resulted in a loss of time. Now we can have all the software installed on the computers but limit student access by setting up application profiles for each class.”

Blank Student Screens—“Whenever I need to capture the students’ attention quickly and easily, I blank their screens. I use this feature at the start of every class to get students to focus on the task for the day.”

Remote Control—“Students don’t always like to raise their hands for questions or help. With Faronics Insight I can remote into their computer and help them without leaving my desk. I can quickly see what a student is doing as they are asking a question and give them a tip, or I can take control of the computer and show them how it is done. It’s faster for me, and less intimidating for them.”

Classroom Monitoring—“On the second day of a new class I inform the students about the Faronics software running in the lab. Faronics Deep Freeze prevents the students from making any permanent software changes to the computers, while Faronics Insight gives teachers control of the computers. Students are amazed when I use the projector to show that I can see all their computer screens at the same time. Students understand that I have full control of the computers and that control is enforced when they break the rules. It only takes me seconds to see what everyone is doing versus playing the game of walking around and catching students.”

Print Control—“Students print anything and everything. The only way we could stop them before was to keep the printers off and physically turn them on every time a student wanted to print. Faronics Insight’s print limiting feature has been of great help here; I grant students access to the printer once they show me via monitoring that it is school related. Talk about no more headaches and wasting money for ink and paper.”

Mute Audio—“Students and their music! I am a believer in going with the times; as long as it does not affect their work or their peers I allow students to listen to music in class. However, at times when I need their undivided attention I mute the workstations along with blanking their screens.”

The teachers of Palmdale High School love Faronics Insight for the fact that it provides them with control of the classroom computers, extends their instructional abilities, and that it is both teacher friendly and proof. Although students are not happy about the fact that they can no longer go off task with the computers, they do appreciate the collaboration capabilities and the convenience of Insight’s testing feature.

Reflecting on the impact that technology has had on the classroom, Leonard Moreno remarks “Computers are used now more than ever in the classroom. Having a computer lab creates another layer for teachers to deal with in an already time and resource limited environment. Solutions such as Faronics Insight give teachers the control they need in their labs to teach more effectively and quickly. Today’s classroom needs to be innovative and use the technology students grew up with as part of the learning curriculum.”



Faronics delivers software that helps manage, simplify, and secure desktop computers. Our products ensure users enjoy a trouble-free computing experience, and have freed IT personnel from tedious helpdesk requests. Faronics’ products benefit educational institutions, healthcare facilities, libraries, government organizations, and corporations in over fifty countries worldwide.

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