Hello Parents,

We have received several requests from parents asking if it is possible to block instant messaging, or to disable certain apps on their student's iPad. While we want to encourage students to practice self-discipline, we understand that some may need additional support in this area. Blocking certain features and the installation of new apps is fairly simple to set up, and can be done from home. The iPad Help Desk staff is also available to help with this, should you so desire.

There are a couple things that should be clarified first. If you desire to block the iMessage app, it can only be done on iPads running iOS 6. This means that it is only possible on iPad 2 and later. Blocking the installation of apps can be done on any Monte Vista iPad. Secondly, this process is not foolproof. It will allow you to disable or limit access to multiple features of your child's iPad. It will not, however, make messaging totally impossible. It does make it much less convenient. In order to send messages, a student would need to visit a website (like Facebook) through their web browser. You will be able to delete the apps you don't want your child to use, and have the opportunity to singly approve each app that gets installed on the iPad.

Here's how you do it:
1) Go to Settings.
2) If you will be disabling Messages, choose Messages and turn iMessage off.
3) Choose General
4) Find Restrictions
5) Tap Enable Restrictions and enter a 4 digit code. It is critically important that you never forget this code.
6) Turn off the items you want blocked. We recommend the following to disable easy access to social networking and messages.
    a. Turn Install Apps off. This will remove the App Store from your student's iPad.
    b. Set Accounts to Don't allow changes (This only works in iOS 6). This will disable the Messages app on your student's iPad. It will also make it so they can't change their iCloud, iMessage, Facebook and Twitter accounts.
7) To make it easier to find your iPad, should it be misplaced, we also recommend changing Location Services to Don't Allow Changes after verifying that Find My iPad is on under iCloud Settings.
8) There are additional settings you may choose to set
    a. Turn Explicit Language off – This only affects Siri
    b. Allowed Content
        i. Music "Explicit"
        ii. Allowed Ratings for Movies, TV Shows and Apps
        iii. Books, "Explicit Sexual Content"
    c. In-App Purchases – Some apps allow you to purchase additional, app-related content from inside the app
9) You can, of course, restrict other things, but these are the settings of interest to most parents.

To install an app, either you or the helpdesk would need to enter your Restrictions code. Then turn on "Installing Apps." Do not "Disable Restrictions" as this will turn off ALL of your restrictions, forcing you to recreate all of them. If the ARC is doing the install, they will need to get in touch with you to get your 4-digit code. They will, of course, let you know which app is being installed.

If you have any other questions, you can email arc@mvcs.org.

Monte Vista Christian School iTeam