Lookout Protects Student Privacy

FERPA Compliance Requires a Unified, Converged Security
Platform to Ensure Data Privacy and Protect Education Apps

Established Law, New Challenges

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) became law in 1974. Its purpose is to protect the privacy of the education records of students from Pre-K through higher education. Education records include all information maintained about a student, from test papers and essays to more sensitive data like personally identifiable information (PII) and protected health information (PHI). FERPA violations for improperly exposing education records can lead to penalties as severe as a total revocation of eligibility to receive federal funding.

For decades after FERPA's enactment, protecting education records was straightforward. Learning took place in the classroom, and paper and electronic records were stored and handled on-premises. More recently, education has undergone a dramatic transformation. Learning often occurs remotely, on school-issued Chromebooks and similar devices, as well as on personal devices like mobile phones, tablets, and laptops. Students rely on the Internet, not the local library, to conduct research. Faculty and students use educational apps, often hosted in the cloud, to communicate, collaborate, and assign, complete, and grade homework. Large volumes of education records now reside and travel everywhere, making them much more difficult to protect – raising the complexity of FERPA compliance.

Cyber Threats on the Rise

Education records are more vulnerable than ever, and the PII and PHI they contain make them particularly valuable, especially those of younger children whose identities are fresh. As a result, cyber criminals have trained their sights on the education sector. In 2020, ransomware attacks affected nearly 1,700 U.S. schools, colleges, and universities – a 100% increase from the previous year. In just one-month of 2021, educational organizations suffered over 5.8 million malware incidents, or 63 percent of all such attacks. Data breaches ruin lives and reputations; create downtime, repair, payment, and other costs; and leave education institutions open to the consequences of FERPA violations.

Current Security Solutions Are Inadequate

Today's education industry faces enhanced data and app protection requirements. Preserving the privacy of education records and maintaining FERPA compliance means cybersecurity must work no matter where PII, PHI, and other data goes, which education apps students use, or which websites they attempt to access.
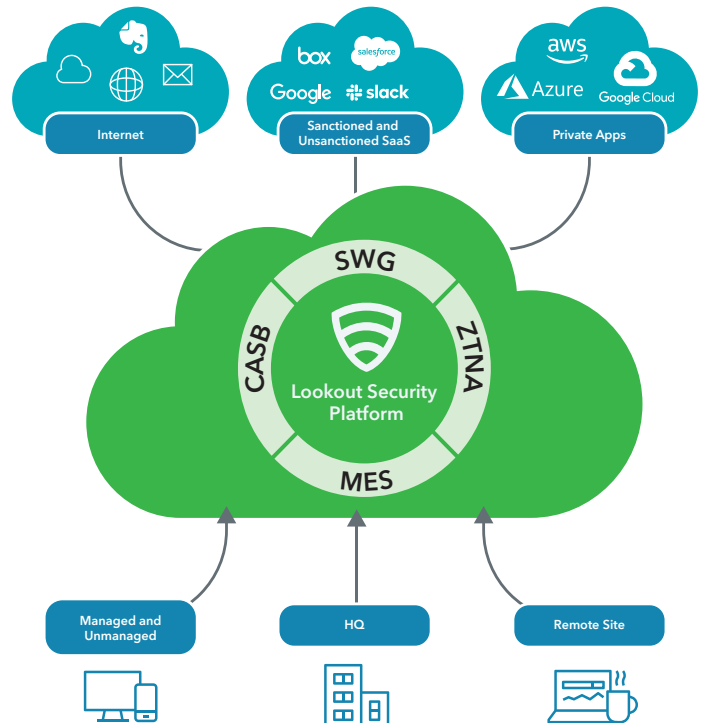
Legacy security solutions support an outdated education delivery model and IT network architecture. They are tied to perimeters where data and users no longer reside exclusively, offering little insight and control over activities occurring on personal devices or cloud apps. Some organizations have begun migrating to cloud-delivered security with features such as secure web gateways to keep students safe by controlling access to the Internet and cloud apps, but these solutions often are deployed in isolation. Security gaps remain open as administrators must switch between consoles to get a clear view of status and performance – failing to eliminate the risk of compromise.

Data Security, Education App Protection & FERPA Compliance Requires a Unified Approach

The Lookout Security Platform eliminates the need for a patchwork of technologies and underqualified point security solutions. With a unified, converged platform of natively built functionality that provides end-to-end data protection and visibility, Lookout:

- Controls and enables access to on-premises and cloud-based apps as students, teachers, families, and administrators require

- Offers endpoint protection for all the devices students use to learn, collaborate, and do their homework, including Chromebooks, iPhones, and iPads

- Creates secure web gateways for safe student web browsing by enforcing policies to block access to sites deemed inappropriate or outside of acceptable use

- Counteracts the efforts of cyber criminals by protecting data wherever it goes and continuously assessing risk by analyzing information gathered from over 200 million devices, 140 million apps, and millions of websites daily — dynamically blocking access to locations where viruses and malware may be present

The Lookout Security Platform delivers these capabilities without impacting the student experience or invading the privacy of the personal apps and data that reside on students' personal mobile devices. The Lookout Security Platform offers the most comprehensive solution to meet the data protection, privacy preservation, and FERPA compliance needs of all educational institutions.

About Lookout

Lookout is an integrated endpoint-to-cloud security company. Our mission is to secure and empower our digital future in a privacy-focused world where mobility and cloud are essential to all we do for work and play. We enable consumers and employees to protect their data, and to securely stay connected without violating their privacy and trust. Lookout is trusted by millions of consumers, the largest enterprises and government agencies, and partners such as AT&T, Verizon, Vodafone,Microsoft, Google, and Apple. Headquartered in San Francisco, Lookout has offices in Amsterdam, Boston, London, Sydney, Tokyo, Toronto and Washington, D.C. To learn more, visit www.lookout.com and follow Lookout on its blog LinkedIn, and Twitter.