

Protect Your Zoom Meetings

Keep Yourself and Your Students Safe in Online Classrooms

CSDSIP InSight Newsletter | April 2020



Many of our Members are using [Zoom](#) in order to teach classes from home during COVID-19 social distancing restrictions. However, the spike in application usage has also led to a spike in trolling, hijacking, and other abuse of these platforms, causing problems ranging from annoying interruptions to serious offenses.

ARS Technica, a leading technology publication aimed at IT professionals and technologists, provides [an in-depth guide for educators on how to best protect your virtual classroom](#). Below, CSDSIP has summarized key points and tips from the ARS Technica article.

Best Practices for Zoom Classrooms

- **Password protect your meetings.** Requiring a password to gain entry to a digital classroom is the best way to make sure only your class has access. Changing the password every lesson will provide the highest level of protection, but might not be practical. Giving students a standard password that does not change (such as your school mascot, or the teachers name) can help provide a first-layer of protection while remaining simple to implement.
- **Avoid announcing meetings on social media or elsewhere that the public can see.** It's best to send meeting details out over email, rather than announcing schedules on the school website or

facebook page, where anyone with a search engine can know when and where a class is taking place

- **Pay attention to your participant list** and kick out any user you do not recognize
- **Calibrate user settings to meet your needs.** If you do not need screen sharing for your class, turn it off completely in your user settings so that it cannot be abused. The better control you have over what users can impact, the more interruptions you can avoid completely
- **Disable the "Join before host" feature and make use of your digital "Waiting room".** Make sure you are first into the digital room and can monitor attendance requests before accepting viewers. These two measures will help assure teachers that they know who is attending their class
- **Once a class begins, lock it.** The downside of this measure is it prevents late arrivals from joining a class. However, it also gives trolls a very short window in which to join, and prevents them from interrupting a class after it has started.
- **Pay attention to what your camera can see.** Avoid leaving private information within view of your camera for any reason, and make sure to double-check that you only have your students in your virtual classroom before you share things like class schedules or future meeting plans.
- **Use your best-protected browser.** Zoom provides an application for use, but if you choose that option you skip out on any extra protection that might be browser specific.

As always, Members who have questions about any of this advice should give CSDSIP a call at [303.722.2600](tel:303.722.2600)