

LightSpeed Web Zones

Web Zones - Introduction

Web Zones are a powerful tool for balancing IT and educator administration. Admins: learn more [here](#).

Your Internet filtering software from Lightspeed Systems includes the ability to create customized web zones. These web zones are like virtual rooms that teachers create and manage. Students can request to join these web zones by navigating to a web page in their browser. Within these zones any teacher authorized as a web zone administrator can specify rules for what web sites the students can or cannot access. Teachers can even override existing content filter rules.

EXAMPLE: So, let's say you were teaching a unit on how special effects are produced in movies. You may have five web sites that you would like your fifth graders to use for research, but two of them are blocked by the content filter. Instead of going to your IT staff for help, now you can take matters into your own hands and add the two sites to a web zone. Once a student has joined that web zone, the rules will now be applied to their browsing session.

Open Zones

Open zones are created on the fly. They are called open simply because authorized teachers can create them at any time from any where, and students can request access to these zones when the zone is active. This functionality differs from a fixed zone in that fixed zones apply to specific IP's or IP address ranges. If a teacher or student is within one of these IP ranges as setup by the IT staff, the users are automatically placed into that zone and do not have the option to leave.

Once IT has specified you as an authorized web zone administrator, you can manage your open zones by simply opening a web browser and navigating to **<http://netfilter.oakparkusd.org/zones>**.

Login using your regular network credentials. To create a new web zone, you'll first give it a good descriptive name, starting with your last name like "Smith - Special Effects in Movies."

Whenever an open web zone is created the zone is automatically activated as noted by the toggling Active/Inactive button at the top right. Just below, you'll see we have a user management panel containing lists for pending user requests and joined users. Your students will have access to a web page where they can request to join an active web zone.

Right below the user management panel are the domain rules. From our example, we'd want to add under the Allowed List the two sites that are normally blocked by the content filter. Essentially you are expanding your students' normal access rights to include these two additional sites. So you don't have to enter all five sites you want them to use, only those that are normally blocked.

IMPORTANT: Do not include the protocol (<http://> or <https://>) in your domain rules.

However, if you want to help your students stay on task, we can enter all five web sites and select the “block all domains expect for allowed list” (under the Block List). This restricts use of the Internet to only the five sites located in the Allowed box.

TIP: You’ll need to communicate the web zone name for students to join it. In addition, if you’ve limited their access to a few sites, you’ll need to provide these web addresses separately because the rules are not displayed for students to see. Perhaps you could include them in the assignment, in favorites/bookmarks, or on your whiteboard.

Joining a Web Zone

Your students will open a web browser and navigate to the “join request” page– **http://netfilter.oakparkusd.org/joinzone**

TIP: You may want to bookmark this “join request” page on each computer or have a shortcut on the desktop to assist your students.

From this page students will be asked for first and last name and the name of the web zone you wish for them to join. When the user begins to type in the name of the web zone, all matching and active web zones will be displayed to select from. Once a student has sent the join request, they will not be able to join another zone until the teacher takes action upon that request.

You’ll see here on the zone management page that a request type of “join request” requires your response. Once you allow that student to join the zone, they are admitted; and the browsing rules of the zone are applied to them.

Students wishing to leave the zone for any reason can submit a “leave request” from the page where they first requested to join the zone. The system knows that they are already joined to a zone and prompts them with the appropriate action. Again once the student submits the request to leave the zone, the teacher sees a request type of leave request and can release the student from the zone.

IMPORTANT: Users can be joined to just one web zone at a time. So be sure to accept their leave requests in a timely fashion. Note, you can select all requests at once.

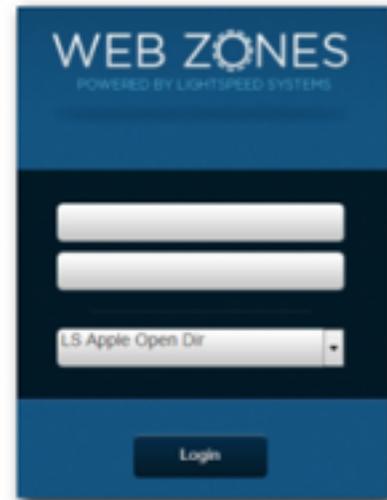
Three types of Web Zones

- Created in the Web Filter:
 - *Fixed zones* are defined by static IPs (set up by IT department only)
 - *Open zones* allow any user to request membership and likewise request dismissal (set up by teachers)
- Created in My Big Campus (see [Tech Note: Customizing student web access with Web Zones](#))

DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS

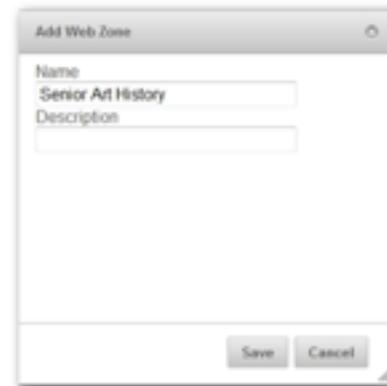
The Web Zone Login

Open Web Zones are created on the fly by teachers in the Web Zone View portal. Students can request to join these web zones by navigating to a web page in their browser. Navigate to <http://netfilter.oakparkusd.org/zones>, and then log in with My Big Campus credentials



Creating a new open Web Zone

- 1. Click Add Web Zone.
- 2. Enter a meaningful name that students will be able to locate easily from the Join a Web Zone page, and then click Save.



Configuring the Web Zone

The next step is to configure the Web Zone Rules.

- From the Web Zone Rules dashboard, click to select the Web Zone to configure, and then click the Rules button.
- Enter URLs in the Allowed Sites and Blocked Sites lists, and then click Save Rules.
- Note the option to Block all URLs (except for allow list).

Note: Sites in the porn and security categories will always be blocked, even if a Web Zone manager uses "*" to allow all available URLs.

Activating a Web Zone

- 1. Click the green "start" icon to activate a Web Zone.

When a zone is active, you will see a countdown of the remaining time. To change the remaining time, click the timer to open a dropdown list.



Managing Web Zone Users

- 1. Click Users to view and manage web zone memberships. You must approve requests to join and leave an Open Web Zone.

The screenshot shows the 'Web Zones' management interface. At the top, the title 'WEB ZONES' is displayed with the tagline 'POWERED BY LIGHTSPEED SYSTEMS'. A 'Logout' link is in the top right corner. The main content area is for a zone named 'Senior Art History', which has a duration of '1 hour and 19 minutes'. Below the zone name, there are tabs for 'Users' (selected) and 'Rules'. A message states 'User authentication is turned off.' The interface is divided into three columns: 'Join Requests' (empty, with the text 'No one is currently requesting access'), 'Members' (containing one member, 'Gwen Barnes', with details: 'Location: 10.16.3.142', 'Entered Zone: 9 minutes ago', and a 'RELEASE' button), and 'Leave Requests' (empty, with the text 'No one is currently requesting to leave'). At the bottom, there is a 'Delete this Web Zone' button.

How does a user join a Web Zone?

The Join Web Zone page is the student portal for Web Zone users.

From this page, students can:

- Search for web zones to join
- Request to join a web zone
- Request to leave a web zone
- The Join Web Zone page is hosted on the Lightspeed Systems Rocket Appliance. To reach the page, users navigate to <http://netfilter.oakparkusd.org/joinzone> and then search for active Web Zones to join.

WEB ZONES
POWERED BY LIGHTSPEED SYSTEMS

1 Find a Web Zone
Type the name and we'll start suggesting

senio

Senior Art History

A student selects a Web Zone to join, and is then prompted for first and last names, or network login name and password, depending on how the Web Zone is configured.

1 Find a Web Zone
Type the name and we'll start suggesting.

Senior Art History

2 Enter your name.

Send Request

The Web Zone manager can then approve or ignore the student's request to join the zone.

WEB ZONES
POWERED BY LIGHTSPEED SYSTEMS

Your request to join "Senior Art History" is pending.

When it's time to leave a web zone, the student sends another request.



Note: Students can only join one Web Zone at a time, and cannot leave a Web Zone until removed by the Web Zone manager (teacher), or the zone is deactivated.
What do teachers need to know about using open zones in the classroom?

- **Note:**
 - Schools using the Web Filter and My Big Campus can now allow designated teachers to manage Web Zones from within the My Big Campus interface. Find out more here:
 - [Bob blog: Teachers: Customize web access for students in Web Zones](#)
 - [Tech Note: Customizing student web access with Web Zones](#)