



Unified Classroom for Self-Hosted Customers – Requirements Guide

PowerSchool Student Information System

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide PowerSchool customers with an understanding of the requirements specific to the implementation of the PowerSchool Unified Classroom platform, hosted by PowerSchool, and a self-hosted PowerSchool SIS deployment that resides within the district's own IT infrastructure.

The PowerSchool Unified Classroom platform and the PowerSchool SIS are two integral parts of the PowerSchool Unified Classroom solution that rely heavily on real-time data synchronization. To ensure the data in transit for synchronization is secure and protected between the self-hosted PowerSchool SIS database and the PowerSchool Unified Classroom environment, which is hosted by PowerSchool, a Virtual Private Network (VPN) is utilized. The PowerSchool provided VPN solution from Cato Networks creates an encrypted connection between the two endpoints, known as a tunnel, over a less secure network, such as the public Internet.

The tight integration between the PowerSchool Unified Classroom platform and the PowerSchool SIS platform requires strict adherence to PowerSchool SIS version release compatibility. For proper PowerSchool Unified Classroom functionality, the customer's self-hosted PowerSchool SIS deployment must remain on a PowerSchool SIS version release that is supported with the PowerSchool Unified Classroom platform.

In addition to the VPN and PowerSchool SIS version release compatibility, the PowerSchool Unified Classroom solution must maintain a stable, persistent network connection between the PowerSchool Hosting network and customer's network where the self-hosted PowerSchool SIS deployment resides.

Important Notes

- This document is intended for system administrators. To use this document, you must be familiar with network security technologies and network protocols.
- The PowerSchool Unified Classroom solution with a self-hosted PowerSchool SIS deployment requires a valid Enterprise Management Service (EMS) subscription through the PowerSchool Technical Solutions Group (TSG).
- The PowerSchool Technical Solutions Group (TSG) will work with the district to establish the VPN connection as part of Enterprise Management Service (EMS).
- All customers must use the PowerSchool provided VPN solution from Cato Networks.
- Throughput and stability of the VPN connection will be dependent upon the quality and speed of the customer's Internet Service Provider and LAN.
- The Unified Classroom solution with a self-hosted PowerSchool SIS deployment is only available to customers where data resides in the US and Canada.

Virtual Private Network

The VPN provides a secure mechanism for encrypting and encapsulating private network traffic between two endpoints and moving it through an intermediate network such as the public Internet. Data confidentiality, security, and integrity are achieved with an encryption key. Without the correct encryption key, intercepted data packets cannot be deciphered.

The PowerSchool provided VPN solution from Cato Networks leverages the Cato Cloud, which is a private global backbone of multiple, redundant point of presence (PoPs) connected via multiple Tier 1, SLA-backed carriers. The self-hosted PowerSchool SIS database server utilizes a Cato Client to establish a persistent, unidirectional connection to allow for real-time data synchronization with the PowerSchool Unified Classroom environment, which is also directly connected to the Cato Cloud. The Cato Client installed on the self-hosted PowerSchool SIS database server will automatically reconnect if there is a connection failure or server reboot.

The sole purpose for the VPN is to enable communication between the PowerSchool Unified Classroom environment, which is hosted by PowerSchool, and the self-hosted PowerSchool SIS database server. Network traffic between the self-hosted PowerSchool SIS database server using the Cato Client and the Cato Cloud is restricted for ODBC traffic only over TCP Port 1521. All other network traffic on the self-hosted PowerSchool SIS database server will utilize local connections outside of the Cato Client.



Additional Requirements

For the PowerSchool Unified Classroom solution with a self-hosted PowerSchool SIS deployment to function properly, the following technical, software and operational requirements must be met.

Network Specifications

Maximum network latency of 10ms between PowerSchool Hosting network and district's network where the self-hosted PowerSchool SIS deployment resides.

Bandwidth Specifications

Minimum Internet upload and download speeds of 1.5 Mbps per 3,000 students where the self-hosted PowerSchool SIS deployment resides.

District IT Personnel

The district will be responsible to provide a point of contact to assist PowerSchool personnel in obtaining access to Internet and the PowerSchool SIS database server on which the Cato Client will be installed.

PowerSchool SIS Version Release

The district must upgrade to the minimum PowerSchool SIS version release that is compatible with the PowerSchool Unified Classroom platform. This will usually be the latest PowerSchool SIS version release available. For this reason, the customer may have limited time to test new PowerSchool SIS features prior to implementing them in production.

The district must adhere to a published PowerSchool SIS version release upgrade schedule that complies with the PowerSchool Unified Classroom platform upgrade schedule. It will be common that each PowerSchool Unified Classroom platform release will also require a PowerSchool SIS version release upgrade. As part of the EMS subscription, TSG will ensure the district's PowerSchool SIS is updated per the published schedule.

The PowerSchool Unified Classroom platform upgrades are applied during a maintenance window beginning Friday evenings and can run through the weekend. If required, the PowerSchool SIS must be upgraded in this same maintenance window due to data synchronization requirements. District will be notified of scheduled maintenance windows through email communications.