

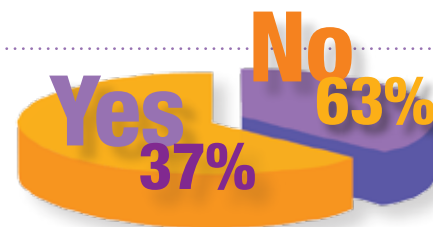
# READERS **respond**

L&L wants your opinion!  
Send comments to [letters@iste.org](mailto:letters@iste.org).  
Participate in our monthly reader poll at  
<http://www.iste.org/LL>.

## POLL RESULTS

### Should RFID be Used to Monitor Students?

The majority of those who voted in our poll were opposed to the use of radio frequency identification technology in schools; poll comments were mixed.



#### It's a Useful Tool

RFID is a cheap technology that can help track students anytime, anyplace. If a dangerous intruder enters a school, RFID would give the best picture of the situation. Limitations to this information would need to be in place, but the concept fills a need.

*Michael Baker  
South Side Area School District  
Hookstown, Pennsylvania*

#### Students Aren't Animals

I tend to agree with Mr. Allan [Jones] [*Point/Counterpoint*, Nov., 2006, (pp. 8–9)]. Just because we have new technology does not mean we should use it in the same old way. If indeed an inexpensive plastic ID can be used to swipe in for attendance, food, library books, and this is available, easily implemented, and costs less, why do we need RFID for monitoring? Instead, we need to make use of the technol-

ogy we already have to automate these processes to save time, manual labor, and money. It would seem using RFID with students is similar to putting a chip in a dog—to locate it if it is lost or stolen. Extending that thought, we will need to imbed the chip in the students' bodies, like we do with dogs, in random locations so the devices are not easily removed by those that would steal our children. Surely RFID can be put to better use.

*Sandi Atols  
Chicago Public Schools  
Chicago, Illinois*

#### Facilitates Continuous Learning

In my opinion, RFID should be used to safely and efficiently expand the learning environment. I believe that RFID has the capability to help usher in a “learning anytime/anywhere” model for public schools. Schools partnering with health clubs to provide PE classes, for example, and being able to track a student's interaction with specific equipment for accountability and safety, is absolutely amazing. It opens up new doors for continuous learning with new levels of safety and accountability.

*Rod Aust  
Willamette Education Service District  
Salem, Oregon*

#### Inhumane, Unconstitutional

NO!!! Our students are humans and we live in America—land of the free.

*Cheryl Lyman  
William Tennent High School,  
Warminster, Pennsylvania*

## LETTERS

### Exception to Favata's Counterpoint

I rarely feel the need to respond in writing to something I've read in a publication, but need to take exception with Chuck Favata's statements in *Point/Counterpoint* [Dec./Jan., 2006]—particularly the analogy he uses comparing social networks to candy cigarettes.

I don't know of any employers who insist that employees smoke to keep their jobs. However, I do know of a growing number of companies that require staff members to use social networking applications. For example, all journalists for *Business 2.0* magazine must blog, and a major newspaper recently imposed the same requirement for its reporters. Not to mention the companies that now Google employees' names and take disciplinary action when they find inappropriate material posted online.

I prefer to compare use of social networking applications to driving. We all know that putting a teenager

behind the wheel of a car can be dangerous—even deadly. However, we also recognize that not being able to drive is a serious social and economic handicap for most Americans. And so, we don't forbid our children to drive and we don't wait until they're of legal driving age, hand them a set of car keys, and then hope for the best.

Instead, we make every effort to teach them how to drive sensibly and responsibly. In most cases, this works. We need to treat social networking the same way, by teaching students how to use it constructively and avoid pitfalls. Will this approach protect every teen? No. However, ignoring social networks and leaving kids to their own devices leads to more harm than good, and causes us to lose valuable opportunities to teach students to take advantage of this powerful tool for collaboration.

*Susan Brooks-Young  
S.J. Brooks-Young Consulting  
Lopez Island, Washington*