ÉPREUVES ÉCRITES D’ADMISSIBILITÉ

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ANGLAIS

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Texte au verso
Under digital surveillance: how American schools spy on millions of kids

The Guardian - Tue 22 Oct 2019

Fueled by fears of school shootings, the market has grown rapidly for technologies that monitor students through official school emails and chats.

For Adam Jasinski, a technology director for a school district outside of St Louis, Missouri, monitoring student emails used to be a time-consuming job. Jasinski used to do keyword searches of the official school email accounts for the district’s 2,600 students, looking for words like “suicide” or “marijuana”. Then he would have to read through every message that included one of the words. The process would occasionally catch some concerning behavior, but “it was cumbersome”, Jasinski recalled.

Last year Jasinski heard about a new option: following the school shooting in Parkland, Florida, the technology company Bark was offering schools free, automated, 24-hour-a-day surveillance of what students were writing in their school emails, shared documents and chat messages, and sending alerts to school officials any time the monitoring technology flagged concerning phrases.

Before his school used Bark, the principal said, school officials would not know about cyberbullying or a student talking about hurting themselves unless one of their friends decided to tell an adult about it. Now, he said, “Bark has taken that piece out of it. The other student doesn’t have to feel like they’re betraying or tattling or anything like that.”

Bark and similar tech companies are now monitoring the emails and documents of millions of American students, across thousands of school districts, looking for signs of suicidal thoughts, bullying or plans for a school shooting.

The new school surveillance technology doesn’t turn off when the school day is over: anything students type in official school email accounts, chats or documents is monitored 24 hours a day, whether students are in their classrooms or their bedrooms.

Tech companies are also working with schools to monitor students’ web searches and internet usage, and, in some cases, to track what they are writing on public social media accounts.

Parents and students are still largely unaware of the scope and intensity of school surveillance, privacy experts say, even as the market for these technologies has grown rapidly, fueled by fears of school shootings, particularly in the wake of the Parkland shooting in February 2018, which left 17 people dead.

Unlike gun control, Marlow said, “Surveillance is politically palatable, and so they’re pursuing surveillance as a way you can demonstrate action, even though there’s no evidence that it will positively impact the problem.”