

By BROOKE STEINBERG
and MARIE POHL

Big Brother in the school toilet

They're tracking your movements.

New York City public-school students are crying *ewww* over a new digital-hall-pass scheme that allows nosy teachers to closely monitor how long their students are actually spending in the bathroom and hallways.

SmartPass, which has been rolled out to 167 schools, lets Big Brother educators know exactly how long the pass-holder has left a classroom, tallies their overall missed class time and can be used to detect unauthorized socializing in the hallways during teaching time.

The manufacturer calls its brainchild "empowering" — allowing fewer class interruptions, for a start, as all pass requests are done via iPad. Students and advocates, however, call the toilet-tracking tool dystopian.

"How would that even work?" Union Square Academy for Health Sciences senior Nairobi H., 17, asked The Post. Upon learning that the SmartPass tracks the time, she suggested it was inherently invasive and could easily have a negative impact on students' behavior.

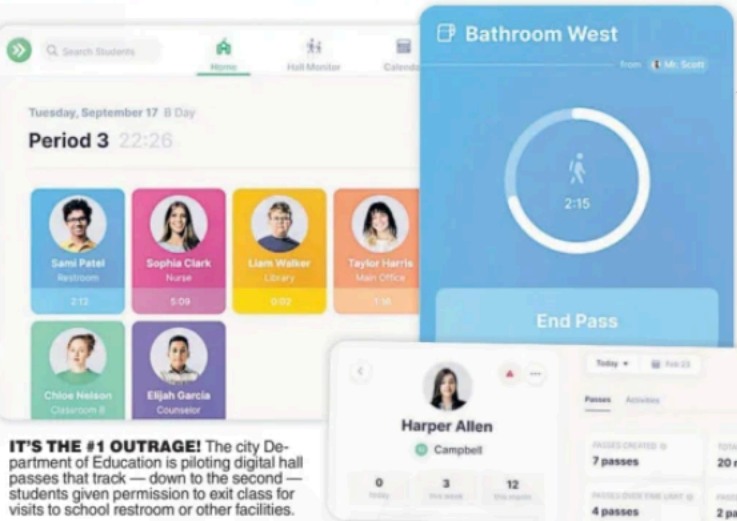
Compelled to rush

"I would be uncomfortable because then I would have to rush doing what I'm doing. And that wouldn't feel nice," said Nairobi, who already uses cards when she goes to the bathroom and didn't see a functional difference between the SmartPass and her card.

Public records showed that the city Department of Education spent \$368,000 on SmartPass contracts in 2025 and \$120,000 the year before. Based on the number of schools currently using it, the cost is roughly \$2,200 per school.

This spending comes as the city's Independent Budget Office said the city needs to shave \$535 million to close budget gaps in the current fiscal year.

"It's just creepy," Johanna Miller, director of education policy at the New York Civil Liberties Union, told Gothamist, adding SmartPass will "inevitably turn a student into a product and turn a student's behavior into a long-term record that is exploitable, hackable and can be



IT'S THE #1 OUTRAGE! The city Department of Education is piloting digital hall passes that track — down to the second — students given permission to exit class for visits to school restroom or other facilities.

Digital pass timing visits

used against the kids."

The DOE is claiming the pricey technology has been vetted to make sure student data is protected.

"NYC Public Schools takes student privacy seriously, and we follow all city, state and federal privacy regulations. All approved tools meet strict privacy and security standards," DOE spokesperson Onika Richards told The Post.

"No school is required to adopt this tool, and supervisory discretion

at the school level allows for individual locations to choose to procure and implement approved software that meets their needs. We take all public and student feedback seriously and believe in trust and transparency across our schools."

But that doesn't necessarily calm nerves, said Nairobi, who pointed out that the Big Brother aspect would haunt anyone, anywhere, whether in school or in public.

"Like, if you were walking down

the street and you knew that somebody was watching you, like, following wherever you go?" she told The Post. "I feel like most people just would feel uncomfortable about the idea of that."

Another student noted teachers can put a time limit on how long they can be in the bathroom.

"The teachers can put timers on how long you can be in the bathroom for... I was [given] 30 seconds by one teacher."

New Hays Film Code Lauded, Assailed as "Flapdoodle"

Editors: Glenn Frank and Other: Executive Producers: Librarian Critics: Dorian Fox Expressions In Periodic—Arthur Conolly: Days in Opposition

'Code' to the movies

The Post is counting down to America's 250th birthday with a look back at the nation's — and the paper's — history. Every day leading up to the big event on July 4, 2026, we're publishing notable covers and stories from our archives:

April 1, 1930 — The Hays Code hits Hollywood

"New Hays Code Lauded, Assailed as 'Flapdoodle'" read a headline at the bottom of the front page a day after the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America adopted a strict new set of morality guidelines. The Hays Code barred profanity, substance use, homosexuality, ridiculing religion and much more from the movies.

Some — including Thomas Edison — cheered it, while others regarded it as an "April Fool Day Joke" or "something more sinister, an effort to institute an autocratic control over an agency which should be free, both intellectually and artistically." Despite its divisiveness, the code persisted for decades until the studio system collapsed in the '50s and '60s and the modern movie-rating system was adopted in 1968.

Will Zimmerman

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Evening Nos. Wed.: 673	Pick-3 Wed.: 216; Fireball: 5
Evening Win-4 Wed.: 5269	Pick-4 Wed.: 0973; Fireball: 5
Evening Take-5 Wed.: 10, 14, 21, 35, 36	Cash-5 Xtra Wed.: 7, 11, 34, 35, 44; Xtra: 3
Lotto Wed.: 16, 39, 44, 47, 48, 57; Bonus: 7	CONNECTICUT
Pick-10 Wed.: 2, 9, 12, 13, 14, 17, 23, 31, 32, 39, 43, 44, 46, 54, 59, 60, 64, 74, 78, 79	Play-3 Wed.: 182; Wild: 9
	Play-4 Wed.: 9883; Wild: 9
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POST CONTACTS

Editorial	Postmaster: Send address changes to The New York Post, 1211 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10036-8790.
Main Office (212) 924-6000	Vol. 225, No. 131. Copyright © 2026, NYP Holdings Inc. (USPS-383200)
News Tips (212) 924-6000	Published daily by NYP Holdings Inc., 1211 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10036-8790.
Sports Desk (212) 924-6000	
Circulation and Home Delivery	
Customer Service (800) 633-3279	
Mail subscription & back issues only:	
Phone (800) 633-3279 or contact New York Post, P.O. Box 1407, Bellmawr, NJ, 08099. Foreign and domestic mail subscription rates available upon request to the Publishers Information Center, Inc.	