



# WiscNet Elects M86 to Lead Wisconsin Schools, Government, and Public Services with a Hardware Filtering Solution

**Client:**

WiscNet

**Web Site:**

www.wiscnet.net

**Number of Users:**

64,000+

**Requirements:**

Web Filtering and Reporting

**Solutions:**

M86 Web Filter and Reporter

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Kika Barr  
Technical Support Manager  
WiscNet

## Profile

Wisconsin State Education Research Network (WiscNet) is a non-profit, membership-based association. It consists of public and private organizations that provide high quality, cost-effective network services and access to worldwide information and computing resources in Wisconsin. Members of WiscNet include the State of Wisconsin, virtually all of Wisconsin’s colleges and universities, more than 75 percent of the state’s K-12 school districts, consortiums, most library systems, many local and municipal governments, and several non-profit affiliated organizations.

## Challenge

WiscNet was experiencing many performance problems with their former software Internet filtering solution, such as failure to connect to the Internet, bottlenecks, and difficult manageability. Technical Support Manager, Kika Barr also found the software filter to be unscalable: “The hardware was not scaling for the number of users we had. We kept putting in more servers, which became very costly, but the performance problems never stopped. We had several complaints from our members, which forced us to look for another option.”

With over 64,000 users, each small problem created by the software filter was creating a large obstacle for WiscNet members. Rich Turiel, Technical Support Specialist, says, “Our clients include network administrators, government officials, school board members, and parents. We can’t afford to have glitches in the network, because they don’t just affect us, but over 450 widely varying organizations.”

Whether WiscNet members are schools or government facilities, they share basic objectives in Internet safety:

1. Block unacceptable Web sites and protect both students and employees from harmful content
2. Save bandwidth
3. Reduce exposure to legal liability due to inappropriate Web content
4. Minimize security threats from malware, spyware, and adware
5. Improve student and employee productivity
6. Comply with federal laws such as CIPA

“M86 was the only solution that fit all these requirements and more,” says Mr. Turiel.

## Solution

The scalable and high-performing M86 Web Filter and Reporter (M86 WFR) is designed to secure against Internet threats, ensuring regulatory compliance and lower TCO.

“We are pleased with M86 and its ability to stay competitive in the Web filtering market. But it is in the customer service that M86 really shines.”

Rich Turiel  
Technical Support Specialist

## ABOUT M86 SECURITY

M86 Security is the global expert in real-time threat protection and the industry's leading Secure Web Gateway provider. The company's appliance, software, and Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions for Web and email security protect more than 24,000 customers and over 17 million users worldwide. M86 products use patented real-time code analysis and behavior-based malware detection technologies as well as threat intelligence from M86 Security Labs to protect networks against new and advance threats, secure confidential information, and ensure regulatory compliance. The company is based in Orange, California with international headquarters in London and development centers in California, Israel, and New Zealand.

M86 supports and maintains the operating system, the Web filtering and reporting applications, and the hardware platform, unlike software vendors who leave administrators to determine which component of the hardware, OS and filtering software is at fault if there is ever a problem. Because of this, M86's clients never experience finger pointing between vendors. “M86's staff gives great response time, they are very flexible and they listen. They consistently take the time to help us,” states Ms. Barr.

In addition, the M86 appliance and its operating system have been optimized to provide best-of-breed performance and functionality. Finally, there are no premium categories, which means no premium pricing.

Key features include:

- “X-Strikes” Blocking: Sets limits on users attempting to access “inappropriate sites”
- Google and Yahoo SafeSearch Enforcement: Blocks access to inappropriate content within the Google/Yahoo search engines, including images
- Real-time Probes allow administrators to monitor user Web activity as it occurs
- Anonymous Proxy blocking
- Flexible detailed reporting and archiving of Web activities (Enterprise Reporter)

The WiscNet team's favorite feature? IP Group Management. “The IP Group Management has allowed us to provide our customers with the ability to manage and customize their filtering options on a real-time basis. This allows individual schools to be more specific about what they want to block without blocking legitimate sites,” says Mr. Turiel.

## Result

Because network availability 24/7 is the order of the day, WiscNet found it made the right choice with M86. There are no single points of failure and the appliances are far easier to configure and manage than software-based filters. This makes servicing Wisconsin's education, research and public service constituencies that much more pleasant.

“The M86 WFR has helped alleviate WiscNet staff time and improve customers' perception of our service,” says Ms. Barr. “Since we first purchased the product in 2000, it has grown and improved consistently, showing that M86 is serious about providing good service.”

Mr. Turiel states, “We are pleased with M86 and its ability to stay competitive in the Web filtering market. But it is in the customer service that M86 Security really shines.”

## TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

M86 Security offers free product trials and evaluations. Simply contact us or visit [www.m86security.com/downloads](http://www.m86security.com/downloads)



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