

TECHNOLOGY TIPS

SEPTEMBER 4, 2007

VOLUME 2, EDITION 1

Heeeeyyyy!!!! We're Baaaccckkk!!!

Let me be the first to officially say, "Where did the summer go???" To tell you the truth, I haven't the foggiest idea.

Well, now that's been said, we can get on with the business at hand. We're back and there is a whole new year of meeting challenges, overcoming obstacles, and generally having a grand time doing it all. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Ed Musiak and I'm the Instructional Technology Specialist assigned here to the High School of Commerce. For those of you who do already know me, I'm still Ed Musiak (although I don't admit it in public nearly as much as I used to).

What I'm here to do is help you integrate the technology requirements of all your content areas into your lessons

and planning. I can also help you with the actual execution of those plans in the class by co-teaching, modeling strategies for you, and basically everything you can think of when it comes to making the experiences of our students as grounded in the 21st century as we can.

Now there are obstacles that some folks already know about concerning the availability and reliability of the technology in the building. Let me say that over the first year that I was here, we made some great strides. We're going to make more this year.

I worked with many of you last year (most of you actually) and I think that's the first area where we can start to make some moves. I'd like to make sure that all of us continue to improve on the work

we've done already. That means getting our series of trainings for the different areas of need on track for all of our teachers. They'll be held in my office (B155) just as they were last year and will include:

1. The use and care of your HSC computer. 1 hr.
2. Using MS Word in the classroom for more than word processing 1 hr
3. Grade Keeper and other Teacher Tools 1 hr
4. PowerPoint in the classroom. 1 hr
5. Web Page design 1 hr
6. Using and maintaining your SPS e-mail account. 1 hr
7. Classroom Management Techniques for folks who haven't used technology in the

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STUFF YOU NEED TO KNOW

ALL THE FOLLOWING ARE AVAILABLE IN B155 WITH MR. MUSIAK:

- ◆ I am available to co-plan, co-teach, and work out just about any other method for the integration of technology in your classroom. I am a good resource for ideas and inspiration when you find yourself in a bind trying to find an activity that will make the most appropriate connection with a lesson.
- ◆ The GradeKeeper registration key.
- ◆ Schedule a time to get trained for laptop cart. No training = No laptop cart use.
- ◆ E-mail accounts sign up
- ◆ Information on school based technology mini-workshops.
- ◆ If you'd like to start your own area on the HSC web pages, please set up an appointment with Mr. Musiak to find out the particulars for posting and some of the really nifty ideas you can use for creating a viable educational presence on the web.

Things that are available to us...part one...

There are a number of things that are available to all of us here at the good ol' HS of C (technology resource-wise). Probably the most important of the things that I can say will make your life a good deal easier is the program GradeKeeper.

Basically it's a course record platform that lets you: keep detailed grades for assignments, records of attendance, short notes on students, behavior, among other classroom record keeping tasks.

Another one of the

things that are available to us here at HSC is the ability to have a teacher page attached to the Commerce web pages. Having used my pages as a platform where I could; assign material, give tests and other assessments, I can say that the use of the Internet as another way of making sure that academic standards are met and documented. is an incredibly effective one when we take into account the use of multimedia and today's high speed connections being very much available to people in any num-

ber of places (school, home, public libraries, and civic organizations to name a few).

One example of the use of your teacher pages on the HSC site might be to have the expectations letter for your students on-line either as a hyperlinked file or an open document. That would certainly be one way to eliminate the excuse, "I didn't know anything about that" when it comes up in a discussion about the student's grade. You'll always be able to say, "It's on the webpage."



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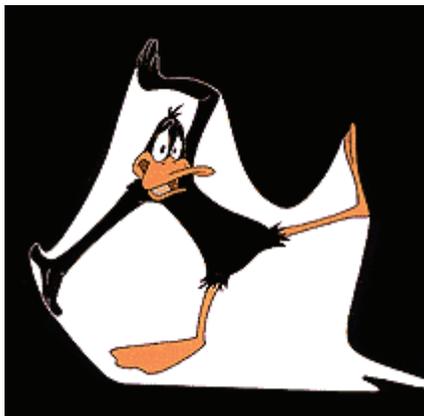
classroom 1hr

- 8. Laptop Cart training– everyone needs to have this training in order to sign out the carts. If you don't take it, well... you get the picture.
- 9. PC Basics– this one's an extension of "the care of your HSC computer..." a pretty good idea to take.

There will be more of these sorts of offerings over the course of the year, but I just want you to get an idea of the things that will be made avail-

able to everyone.

As I've said before, there will also be times when you might want me to come in and show you



Feeling a bit overwhelmed?

how some of this can be applied in your situation. Those are the times when we'll get together, plan things out (you know, expectations, learning activities, activators, mini lessons, that sort of thing), and then co-teach if you'd like. I'm a fairly versatile kind of guy that way.

Any way you slice or dice it, the year's going to be very busy for all of us and I want you all to know that I'm here to help you navigate through your content area's requirements with regard to technology and its integration into your classroom.

Wireless access coming to the High School of Commerce!

There has been a great deal of talk about the ability of the HSC to have wireless access to the school network and the rest of the world. The way I understand it, the project has been approved for funding by the E-rate program, however...(you knew this was coming didn't you?) the actual project still has yet to be scheduled for installation as it was origi-

nally intended (the first plans that were approved).

What this means is, we'll be getting wireless access sometime in the fairly near future. That could be within a couple of months, by the first couple of months in 2008, or by the end of the year. It's all a bit nebulous. But the important part is, we'll be

getting it!!! Woohoo!!!



MUSIC IS A GREAT TENSION RELAXER.

"I have never let my schooling interfere with my education."

Mark Twain

New e-mail accounts

Hi all!!!! This is mainly for the new folks who probably haven't gotten their e-mail accounts yet and are just starting to realize, "Oh my Gawd!!! There's more stuff I have to know?"

Here at The High School of Commerce, many of the announcements and communications between staff are carried out via e-mail. It's a bit more convenient than having announcements made over the school's "intercom" or having to kill of a rain-

forest to make the massive amount of paper it would take to get the many memos out to all of us.

Basically it goes like this, there are several ways to sign up, the first of which is to ask the lovely office staff if you could have one of the forms for an account. Fill it out, then give it to them and they'll send it to the account administrator. Over at the PD building.

The second is very simply to ask me. I'm here in B155 and whenever the

door's open, come on in!!! I'd be glad to help you get things going (it'll take the same amount of time as the first method, especially in the first couple of weeks, but it's still nice to say hi anyway).

There are other ways, but they involve bribery and deceit (chocolate chip cookies seem to work best for me... just kidding). Actually, if you follow either of the two methods you'll be set up and e-mailing within a very short time.



Some new things on the horizon...

Every year when we come back to classes and the excitement is high, I start to feel like Charlie Brown in a way. No, not because everyone but Charlie knows that Lucy's going to pull the football away at the last minute, or the tree is going to devour his kite, but because he keeps on getting up and tilting at windmills as it were. He keeps on getting up and dusting himself off. Teaching with technology can be a lot like that I suppose.

Every year we come back and "make the best of the situation" with what we have. I think we can do more with what we have. We proved we could do better last year with just a few small improvements in the way we

stored equipment and how it was administered. We have better communications because of e-mail usage increasing. We have a better presence in the community with our web page being the standard by which others are starting to be judged.

It is with this in mind that I think that we can use technology in the classroom better in terms of what we show ourselves and others from an academic standpoint. We'll be starting with some of the things that have been added to the technology curriculum over the summer.

Many of you have heard about the *Learning Center* and the pacing guides that were written along

with unit plans and lesson plans. In the Instructional Technology department, there were plans created that are aligned to the content expectations of :ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies frameworks and pacing guides.

While folks in technology classes aren't experts in your fields, the fact that some of what you can do in the class is supported in the Tech department (specifically Apps I and II classes), perhaps you could use some of the work that's going to be produced in those classes to enhance your student's experience in both areas.

"Once confined to fantasy and science fiction, time travel is now simply an engineering problem."

MICHIO KAKU

And so gentle readers....

Have you ever wondered why time always seems to speed up during the months of June, July, and August (the exception being the last seven days of August)? I think I actually have the reason. Well, it may not actually be reasonable, but it is indeed a reason.

I think it has to do with mathematics (somehow you knew it'd all get blamed on some math teacher didn't you?). See, it's like this... we actually like being outside and enjoying the sunshine. We really do have a special fondness for watching the sun rise and ability to hear nothing louder than the barking of your new puppy as she tells you it's about time to get out of bed even though it's 4 a.m. and you would rather watch it from a nice reclined position. Of course you also recognize the god given right you have as a teacher during the summer to take a nap whenever you flipping well

please during these months of the year. My point being, the enjoyment we cherish for these months and the speed of time during said months is in direct proportion to the dismay and disappointment that we can no longer tell our friends that we'll meet for breakfast at O'Brian's Corner or lunch at the Munich Haus in Chicopee.

The pain we feel at no longer being able to go to a 7:30 p.m. start for a movie during the week (knowing that we'd end up falling asleep) or the fact that we can't do any number of fine, wonderfully hip and chic things because we "can't be out that late on a school night" is certainly quantifiable in relation to the inverse of having to wake up with the dogs mentioned earlier and knowing you can't take a nap later. Subsequently, the total of all our musings leads us directly back to the con-

clusion that we're actually back in school and it's all due to the calculations of evil math teachers mucking about with the space time continuum.

Of course, they'll try and distract you from the understanding of this particularly ridiculous theoretical exercise with some mumbo-jumbo about how English teachers who teach Shakespearean tragedy are responsible for the effects of global warming due to the deforestation of the Amazonian rainforest for texts and script rewrites according to Mel Gibson and Leonardo DiCaprio... but, that's another story.

Have a great year everyone!



Ed Musiak

Life Lessons in Comics

