

Technology Tips

VOLUME 2, EDITION 3

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Multimedia and Classroom Management

The Do's and Don'ts of using technology in the Classroom—part 2

Was there anything I forgot about in the last issue? Well, I didn't forget about it, but I did indeed put it off until I had some time to go into this bit in depth. Many of you, constantly ask about using video in the classroom and the applications for the average standards based room environment.

To be perfectly honest with you, any classroom teacher that doesn't use video to a certain degree should seriously consider checking out the vast amount of materials that are available in every content area today. It is foolish not to use these resources when they're so easy to obtain and display. This is especially true for us here at the High School

of Commerce.

While there are certainly hundreds of VHS tapes and DVD's available to us from a variety of sources within the school, there are thousands available to us through the district at no cost. Aside from the library (both ours and the City's Central Library just down the street), there's also a service by a group called [Achieve Express](#).

What's really cool about this service is it's open to us for as often as we'd like and as much as we need.. I won't bore you here with all the details, but if you go to the link above, and put in;

hcommerce - username

achieve - password

Using these, you can search

through thousands of videos that, upon approval of the department director for your content area and Mr. Fernandes (both of which should be a no-brainer considering the sources quoted for most of this stuff), then you can display it in any number of interesting ways.

One of these is the television monitor above many of the teacher computer stations. Most of you have already done this sort of thing a thousand times over already, but it is a very good way to get the content across.

Another way to display some of the video content is to use an LCD projector. While we don't have many, if you let me know ahead of time, I can make sure you get one. It's certainly one way to view the materials you download in a large screen format.

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

Web pages for classroom purposes...

Last time, I spoke about the opportunity that teachers here at the good ol' HS of C have with regard to web pages. Let me give you a few really good reasons, other than those I've already given you, for taking advantage of a possibility that could help students in a myriad of ways

The first, and most important, reason for creat-

ing a website for your classes is the 24/7 fact. The point is the access that students have to the web is far greater than many give credit for. Having a portal of communication and teaching in this form shatters the limitations of time in the classroom (in the sense that it is a barrier, a sort of elephant in the room as it were).

Considering all the time our students spend away from the classroom, we need to make sure that we offer every possible method of true learning and instruction be available to them. This is one way, not the only way by any means, that we can make sure this happens.

See me in B155 for details.

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 is currently unavailable until further notice per Director of Technology*
- *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 me 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.*



On-line opportunities...

The [HSC Links Page](#) is one of the places on our website where we can put together a comprehensive list of online resources specifically for our students here. We can tailor the links and source material to direct them at a

pace we see them being able to understand and maintain, while pushing them toward individual exploration.

We all know quite a few ways of finding outstanding content and sharing the results of our

questing, as it were, with our colleagues on our own, but please be aware that whenever you have a link to a site that has very pertinent content for either students or faculty, please share it!!!!

Let me know about the truly wonderful things that you find on the web. Each content area has a resource page on our website and I'd like to see those areas populated with the sorts of information the HSC community can use for planning and implementation of our curriculum. I think that any help we can put together for ourselves and our students will bring them

closer to proficiency, not to mention giving them a leg up to mastery as well.

Most of the areas on those pages have content that needs to be more specific to your needs, but I have some material down there. There more you send me, the more we can post. I do have a couple of requests though. I'd like to see some of the material that the Foreign Language folks use so we can get their links up and running. Also, the Sciences and Math could use some revamping to make these areas more specific to the sorts of things you do. Let me know.

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You can't depend on your eyes when your imagination is out of focus.

- Mark Twain

Laptop Cart Tips! Part 2-Get into it!!!

Once you've planned for the lesson, you've aligned all your resources, and gotten a cart down to your room (or up to your room), you're ready to go!!! It's show-time!!!

Always remember, have the students sign out a machine (and subsequently, the same machine for each successive time you use the carts). This way it's easier to keep

track of who has what and where. It also helps to maintain a certain sense of continuity for the students as well since it helps to establish another one of those "classroom routines".

You see, that's really the key. Routines. It's probably our most important classroom management "trick". Students knowing that the same way things went yesterday, is the way things

will go today and tomorrow is almost like a balm to them. The actual physicality of a repetitive task is what can get students to the point of being in the frame of mind where studying isn't that tough to deal with on any number of levels.

The Learning Center...

There are a number of things being said about the use of the materials on the *SPS's Learning Center*. Of course, this was to be expected folks. The feedback that we're going to be giving will be the basis for the changes that will occur over the coming months and years.

There are some who have acted as if they'd been told the *Learning Center's* materials are etched in marble tablets carried down a mountain by some guy that knows what burning bushes actually sound like.

This is not true. This is the first year of the implementation of materials offered on the *Learning Center's* pages. There's bound to be a good deal of tweaking yet to be done. I've seen some of the lessons that people are going to be using and while they are good plans, there will need to be work done so that alternatives are available

The fact is folks, the more feedback we give the people over at *Learning Center*, the better chance we have of influencing what actually



gets revised and improved upon. It's up to the teachers in the classroom here and at other high schools around the city to make the changes that are necessary to sustain a useful tool such as was envisaged by both the administration and the teachers themselves. So... we have to participate in the process in order to make the changes that will benefit our students most.

And so gentle readers. . .

Over the last several months I've been following Funky Winkerbean and the characters that Tom Batuik (sounds like b-attic) created what seems like a hundred million years ago in 1972. Of course, I've been following it for far longer than several months, but recently the story of Lisa and Les Moore as they deal with Lisa's recurring breast cancer has held me captivated. There's only one way it can, and will, end. Lisa is going to die on October 4. The funny thing is, for as poignant and sad as it seems on the outside, the story is really about joy and hope for the future. It's one hell of a comic strip and has a lesson there for all of us.

On a totally unrelated, though certainly not less poignant, topic, I've known about Bill Goodwin's retirement for a while now and, since this is just another in a long succession of people who will leave this profession for what I hope will be many years of (in Bill's case anyway) puttering around on the mobile Chateau Goodwin, biking, skiing, or if not on those more physical pursuits, listening to some really good blues from some of those young kids coming out of Austin while chowing down on some good barbecue. Yes, I'm jealous.... You say, once again and rightly so, "What does this have to do with technology Ed?" You know, you think that all time, and for some godforsaken reason, I always seem to come up with a fairly reasonable, if not entirely logical, explanation. Absolutely nothing. If you want things to make sense, buy a copy of Utilitarianism by John Stuart Mill. The two stories I'm talking about have to do with what I see as joy.

Sure, death is sad, especially when it happens to someone as young as Lisa in the comic strip. Yeah, retirement is sad, in a totally selfish kind of way (from my perspective anyway) when the person retiring is perfectly capable of doing at least another eight months and then just not coming back after summer vacation so as not to make us all insanely jealous because he's going to be able to go to B'shara's for apple pancakes whenever he pleases and chuckle when some of the rest of us have to try and figure out

how we're going to get through another extended day meeting without wondering if the new principal can break the record for having the highest word count of any teacher in the history of the SPS before losing oxygen to the brain and passing out.

There!!! Whew!!! I said it. A statement that epitomizes what I think of Bill Goodwin retiring in something less than a War and Peace sentence (of which Bill should be proud to be the inspiration).

Now here comes the actual correlation with technology. Funky Winkerbean is one of hundreds of syndicated comics that are published every

"Don't go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first."

Mark Twain

day on the Web. It's how I start my morning. Every day I check the comics because, not only do they make me laugh, but I take some of my teaching from them. The stories, foibles and flaws of the absurd (and in the case of **Funky**, all too real) characters I like to follow can't always be found in one newspaper so... I look them up in "papers" across the country via the web. It's also kinda interesting seeing the news from around the country and the world.

How does Bill Goodwin fit in? Well, for as long as I've known him, he's always been an advocate for the use of appropriately directed technology. The really interesting and cool thing about this advocacy is the fact that he also tries to understand and use it as well. For instance, not many people take things like this newsletter and use them for as much as they can get from it like he does. It's a fine quality I think the SPS is going to miss.

I recall last year (August of 2006) when the program we had both worked for was undergoing some fairly

significant changes and he was appointed Associate Principal of HSC. He pointed out that maybe I needed a change myself and that I should apply for the position of Instructional Technology Specialist. I loved working with the folks at Springfield High School and the rest of the S.A.F.E. schools. They are fine people and wonderful teachers, but I thought there might be something to what Bill was saying. Maybe I needed a change. Getting in at the ground floor to be a pioneer with the other Instructional Technology people would prove to be one of the best decisions I ever made. They're great folks! Oh, there were a few people who helped me make the decision, not the least of which were my wife and friends, but when Bill mentioned it, I think that "sealed the deal" for me. I couldn't be happier here at Commerce, it's always like coming home. Really. I'm not kidding.

I'm not going to get all mushy and start talking about all the wonderful ways that Bill made a difference in the lives of urban students as a teacher here in the SPS for the last couple hundred years, you know that. I won't say anything about the great job he did as a vice-principal either.

That's pretty obvious. I won't talk about the fact the he's been in some very difficult and trying positions being a principal at 3 of the 4 traditional high schools in the city. Anyone who's ever had the job can tell you that the it's tough and makes you want to rip your hair out



I will say that he's been a great guy to work with and a damn good man to have around as a teacher, mentor and friend.

Ed Musiak

Life Lessons in Comics

