

Technology Tips

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 3

OCTOBER 5, 2009

OITA Help Desk Forms

There I was, happily minding my own business and getting ready to start writing some of the new articles for this issue of the “Tech Tips” and it was suggested by the one and only Ruth C., who is actually the one who knows just about everything that’s going on with the Tech Department AND is an avid reader (well maybe not avid, but she doesn’t send it to the Recycle Bin immediately upon receipt) of the “Tech Tips”, that I should probably let all of you know about the new system for technology assistance.

Simply put, the new OITA (**O**ffice of **I**nformation **T**echnology and **A**ccountability) “request system” is far more comprehensive than it’s ever been. You can go there and request just about anything having to do with the technology department you could imagine. From your request for service, the specialist in the department who are able to help you will be routed to you.

The way it works goes something like this:

1. Click on the image below or go to the “Staff” page on the SPS site and click the image there.



2. You’ll be sent to a page where there is a button that will read, “Add New Service Request Ticket”. Click that.

3. Fill out the form:

- Please make sure that the e-mail address in the box below your name is correct).
- Please make sure you enter as much detailed information as you can. It’ll help speed the process along.

For the drop down menu titled “Category” the choices are explained as follows:

- **Assessment, Research &**

Accountability- MCAS questions / appeals, Security portal access, Accountability questions

- **Computer/Network/Printer Problems with Computers, Network Connections, Printers and hardware**
- **Connect-ED Problems with the Connect-Ed notification system**
- **Data Warehouse- Problems concerning the SPS Data Warehouse**



(Continued on page 2)

Stuff To Know

ALL THE FOLLOWING ARE AVAILABLE IN B-010

- 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.
- Schedule a time to get trained for the use of the laptop carts.

No training = No laptop cart use.

- The Springfield Public Schools has a district license for...

GradeKeeper

Please stop by B155 for details

- E-mail and MassOne accounts are a necessary part of what we do these days. If you don’t have either one, please stop by B155 and sign up for them.
- If you’re planning on the use of lap top carts, please reserve one as early as you can. Also, please be considerate of the needs of your colleagues when planning the length of time you’ll need the cart you’ll be using.

Making it work for us-Do’s and don’ts of techie stuff at Commerce Pt 2

Hey again folks! Last issue we talked about the really, really, really basic stuff having to do with technology here in the good ol’ HSoFC (or anywhere else in the SPS for that matter). This time let’s look at some of the things that, if you’re even fairly consistent with, will help you not fly into a homicidal rage, throw the computer out the window and damage someone’s car.

Anyway, the first thing that we should talk about is **email**. I know that we could talk about defragging and doing scandisk stuff, but I’ll get to those later. The fact is, email is becoming our bread and butter for communications and we have an absolute

responsibility (I keep saying that “r” word a lot lately don’t I?) to maintain our accounts in the best way we can. So... let’s just jump right in and get to the litany of supplications I have for you.

1. There are several nifty ways for you to archive/save your material outside of the exchange (email) server.
 - The first of these has to do with creating a folder on your desktop and moving the files from your Outlook workspace to that folder by simply highlighting the messages. Please see me for details on how to complete this task.

2. Make sure you empty your account folders (**Inbox, Sent, Deleted, Junk E-Mail, and any personal folders you may have created**) often. The messages you leave there all take up space on the exchange server (the email server for the district) and subsequently are taking up **your** space out in cybersville.
3. Please be aware that, because we are a public organization, the expectation of privacy doctrine with regard to your SPS email account does not exist for all intents and purposes. Email is, and will be, considered public.

It’s also archived for 7

(Continued on page 2)

OITA Help Desk Forms

(Continued from page 1)

- **Data/Info Request-** Data Requests for (example: How many 6th grade students are in the District?)
- **Email Problems-** with INTERNAL Email accounts that end with "@sps.springfield.ma.us"
- **Instructional Technology Support-** Professional Development Needs, Problem with Instructional Technology Software (example: TimeLiner, Inspiration)
- **Intranet Applications & Developer-** Support Problems concerning applications running in the SPS INTRANET (browser based)
- **Office Productivity-** Problems with client tools (example: Word, Excel, Access, Read 180, Green Globs, Easy IEP etc...)
- **Software Installation-** Software installation

OITA Service Request System

- **Student Information-** (SASI) Problems concerning the SPS Student Information System
- **Web Site-** Problems and changes on the SPS or School INTERNET web sites

Again, in the fields that follow this drop down, the more information you put into the form (as much as you are able, don't obsess about it) the easier it will be to direct the right resource your way.

The most important thing I can say, and believe me, I'm aware that I've been saying this quite a bit in this article, is that you should be as specific as you can when you're describing the issue.

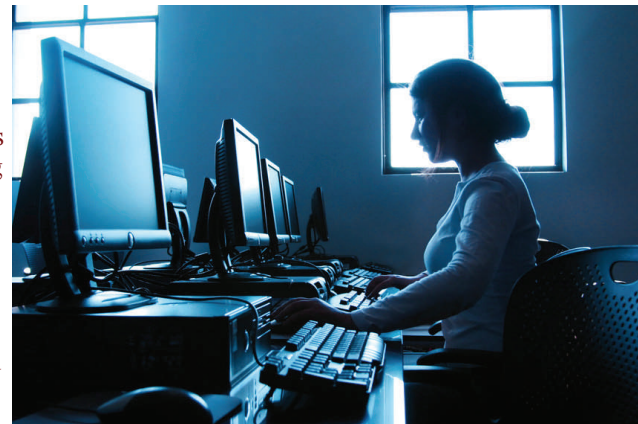
Now here's where the old system gets expanded folks. Just as before, the people who maintained machines and generally did everything they could for King and Country, will still

be doing all that they are able to do with what they have. The folks that things will be different for will be any of the other members of the Technology Department. What that means dear readers is very simply, if you put in a ticket for help with, let's say, online learning. you might actually get me. Actually, what will happen is the Director of Technology (or whichever supervisor has the duty that day) will assign the jobs to the specialists based on the criteria stated in the request.

So...as you can see folks, the "old" system of Help Desk support has changed, but in a more expanded and comprehensive way.

"I never teach my pupils. I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn."

Albert Einstein



Making it work for us-Do's and don'ts of techie stuff at Commerce Pt 2

(Continued from page 1)

years for auditing according to federal laws. Here's the explanation I found for this online: "Section 802 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act requires auditors to retain auditing information for a period of 7 years. The information refers to all records relevant to the audit or review; this includes work papers, memoranda, correspondence, communications, and electronic records (including email). In fact, Section 802 makes it a crime, punishable by up to 10 years in jail, if auditors of public companies fail to maintain such correspondence."

"What are the legal requirements for Archiving?." GFI. 09/29/2009. GFIMax, Web. 29 Sep 2009. <<http://kbase.gfi.com/showarticle.asp?id=KBID002205>>."

Now granted SOX (as **Sarbanes-Oxley is known**) is directed more toward businesses and corporate communications, but the intent of the law clearly applies to organizations like the SPS as well. A recent e-mail from

Central Office clearly states this:

"While the Springfield Public Schools is currently reviewing options to increase the storage capacity of our email system, please see the following important information distributed by the City Solicitor to all email users in City Departments, Police Department and the School Department

"The City of Springfield Law Department together with the City's Information Technology Department is currently reviewing the City's policies with regard to email retention to assure compliance with state public records requirements. This review includes City, School, and Police Department emails.

During this review, all City employees and officials are advised not to delete any emails received or sent involving City business. Please be advised that this requirement applies to any City employee or official who uses a personal or non City of Springfield email account for City business as well as City accounts. Any City employee or official utilizing a non-City email account should make sure that a copy of an email

from a non-City account is forwarded or cc'd to a City account to assure retention.

All Department Heads should take action to assure that all City Employees and officials receive a copy of this notice."

4. While I recognize that it is the easiest and most direct way of communicating with colleagues about issues concerning students, please be aware that it is against district policy to transmit **ANY** student data via email. This includes: names, grades, disciplinary actions, IEP's, class schedules, student ID numbers, attendance (regular school, night school, or Saturday School).

That's just the beginning folks. There are a number of things we have to be very aware of with regard to our SPS email accounts. In the next issue, I'll get very detailed about **what to archive** and **how to archive** your materials as well as what it is that you can actually delete.

Research- What it is & how to use it Part I

According to the folks over at dictionary.com (click the link for the full definition) “research” is defined as:

–*noun*

1. *diligent and systematic inquiry or investigation into a subject in order to discover or revise facts, theories, applications, etc.: recent research in medicine.*

2. *a particular instance or piece of research.*

–*verb (used without object)*

3. *to make researches; investigate carefully.*

–*verb (used with object)*

4. *to make an extensive investigation into: to research a matter thoroughly.*

For our purposes, the fourth definition will do nicely. “*Making an extensive investigation into: To research thoroughly*”. The operative words here are “extensive”, “investigation”, and “thoroughly”. They tend to suggest that research is something more than a cursory glance at some arcane information that bears no relevance to a topic. Additionally, if we are to take things a step further, this would also suggest the necessity of some form of cataloging or note-taking considering the “extensive” nature of research and the researcher’s attention to detail.

Of course, I understand I’m preaching to the choir here. However, we tend to overlook the obvious when we think of the ways that we can do things that are second nature to us. When we think of those things with regard to our students, well... things get even more confused because we

And so gentle readers...

There are times when life is good and you just know that good things are going to happen. Last Sunday I got to go to the Patriots game with my father-in-law to see a truly wonderful spectacle... The New England Patriots kicked some Atlanta Falcon backside (it was by no means a lopsided victory no matter how cocky I sound.) and all was right with the world. Yesterday the random factors aligned again and the Patriots beat the Baltimore Ravens.

Now I know that there are going to be some folks who are going to get all Rodney Harrison on me and tell me to “take off the skirt and put on some slacks” (a quote from Rodney on Sunday Night Football on NBC) when I say that I believe it was perfectly reasonable for Tom Brady to complain to the ref that Baltimore’s Terrell Suggs had hit him below the knee. Players have been doing that since time began. There’s been more acting on the football field than in most Shakespearean dramas. It’s part of the game.

That being said, I also feel it was right of Ray Lewis and Rodney Harrison to say the call

have so many options for teaching the skills for research and the utilization of the information gleaned from following a line of investigation.

Well let’s jump right on in then. Since we’ve already said what it is in the definition earlier in this article, let’s talk about what research *is not*.

Research is not:

1. Something you find in one Google search.
2. An activity where looking for keywords results in the printing of reams of paper where a few handwritten notes would have sufficed.
3. A static (inert) exercise.
4. One dimensional, creating boundaries where thought is torpid and relies on simple/lazy assumptions.
5. Plagiarized.

Research is:

1. Dynamic. It has the ability to reach beyond original intent in order to satisfy unexpected results.
2. An activity that calls on multiple resources from as many foundations of knowledge and varied media as can be applicable in any given circumstance
3. As original as the mind thinking up the question to be studied.
4. Thorough. Many types of media can be utilized and investigated to produce a well rounded and documented conclusion
5. Cited completely.

was a load of what male cows do in fields after having a good meal. Again, just like the players who call for the penalties, the opposing players are going to be vehemently against those penalties being called. It’s a fact of life. Get over it.

The only reason I even mention these things here folks is not because I have something else to talk to you about and I’m just messing with your heads. No. I’m saying this because I read the news this morning and I’ve seen all the hype that’s been built up because of the comments by Mssrs. Harrison, Brady, and Lewis out on the web. This is a perfect opportunity for me to take something that, while it means a good deal to me in terms of my enjoyment of my Sunday afternoon avocation (armchair quarterback and astonishingly partisan Patriots fan), is yet another of those “teachable moments”.

Looking at this incident, there are any number of folks who are out on the web writing any number of opinions on: the veracity of the call, Tom Brady’s loss of intestinal fortitude, Mssrs. Harrison and Lewis’s lack of objectivity in terms of their assessment of penalties and finally what the fans believe in their own infinite wisdom. I can only say that there

To be as concise as possible, we have to remember that when instructing our students about not only the **methods** for researching a topic, we also have to instruct them on the **reasoning** for it and the **ethical standards** for using it.

Citation Links-

1. [Son of Citation Machine](#)

2. [EasyBib](#)

Search Engines-

1. [Google](#)

2. [Clusty](#)

3. [Metacrawler](#)

These are a few links to help get your kids (or yourself) started. In the next issue, we’ll start up with some of the methods by which we will actually use the Internet and other media to require the most we can from the concept of research we’ve started with here.

“I have never let my schooling interfere with my education.”

Mark Twain

are two ways of looking at this, or any opinion where there might be a justifiable difference. There are a couple of ways to resolve this without having to research this call to within an inch of your life out on the internet.

The first is to simply look at the facts themselves by doing the sorts of research I mention above and make a call based on the rules as they apply word for word. If the rule is applied evenly across the board, there shouldn’t be a problem.

The second is, if the above isn’t followed or is just downright stupid, then abide by the call until such a time as you get the rule changed. Until then, I only have this to say...

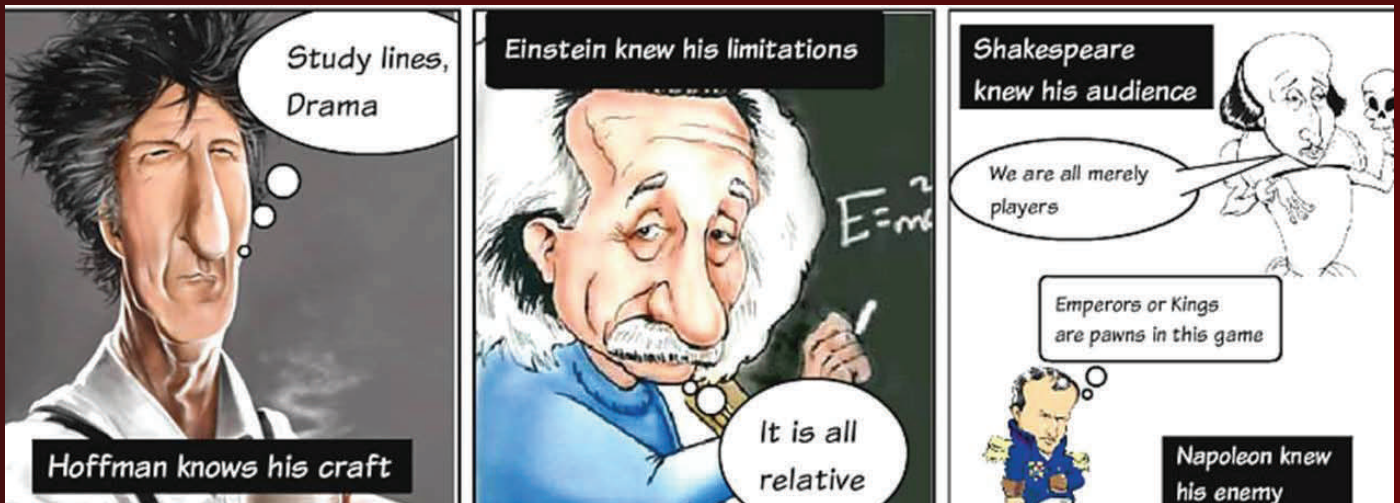
“Nyah nyah, na nyah nyah...we won the call and the game! So there!!!”



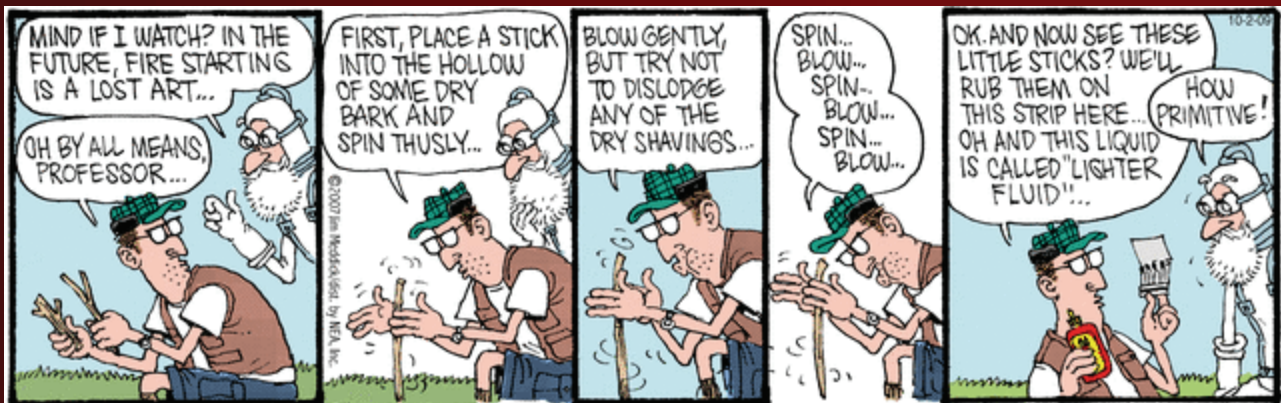
Life Lessons in Imagery

Those of you who've been following this section of the "Tech Tips" over the last several years are fully aware that I've been showing that images we see everyday in newspapers and all sorts of other media are snapshots of life and that the comics we see are certainly excellent examples of this. Every day there are teachable moments to be found throughout the articles in the newspaper, and yet, somehow we neglect to include the gentle humor of Charles Schultz's "Peanuts" or the sometimes not-so-gentle reminders of our "common humanity" from artists like Tom Batuik and Gary Trudeau. I'll be mixing it up this year by giving you as much as we can without violating the "fair use" tenets of copyright laws as they apply in educational situations. Enjoy and share!!!

Ed Musiak



Whaddaya Know? By Ed Musiak



Monty by Jim Meddick