

SUPPORT GROUP

Well another summer has come and gone. We completed another successful training. And once again we have great projects. A reminder to all of you who attended training this summer; your project must be "ready for prime time" by December. In conjunction with that, we are available each Wednesday from 4-7PM. All we ask is that you let us know you are coming so

we can have adequate snacks. If you have something else you would like to work on that's fine too. Just let us know beforehand so we can make sure that we have the appropriate resources to support whatever you want to work on.

In the past we have had teachers work on projects for classroom use, back to school night, online

courses, web based projects and more. You determine the content. Remember just email us!

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MIT COURSE RESOURCES FOR HS TEACHERS!

MIT has begun to share their vast resources to help high school teachers improve the content they offer students. The project is called

OpenCourseWare (OCW). The site contains over 2,600 video clips, animations and other resources for AP Bio,

Physics and other STEM related classes.

<http://ocw.mit.edu/OcwWeb/hs/home/home/index.htm>

TECH DEPT REMINDERS

With the start of the new school year we are going to once again run some tech department reminders. These are basic policies that govern the coming and going of equipment and the usage of the system.

As many of you now realize, with some changes at the help desk things have become far more streamlined. Response time has decreased and overall efficiency has increased. Here are a couple of tips

Existing equipment goes directly through 475-6195;

New request. for:

- User names

- Accounts of any sort
- Equipment
- Movement

All of these requests must originate with your building administrator.

Movement of equipment, by non-department staff, is not permitted:

- Equipment is assigned to rooms/buildings –not individuals (Special Education not withstanding);
- Naming scheme and location are critical to profiles, scripts, network functions and printing;
- Inventory is based on implementation.

Hopefully this clarifies a few issues. Next month we will talk about Acceptable Usage



WHAT'S A WIKI?

As part of our SUNY project we use a wiki. It came to light that many folks don't know what one is. So, for those of you new to the word and concept here is a quick overview.

A wiki is a type of collaborative website with integrated tools for adding and editing content. The online encyclopedia

Wikipedia.org is one popular example, WikiHow.com is another. But not all wikis give public editorial rights as Wikipedia does. A wiki can also be created for a classroom or a club, with an administrator who decides what pages are editable, and who can do the editing

Google Docs

Although they do not call themselves a wiki, Google Docs provides a powerful set of collaboration tools, a familiar interface, and meets most of the usual wiki criteria. With a free Google account, you can post and share documents, spreadsheets, and presentations. As the document owner, you control who can view and edit each

FIVE TIPS FOR NEW TEACHERS

http://www.teachermagazine.org/tm/articles/2008/07/28/43tln_rigsbee.h19.html?qs=five_tips

Even though the ideas here are targeted at new teachers there are some plums for the rest of us...

1. Hit the floor running and breathe when you leave.

I have always been one of the first teachers to pull into the parking lot in the mornings. Getting to work a good 20 to 30 minutes before the "official" start time is necessary for me. First of all, it gives me time to think quietly about my day. Also, it alleviates the problem of standing in line at a copy machine (or finding a jammed copy machine that was left blinking wildly by a teacher who didn't attempt to fix it). After the copies are made, the agenda and goals are on the board, and the room is ready, there's time for nice adult conversations (there may not be another opportunity until after school) and opportunities for relationship building as students arrive.

The "breathe when you leave" part? That means teachers need to take care of themselves and relax during their hours out of school. This doesn't mean they can't grade the occasional paper or do schoolwork. For me, it's very relaxing to do my lesson plans on Sunday afternoons, turn on some professional football and plan the week. But this routine may not work for some teachers. I tell new teachers to figure out what works for them, but to make sure to *breathe*.

2. Always remember, the show must go on.

I have always said teaching is a performance. Standing in front of (or facilitating around) a classroom of kids of any age requires energy and enthusiasm. We don't work behind a computer screen at a desk all day, so we can't just slump in our seats if we feel like it. There have been many days in my career when I have looked at the clock to see that it was time for my next group to come to me. "I can't do it," I would think. But I would take a deep breath, put a smile on my face (it's OK if it's fake at first), and start slapping some fives when those kids entered the room. Pretty soon their energy level would match mine, my smile would be real, and we would take it from there. The idea is to prepare ourselves for the "audience" and be the best we can be when we're with them. Our students deserve no less.

3. Put on your cheerleading uniform.

Yes, we have to encourage and inspire. We know that. Some of our students come to us from dismal situations. I often wonder how some of them can even put one foot in front of the other to get to the bus stop. But they do, and while they're with me, I'm going to do what I can to make their school day the best it can be. But I'm not only talking about students. We need to cheer each other on, too. Schools can be toxic places. The job is stressful, and hopefully we aren't complaining to kids all day. So when teachers get together, there can be some "venting." That's when I put on my metaphorical cheerleading uniform and go at it. Don't worry—I don't act like Little Mary Sunshine. I do understand, and many times agree with, the complaints that are discussed in team rooms and school hallways. But I do try to put a positive spin on things if I can.

4. If you make them the enemy, you will lose.

The rest of this expression goes like this: *There are more of them, and they have an audience.* As a middle school teacher, this is one saying that I share with teachers often. Teaching cannot be an "us" and "them" situation. In the community of a school, we are all family, and when the students know this (and *feel* this), they are much more likely to cooperate, be pleasant, and *learn*.

5. Don't hide your light under a bushel.

I can't take credit for this one. I believe it was mentioned in the Sermon on the Mount. It was also mentioned by my Mama about once a week as I was growing up. Basically, it means "don't hide your talent." I share this one with new teachers as I encourage them to use their talents, even some that aren't so obvious, to make their teaching experience more enjoyable. For example, I love to write poetry. I'm not a published poet, but I don't need to be. I have a captive audience every day. By sharing my poetry and bits of my personal life, I'm able to connect to my students in a way that may be difficult otherwise.

CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALBANY



Community Technology Initiative

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document. Since the documents are stored remotely, they are accessible from anywhere; and changes made by anyone, are immediately available to everyone. Forget the old paradigm of email, edit, email. Google Docs is a revolution in cooperation.

PBWiki

PBWiki provides anyone a free wiki website for up to three users, but educators get a special deal: a 10MB wiki for an unlimited number of users for free. Key features include speedy setup, an audit trail of changes made to the wiki pages, RSS and email notification of wiki updates, IP whitelisting and blacklisting, and four roles to control access: Reader, Writer, Editor and Administrator.

PikiWiki

With drag-and-drop simplicity, PikiWiki is the easiest wiki to learn, and a great one for elementary-age kids. Not only is PikiWiki, free, but you can even build your first page without any registration. I recommend using Internet Explorer, as I had some difficulty using the site with Firefox. "With PikiWiki, even novice computer users can create unique, expressive web pages by dragging and dropping pictures, video, or any other media into their browser right from their computer desktop. ... Friends and family can similarly contribute to your page or create their own pages for you to contribute to."

RESOURCES FOR YOU!

Have you ever needed help but it was after school? Here is an answer.

[http://
webhelp.albany.k12.ny.us/
instructional](http://webhelp.albany.k12.ny.us/instructional)

Under the training resources section are extensive resources that run the gambit from Power School to "How to set up your school email".

There are also templates for word and an entire online book with Microsoft Word resources. Under the Project Resources section are some of our web based projects. There are also our SUNY projects. These are available for your classroom use

Office Of Instructional Technology
Working to integrate technology into teaching, learning, and life...

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Welcome to the Instructional Technology Resource Center

Thursday, May 8, 2008

Office of Instructional Technology Mission Statement

The City School District of Albany Technology Plan ensures that all students have the opportunity to develop lifelong learning skills necessary to be productive citizens in an information-driven society.

To achieve this mission, the CSDA will provide on-going support and access to opportunities for all students, staff and community members to utilize technology and facilitate its application in school, home, and in the workplace.

Technology should be integrated into the total curriculum and instructional process. This integration requires professional development to ensure that teachers have the opportunity to understand how technology can be used as a tool to support authentic teaching and learning.

District Technology Plan
Computer/Network Acceptable Use Policy

For Technical Assistance:
Help Desk Phone: 475-6195
Help Desk Online Submission Form

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