

Log-on



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Mifflin County School District Technology Department

Issue 19

T echnology Update

by *Hunter French*
Network Administrator

Tech_Alert Emails

We have introduced a new system that will allow us to easily inform you when there is a network problem that is impacting users in the District. If you would like to be notified via email when network problems occur, send a blank email to: "tech_alert-subscribe@mcsdk12.org". You will get a reply from the server asking you to confirm your subscription. Reply to it (a blank reply will do as long as you leave the subject the same) and you will be added to the list. You will not be able to send messages to the listserv because it is not a discussion group.

To unsubscribe to the listserv, send a blank email to "tech_alert-unsubscribe@mcsdk12.org". Anyone in the District can join the listserv.

Blocked Websites

Do you need websites unblocked for a lesson? From time to time you may find some websites that you are interested in using in a class lesson that are blocked for students. To have these sites unblocked, submit a work order in Track-It! at least two days before you are planning to teach your lesson. This gives us a chance to unblock the sites and gives you a chance to test them.



Passwords

How often do you change your password? If you are like most network users it can be months between password changes (if it gets changed at all). Choosing good passwords is the first line of network security for the District's computing resources, so please take some time today and change your password. Here are some helpful suggestions from the University of Chicago.

▶ **Never share your password.**

Your account is assigned to you. You will be held responsible for the activities of the account.

▶ **Never write down a password.**

Passwords that are written down are easily stolen.

▶ **Change your password with some frequency.**

The longer that you have used your password, the more likely it is that someone else will manage to figure it out.

▶ **Never store your password in a program.**

Many email clients, web browsers, and web services will offer to store your password for you so that you don't need to type it in each time you want to use it. This is a bad idea — it is generally trivial for people to recover your password from inside one of these programs if they have access to your computer (and sometimes even if they don't).

▶ **When creating a new password,** choose one that is a combination of letters and numbers and has at least six characters.

▶ **To change your password,** press the Ctrl, Alt and Delete keys on your keyboard at the same time.

The Windows Security window will appear. Click the Change Password box in the lower left side of the window. You will be prompted to type your old password and type your new password twice.

Click **Okay** and your new password will be saved.

Elementary Students Attend Board Meeting



The Elementary Computer Program was featured at the November 4, 2004, School Board meeting. Six elementary students shared their computer projects with Board members and administrators. The projects were completed the previous year as part of the elementary computer curriculum.

East Derry student, Trent Goss, shared his kindergarten Color Book. In this project, students use word processing skills to “create” a poem about each color using KidWorks Deluxe. Each page is printed on paper of the same color and compiled into a book. Students use Microsoft Word to create a cover for the book.



Hannah Daubert, from Brown Elementary School, shared her Brown Bear book. This is a first grade project that focuses on word processing skills and the integration of graphics and writing.

Katie LaMarca, presented the second grade ABC book. This word processing project involves recognizing alphabet letters and their sounds, typing the alphabet letters, words and sentences and finding and inserting pictures to match them. The books are then shared with kindergarten and first grade students.



LES student, Olivia Runk, shared M&Ms with the board members after her presentation of the third grade M&M project. Groups of students sort and tabulate M&Ms according to colors and then record the results in an Excel spreadsheet. They create graphs to show the results of their spreadsheets.

The fourth grade All About Me project was presented by Morgan Stimely. This project combines word processing, digital photography, scanning and inserting pictures and using word art to create a mini autobiography in the form of a book. The completed project includes a cover with an original illustration.

IVMS student, Kaylyn Hannon, spoke about the Career Reports that all fifth grade students do as a part of the 5th grade career curriculum. In this internet research/word processing project, students take an interest inventory to assess their strengths, research a number of careers online, choose the one that is best suited for them and create a final product in the form of a report or brochure.



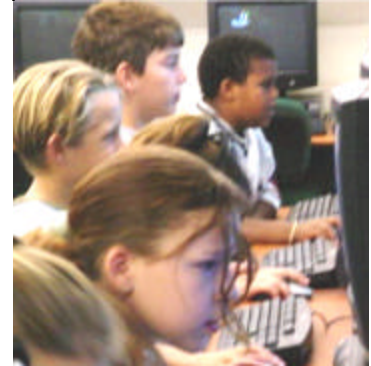
Students are depicted in this order: Trent Goss, Hannah Daubert, Katie LaMarca, Olivia Runk, Morgan Stimely and Kaylyn Hannon



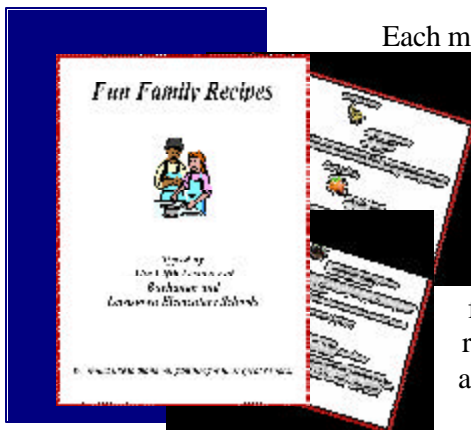
Karen Galbraith, Elementary Computer Coordinator, introduced the computer teachers. The teachers, Michael LaMarca, Suzanne LaMarca, Stephanie Moon, Lanielle Reese and Nancy Ressler, introduced their students and also shared additional information about the projects with the School Board.

Integrating Technology

Teachers at Lewistown Elementary School are combining art and technology in their classrooms. Carol Love is the art teacher at Buchanan and LES and Suzanne LaMarca is the computer teacher at both schools. Each month, Mrs. Love provides the fifth graders with the name of an artist and a library book. Mrs. LaMarca reads the book to the class and the class uses search engines to research the artist. They write about the artist's life and artistic style and provide pictures of his or her work. The students get very excited about the research process and learn a lot about the artist. They share this information in the form of an article for the school newspaper. The students cannot wait to find out who Mrs. Love will pick as the next artist!



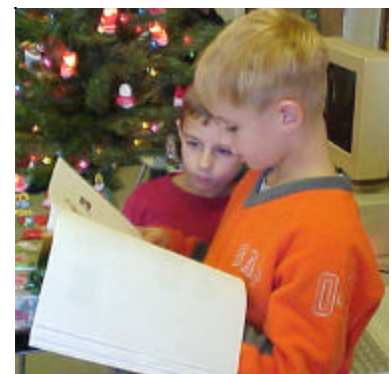
The fifth graders at Buchanan and Lewistown Elementary Schools create a school newspaper as part of their computer instruction classes with Mrs. LaMarca.



Each month teachers submit articles for the paper. It may be student poetry or short stories or information about a special program or project classes are doing. They often submit pictures to accompany the articles. The articles are written by the students at that grade level.

The November newspaper was a holiday recipe issue. The fifth graders created a recipe book. Parents and family members were asked to submit favorite family recipes. The students typed them and inserted graphics. The final newsletter was distributed to fifth graders. The rest of the students received a sampler recipe book. The entire holiday issue can be found online at http://www2.mcsdk12.org/sll34/Fifth_Grade_Recipes.htm.

In the elementary computer curriculum, each grade level is responsible for at least one project. ABC books are one of the second grade projects. The emphasis is on typing a word document, using proper keyboarding skills, using correct sentence structure with proper punctuation and inserting pictures. At SMES, the second graders shared their books with all of the kindergarten and first grades.



► Project Optimism

by Edna Snook

Many special groups in our local community need optimistic words, stories, thoughts, and action during the holiday and winter season. The IVMS students of Mrs. Snook's computer classes responded to this challenge by creating cards, letters, newsletters, videos, and "Party in a Box" packages for people in nursing homes, local soldiers stationed in Iraq, or wounded soldiers or children in Iraq. The theme of all of the projects was OPTIMISM: Strive to be hopeful and positive in your beliefs about yourself, others, and the future.

- Sixth graders are using word-processing, publication, and graphic skills to create cards and letters.
- Seventh graders are using word processing and publication skills to create a one page newsletter. The newsletter must contain a story with an optimistic theme, three motivational optimistic quotes or jokes, and citations giving credit for sources. Mail merge and database skills are used to personalize each newsletter.
- Eighth grade students are working in groups and planning a party. They have been given a budget and are using a spreadsheet to track their spending. If they have chosen a local cause, they are creating party trays. If they chose soldiers in Iraq, they must consider party items that will ship and they are responsible for shipping. We are calling these "Party in a Box."

Although the project is not quite finished, Mrs. Snook is pleased with the way students are working and their feelings of concern and compassion. "It is really cool to see the kid's concern and activism," she comments.

► Dell Employee Purchase Program

Did you know that District faculty and staff can receive substantial discounts on Dell computer systems? Each month Dell sends us a flyer, which we post in the Information Systems section of the Intranet (intranet.mcsdk12.org), listing the deals for that month. Recently, several good deals have been released so, before you buy a computer this season please check out the discounts we have posted!

► SPAM

Spam is the Internet version of unsolicited telemarketing phone calls. This junk mail, arrives day and night and fills your mailbox, wasting our computer resources and your time.

These are the statistics for December. 54% refers to the number of email that gets filtered after getting through the first filter (Norton Antivirus). This 54% is placed in the Junk E-Mail folder for MCS D users.



You should check your Junk E-Mail folder often. You do not need to open spam mail. It can just be deleted.

SPAM Statistics for December, 2004

Total Incoming emails: 71,191
Total SPAM emails: 38,717
Percentage of SPAM emails: 54%

Our Goals

Our goals are to provide staff with up-to-date information regarding all areas of technology, share helpful hints and ideas, showcase teachers and students and communicate staff development plans. Any questions or suggestions can be directed to **Karen Galbraith * 248-6480 or gkg26@mcsdk12.org**