

# Log-on



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Mifflin County School District Technology Department

Issue 32

## Technology News

### ► Microsoft Office 2007 Training

On Monday, August 25th, In-service day, we will be offering three hours of Microsoft Office training. The training will include an overview of the new features of Word, Excel, Internet Explorer 7 and Track-it!. There will also be time to explore the programs independently. We will also be offering some voluntary three hour training sessions during the week prior to the beginning of school. Principals will send the training schedules with the opening school information.

Administrators, Guidance and all Office Personnel will be trained in half day morning sessions during the summer. Each session will be held in a computer lab and each session will be the same so you need only attend one. The dates and locations for these sessions are:

Office Personnel: July 21 (LES), July 22 (LES), and August 7 (HPAE)

Administrators: July 23 (LES), August 6 (HPAE)

Call or email Karen Galbraith if you have not yet signed up.

More extensive Microsoft Office 2007 training will also take place at various centrally located schools during the 2008-2009 school year. That schedule will be announced online and in an email in September.

There is a Microsoft Office 2007 website available on the MCS D intranet. This site includes links to Office tutorials and online lessons and FAQs. There are also print tutorials that can be downloaded. It will be continuously updated. You will be prompted to log in your user id and password because the site is on the Intranet.

<https://intranet.mcsdk12.org/training/gkg26/>

There are still Office 2007 copies available from the Technology Department for home use. The request form pdf is attached to this Log-on email and can also be found at [https://intranet.mcsdk12.org/fac/forms/MS\\_WAH\\_jan08.pdf](https://intranet.mcsdk12.org/fac/forms/MS_WAH_jan08.pdf).

### ► Recycle Computers and Cell Phones

We will be recycling computers the first week of June. If you have a home computer that you would like recycle, please complete a Track-It! Include your name, the kind of computer, your school and your room number. Then bring the computer, labeled for recycling to your room during the week of June 2nd. You will receive an email message giving you information about when the computer will be picked up. The recycling will only take place from June 2-6.



Cell phones can be recycled at any time by sending them to either Dawn Renninger at IVHS or Georgia Olson at LAHS.

### 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 [gkg26@mcsdk12.org](mailto:gkg26@mcsdk12.org)**

## ▶ SMART Boards Enhance Student Learning

This spring, two SMART Boards were added to Allen Muir and Keith Yoder's math classrooms at LAHS. A SMART Board is an interactive whiteboard that can be used to collaborate and communicate with students in the classroom, with staff in conference rooms, with colleagues over the Internet, or just about anywhere that has electricity. It is a large, touch-controlled screen that works with a projector and a computer. The projector throws the computer's desktop image onto the interactive whiteboard, which acts as both a monitor and an input device. Users can write on the whiteboard in digital ink or use a finger to control computer applications by pointing, clicking and dragging, as with a mouse. Buttons launch a popup keyboard and a right-mouse-click menu for more options.

The SMART Board that the District Technology Department has standardized on is a product of SMART Technologies. SMART Technologies has been a leader in the whiteboard technology and has the best ratings. SMART Technologies will allow us to have the software on multiple computers and make it available for home use for teachers for free. This will allow teachers to plan lessons without actually having a SMART Board attached to your computer.

Now every lesson can be hands on with students and the teachers collaborating via the whiteboard. Lesson screens, which can include notes, images and sound, can be printed, emailed, posted to the internet, copied and saved in other applications or saved as a computer file for students to use to review or to catch up on missed work. The attached speakers can also be used to record the lessons.

*The Gallery: Essentials for Educators* comes with the SMART Board and it includes photos, videos, images, famous works of art, physics simulations and interactive lessons for all age groups and subjects. There are also an incredible amount of interactive whiteboard resources on line including a large library of lessons, activities and ideas.

Both teachers use the SMART Board every day. Mr. Yoder recently used the simulation graphics to teach probability lessons. The chart simulations refresh automatically as students add data. He also uses a Jeopardy board created by Mr. Haubrick with Geometer's Sketchpad as an interactive review tool. Students in Mr. Muir's classroom use the virtual graphing calculator on the screen to check their answers on their individual graphing calculators.

### District Plans

Next year, the district hopes to increase the number of interactive whiteboards by purchasing additional SMART Boards that will be placed in the high schools, middle schools and a couple of the elementary schools.

### Research

Current research supports the theory that interactive whiteboards enhance student learning by making "learning more engaging, and by providing new ways of teaching complex concepts and critical thinking." The use of the whiteboard has also been found to limit opportunities for distraction by focusing student attention on lessons. Students are highly engaged when working directly on a whiteboard. The visual and tactile opportunities afford "multi-sensory engagement in the learning process".



## Resources

The “Executive Summary” for *The Future of Children: Children and Computer Technology*  
<http://smarterkids.org/research/paper10.asp>

“SMART Board Interactive Whiteboards Improve Pedagogy and Student Engagement” *Research Brief – Smart Technologies*

<http://education.smarttech.com/NR/rdonlyres/C5A45D3F-A0A6-49EC-ACF2-E17D231F55E1/0/UNBResearchBriefFINAL.pdf>

<http://www.bamaed.ua.edu/cse489/smartboard/index.htm>

<http://www.kenton.k12.ky.us/smartboard/SMARTBoardinfo.pdf>

[wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org)

## ▶ Indian Valley Middle School Students Experiment with Online Courseware

by Edna Snook

Students from Mrs. Snook’s Computer Class have been experiencing and experimenting with a Moodle online companion course site hosted by the Tuscarora Intermediate Unit. Moodle is a course management system designed to help educators create effective online learning communities. Using many of the tools available on the site, students were able to complete some of the following projects:

- Sixth, Seventh and Eighth grade students completed an online questionnaire called “Year in Review.” They answered questions about what they learned from the projects in computer class. With this feature, students can post a response, and view other students’ posted responses as well. Writing for an audience motivates students to use their best language/communications skills.
- Mr. McKelvey’s and Miss Mowery’s 6th grade science students have been sharing research results on weather and hurricanes through the development of wikis. Wikis are online web sites that can be edited by many different students. Students can add text, pictures/graphics, emoticons, as well as links to other sites, to create a dynamic, collaborative research effort.
- Sixth graders have participated in a chat session where they identified bad or good examples of Internet safety netiquette. Name calling, writing in all caps, gibberish, and being rude (by Mrs. Snook, the appointed bully) were quickly responded to with a message from the students identifying the behavior. Being nice to newbies and using emoticons elicited a positive chat response from all.
- Kids’ Cut-Lewistown participants were able to **chat** with, and respond to questionnaires from Charlie Grudeman, project leader from WPSU TV. Since we are only the fourth school involved with Kids’ Cut, Charlie needed some feedback for project improvement. This was an excellent way to communicate with a very busy Charlie who was 30 miles away, but could still communicate with the whole class in real time.
- As part of a “Charities” project, 7th and 8th graders wrote persuasive messages to classmates trying to elicit volunteers for their chosen charity. Recipients of these messages had to respond with comments, and in turn, try to persuade the sendees to volunteer for the recipient’s chosen charity. The original assignment was to write a persuasive letter in Word, but when given the choice to do that or use the message feature of Moodle, students were more than willing to use the 21st century communication technique.

# Save the Planet



► **Grist**

Grist is environmental journalism with an edge. This is a e-zine that delivers “news and news you can use on pivotal topics.” Grist is a nonprofit organization funded by foundation grants, reader contributions, and just a touch of advertising. The website and other services are free. “Grist: it’s gloom and doom with a sense of humor. So laugh now — or the planet gets it.”

<http://grist.org/>



► **RealClimate**

RealClimate is a commentary site on climate science written by working climate scientists. “It provides a quick response to developing stories and straightforward presentation of the physical evidence for global warming.” The website is restricted to scientific topics and does not get involved in any political or economic implications.

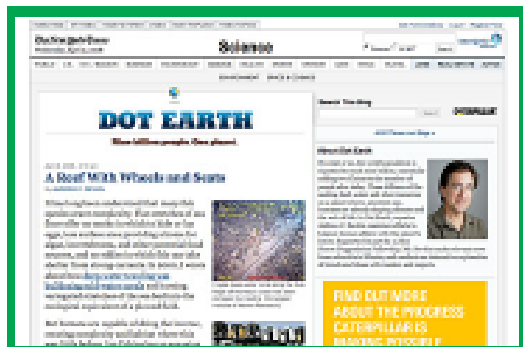
<http://www.realclimate.org/>



► **Dot Earth**

Dot Earth is a New York Times blog created by Times reporter Andrew C. Revkin. “He examines efforts to balance human affairs with the planet’s limits. Mr. Revkin tracks relevant news from suburbia to Siberia, and conducts an interactive exploration of trends and ideas with readers and experts.”

<http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/>



Check out more green websites and information at Time Magazine.

[http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/article/0,28804,1730759\\_1731034,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/article/0,28804,1730759_1731034,00.html)