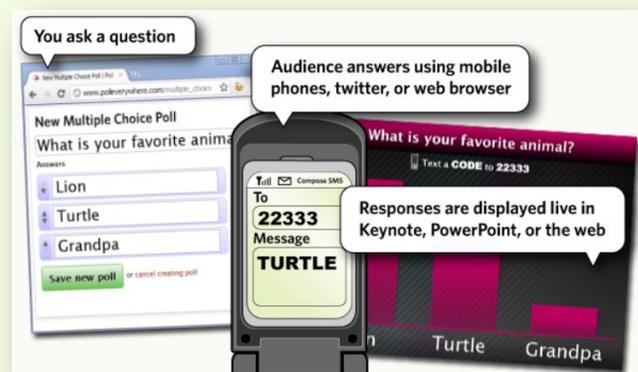# PPS Technology Times

FACS QuizBowl 2012

This year the freshman FACS classes at PCHS reviewed for their final exam in a unique way... a Quiz Bowl!

The classes gathered and teamed up in the auditorium for a fun morning or afternoon of interactive review. Sara Brown, Media Specialist, organized the event along with the FACS teachers, Jim Schafer, Katie Eichstaedt, Corey McNeal, and Cheryl Tucker. Mrs. Brown loaded the questions provided by the teachers into a website called PollEverywhere.com This site allow students/participants to use the text messaging feature on their cell phones to text in the correct answers to the quiz bowl questions. Students can see the results of the quiz question in real time. Teachers are able to see how well each group did on the questions, summarize which questions the students had the most trouble with, and crown a winner all through the PollEverywhere program.

Students also were able to send in their answers via the PollEverywhere website. This was helpful when the cell phone reception in the auditorium was not as strong as needed.

Overall this was a fun review experience for the students.

Learn more at http://www.polleverywhere.com/

Technology Bond Update

Technology projects continue to move forward. Here are a few of the highlights.

- New Hovercam document cameras have been distributed to the middle schools, CEC, Northern High School, Woodland Elementary, Lake Center Elementary and 12th Street Elementary. Where applicable, these replaced the Logitech cameras installed with the original TECs to increase use and functionality. We deployed the cameras to the middle schools this school year so the teachers could begin learning their functions and using them with their students. Trainings on using the Hovercams will be provided this summer along with TEC training.
- *HOVERCAM SUMMER STORAGE:* If you are in a non-carpeted classroom, you will need to store your Hovercam in a safe storage cabinet this summer. Make sure you put it in a place you will remember since you will need to get it out again in the fall to use. To unplug your Hovercam, simply remove the USB cord from your computer's USB port on your computer.
- Plans to install Technology Enhanced Classrooms at the middle schools and CEC this summer are moving along on schedule. These systems will include 70 inch LCD TVs (or projectors in a few large spaces), new computers with touchscreen monitors, adjustable tables, microphones, and document cameras. The computer will be in addition to the new teacher computer that was installed this winter and will run on Windows 7 and include Office 2010.
- Several other "behind the scenes" processes will also be occurring to help make our computers and the network run as efficiently and effectively as possible next school year.

Distance Learning: COSI Autopsy at PCHS and PNHS

Our Forensic Science and IB Biology students received a real treat this year. They were able to watch an actual autopsy narrated by a forensic pathologist through the wonders of distance learning. The autopsy was brought to us by the Columbus, Ohio based Center of Science and Industry (COSI). The classes who participated in this great event were:

- CHS: James Carrow's Bio 3 (Anatomy/Physiology) and Cathy Laurencig's Forensic Science.
- NHS: Kathy Mirakovits's Forensic Sciences II classes and Donna Hertel's IB Biology HL II classes.

Student participants worked through the "case" and were asked to solve the cause of death. Before the program, students were given a booklet to use during the autopsy to help them collect the "clues". The 90 minute program showed the autopsy from Y-incision to the removal of the brain. During the autopsy, students were able to ask the forensic pathologist questions about the autopsy, the deceased and forensic science in general. They were also able to hear the answers to questions asked by schools across the country who were also participating in the distance learning experience. At the end, the students reviewed what they had learned from the autopsy and made a case for what they believed to be the cause of death. This was a great exercise and experience for our budding forensic scientists, one that wouldn't be possible without the use of technology.

Expanding the Classroom: Skype Video-Conferencing

Students from 1st grade to 12th grade are having the walls of their classroom expanded thanks to the video-conferencing program called Skype. Teachers are beginning to use Skype in many different ways to enhance the connections the students have to the world outside their school walls.

PCHS Physics teacher, Kat Myers, offered up a fantastic opportunity for her IB Physics HL 2 class, along with Chris Czuk's IB Physics HL 1 class. They were able to Skype with Mr. Jesse Chvojka, who is a physicist at FermiLab in Illinois. The lab he works for is studying neutrinos and recently they were able to send data via these tiny particles. These new discoveries are especially interesting to the IB Physics students because one of the topics discussed in their class is particle physics where they learn about neutrinos and their production.

Kat Myers was very happy with how the experience turned out. "My class enjoyed talking to a working physicist. I liked that they were able to take an abstract classroom topic and see how it's actually applied in the real world."

Our 1st graders at Lake Center and Haverhill celebrated March is Reading Month with a special guest reader, our Superintendent, Dr. Perry. Dr. Perry was able to read to classes at Lake Center and Haverhill simultaneously thanks to our Skype connection and the TECs. While the first grade students at Lake Center were listening to the book in person, the students at Haverhill were enjoying the story on their TV screen. Students from both classes were able to interact with and ask questions of Dr. Perry. More importantly, students were excited about seeing their first grade friends from the other school.

Experiences like these really help the students see beyond the walls of their classroom to the rest of the community and beyond.

Interested in trying a new tech project with your students? Read this first!

In order for us to create 21st century learners, we are looking to the Internet more and more for tools, resources and project ideas. The Internet is full of great free resources for us to use with our students. Whenever you begin a new project, it is important to follow these steps:

1. You need to make sure you read the PPSNet User Agreement and review it with your students. This is something you should do **before** beginning a technology project as a reminder to students of the expectations. Each student should have this on file already. If you have concerns, check with your office staff. Here is a copy of the agreement: http://www.portageps.org/departments/technology/acceptableuse/aup_revised_2012.pdf
2. Before starting your project, you should contact Jessica Winstanley and/or Kelly Jensenius to help you solidify your project and/or provide tips and tricks.
3. As with any project you introduce for the first time, you should always contact your building administrator so they are aware of your plans and aren't surprised by parent calls.
4. Next, it is in your best interest to contact the parents to let them know your intentions. This will give them the information they need and alleviate possible concerns. Here is a letter about Google Docs you can personalize, as well as an additional voluntary contract to the PPSNet agreement to help communicate expectations for Google Docs. Feel free to adapt these as needed for the program you are using.
    a. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hpjmdkxs17_g1pszoTSfWSFk_18P_-INPCogmhO1gA8/edit
    b. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SrL6yGJN4AVhpZkueZchJ4r-N7tz5dYzo7KKtEwbu2k/edit
5. Know your age group. If you teach students that are under the age of 13, you are not going to want them using websites that require an email address to register for an account. Free sites that allow us to use them without registering are best for young students - just make sure you check out the site completely for appropriate content and advertisements. Our Google Apps products are also great tools to use with our younger students.
6. Start small – you don't have to use **ALL** the features of Google Apps or **ALL** the resources on the web.

If you don't know **WHERE** to start but want to, ask for our support! Jessica Winstanley and Kelly Jensenius are available to help guide you.

Meet the Tech Staff: Joan Herson

Joan Herson is our ever-efficient secretary for the Technology department. Joan has worked at Portage Public Schools for almost 17 years, the last 5 in the technology department. She is in charge of ordering equipment, supplies, bond items, software and much more. She also takes care of the data management (expenses, subscriptions, etc.) for the department. When not at her desk, Joan can be found working on the receiving dock or opening, tagging and cataloguing all the technology equipment that flows through our doors.

She is also on the Excellence in Education committee for the county. She is one of many who help to make the yearly Excellence in Education banquet happen. She really enjoys being a part of this great county project.

In her free time you will find Joan outside - sledding, skiing, skating, playing with her grandkids, gardening, camping, spending time at the beach, and being with her family and friends. She will be heading to Kentucky this Memorial Day weekend to bike the Horsey 100!

Joan is a valuable member of our technology team here at PPS and we are very luck y to have her.

Joan's Tech Tip:
My favorite tip is a shortcut in Access. Ctrl + ' will copy exact information from the cell above to the one below. In a database that is such a time saver because every cell is an individual record so a row or block of data cannot be captured and copied into another block or row of data.

Summer Technology Training

Are you interested in brushing up on your technology skills this summer? Are you getting a new TEC (Technology Enhanced Classroom) in your room next year and want to have some time to learn about it and practice before the kids arrive next fall? Do you have a technology project (OneNote, Blogger, Webpage, Eboard, etc.) that you have been telling yourself, "I'll work on that this summer" and now you need the place to work on those projects? All this and more will be available for you this summer! Check out the complete list of class offerings on the PPS Tech Training Website: http://techtraining.site.portageps.org/home/summer-training. From here you will be able to learn about the classes and register.

There is a minimum class size of 10 people. If a class is cancelled for low numbers or any other reason, you will be notified via a phone call. *For planning purposes registration must be done by June 1, 2012. Any classes with fewer than 10 people on June 1st will be cancelled!!!*
Trainings will be held in the computer lab at the Technology and Training Center (TTC).

- **High School Google Docs and Evernote**: June 4 at 9:00 am
- **Quick Assessments with Google Docs, Flubaroo and PollEverywhere**: June 6 at 12:00 pm
- **Blogger and Google Drive for HS teachers**: June 7 at 9:00 am
- **Google Docs Basic**:
    - June 20 at 8:30 am
    - July 11 at 8:30 am
- **Google Forms**: June 20 at 10:30 am
- **Google Blogger**: June 20 at 12:30 pm
- **Google Docs – Projects**: June 27 at 9:30 am
- **Data Collection and Debriefing with Google Docs:** August 15 at 11:30 am
- **Picasa Online Photo Albums**: July 11 at 10:30 am
- **TEC (Technology Enhanced Classroom) Basic Training**:
    - July 31 at 8:30 am
    - August 8 at 8:30 am
    - August 13 at 12:30 pm
    - August 22 at 8:30 am
- **Prezi:** July 18 at 2 pm
- **LanSchool:** August 15 at 8:30 am

- **Advanced Hovercam:** August 15 at 10:30 am
- **TEC for Substitute Teachers:** August 29 at 1:00 pm
- **Word 2010**: July 18 at 8:30 am
- **Excel 2010**: July 18 at 10:00 am
- **Outlook 2010:** July 18 at 1:00 pm
- **OneNote 2010:** July 25 at 11:30 am
- **Using Technology in the Classroom Idea Sharing Sessions**:
    - June 25 at 9:30 am (Elementary)
    - June 25 at 10:30 am (Secondary)
    - August 15 at 10:30 am (Both elementary and secondary)
- **Skype Projects:** June 26 at 9:30 am
- **Technology Free-Choice Work Session:**
    - June 27 at 12:30 pm
    - July 11 at 12:30 pm
    - July 25 at 12:30 pm
    - August 8 at 12:30 pm
    - August 22 at 12:30 pm
- **Technology for Secretaries**:
    - August 13 at 9:30 am

Jessica Winstanley and Kelly Jensenius are always more than happy to schedule individual or small group trainings, as needed, throughout the month. You may email them at jwinstanley@portageps.org or kjensenius@portageps.org. To learn more about the classes, view the training calendar, download how to documents and training handouts and **register for the classes**, go to: http://techtraining.site.portageps.org
WHEN COMING TO THE TTC FOR TRAINING, REMEMBER YOUR KEY FOB. YOU WILL NEED IT TO ENTER THE BUILDING.