

Technology Newsletter

April, 2005
Volume 1, Issue 4

Martha J. Eagle, Director
Marion Wood, Instructional
Technologist Coordinator

Director's News

Happy Spring!

Welcome April and May with warm breezes and beautiful flowers. Summer is on its way!!

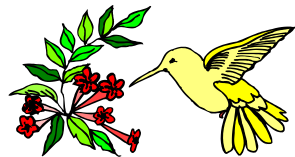
The wrap up of a school year can be very hectic - for classroom teachers and administrators. We have SOL online testing coming up in May for BOTH ACHS and AMS. This is an exciting time of year, but hard to keep the students focused on important issues. To spice up your curriculum a little, try using the SmartBoard or wireless cart. Think of fun activities that relate to your SOL's and that use technology. These activities, if used properly, will have your students so focused on learning, they will forget about the warm breezes and that they are truly learning. We have a few workshops still open this spring - check out the division website at www.appomattox.k12.va.us and click on bottom right on "Events" for the

latest updates.

With the coming of summer, we have only APS teacher computers to replace. There will also be several labs replaced by the start of 05-06.

Our email system is a wonderful asset to have, but one that needs to be managed. As a responsible user of email, please keep your mailbox cleaned up. Delete all mail you do not need and create folders to store your important mail. Each mailbox can only hold so much data, so as your mailbox fills up, you will not be able to utilize it until you sort your mail. Remember to go online and check your email this summer. You can open up the division website and click on "Technology" page and on "Staff Mail" to access GroupWise from ANYWHERE, ANYTIME.

Martha Eagle



Contents

Director's News	1
Leader in Online Testing	1
Integrating Technology	2
What is an IT?	2
E-Mailing Interims	3
Assistive Technology	3
2 Views of Groupwise	4
Appomattox Open Labs	4
Ms. Franklin's Class	4
April Workshops	4

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Technology Workshops
- ◆ NTTI Training, Roanoke, April 8-9

Appomattox: A Leader in Online Testing By Joyce Jamerson

The Appomattox County School Division is a leader in online testing among Virginia school divisions. Beginning in January 2001, Appomattox County High School was included in the first group of schools in the state to administer SOL End of Course tests via the online testing system. Since that date, additional online subjects have become available and given at ACHS during each test administration. Currently, all SOL End of Course tests are administered online with approximately 1600 online tests given annually.

Beginning with the Spring 2005 test administration, Appomattox Middle

School will begin online testing as it becomes available at the middle school level. AMS will administer online tests in Algebra I, Geometry, and Science 8. All middle school testing will be available online in Spring 2006.

Distinct advantages to giving online tests include elimination of answer documents and test booklets, increased security of testing materials, and immediate return of student scores. In addition, students report a greater willingness to take online tests and are more attentive during testing sessions.

Why do we need technology integration?

Article reprinted from: <http://www.edutopia.org/modules/TI/Why.php>



Technology, when integrated into the curriculum, revolutionizes the learning process.

Teachers who recognize computers as problem-solving tools change the way they teach. They move from a behavioral approach to a more constructivist approach.

Technology is a part of children's lives. It is transparent. Many homes have computers and Internet connections. As prices of technology drop computers and other digital devices may replace television as we know it. The technologies of today bring the tools of empowerment into the hands and minds of those who use them.

Now, walk into a classroom. Are there computers and if so, are they being used? How are they being used?

Technology is revolutionizing the way we think, work, and play. Technology, when integrated into the curriculum, revolutionizes the learning process. More and more studies show that technology integration in the curriculum improves students' learning processes and outcomes. Teachers who recognize computers as problem-solving tools change the way they teach. They move from a behavioral approach to a more constructivist approach. Project-based learning takes place utilizing interactive multimedia and telecommunications technologies. Students are engaged in their learning using these powerful tools.

Another reason for technology integration is the necessity of today's

students to have 21st Century Skills. These 21st Century Skills include:

- Personal and social responsibility
- Planning, critical thinking, reasoning, and creativity
- Strong communication skills, both for interpersonal and presentation needs
- Cross-cultural understanding
- Visualizing and decision-making
- Knowing how and when to use technology and choosing the most appropriate tool for the task

Technology helps change the student/teacher roles and relationships. It promotes project-based learning styles. It engages students in their learning processes. Students acquire and use higher-order thinking, analysis, and problem solving. They take responsibility for their learning outcomes. Teachers become guides and facilitators. Technology lends itself as the multidimensional tool that assists the process. For economically disadvantaged students, the school may be the only place where they will have the opportunity to use a computer and integrate technology into their learning.

(Go to the above site for more information on this topic.)

What is an Instructional Technologist?

By Susie Fisher

The plan for next year is to have the equivalent of 2 full-time Instructional Technologists. That would be the equivalent of one half-time position for each school in Appomattox.

The Instructional technologists are in the schools to help teachers, students, and administration. By definition, the instructional technologists work with the design, development, utilization, management and evaluation of processes and resources for learning to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of instruction. Sounds like

educational jargon doesn't it? In theory, all teachers are instructional technologists. The goal of the instructional technologist is to understand how people learn and how to best design and implement instructional systems and instructional materials to facilitate learning. The IT assists faculty and staff by providing workshops, one-on-one support, and keeping abreast of the newest educational technology. See your IT person, they really want to help.



E-Mailing Interims to Parents

By Vic Meadows

I can think of no better way to keep parents informed of their child's performance in school than to e-mail interims at regular intervals. I send paper interims each Monday. Since I started this practice two years ago, I have had no parent claim that he/she did not know that their child was failing my class. I get the interims back signed by the parent. I also get all kinds of comments written by the parents. They are informed and if there is a problem, I can resolve it before it gets blown out of proportion.

Sending regular interims serves several purposes. Parents can keep abreast of what their child is doing in school and can help with formulating good study habits when grades begin to drop. Students can keep abreast of assignments that have been missed due to absences or neglect. Teachers can locate errors in the grades that have been entered into the computer. (I have found quite a few typo errors which could cost the student dearly when averaged into the six weeks grade.)

We now have the power to e-mail interims which can save a bundle of paper. It takes very little effort to send the interims once the system has been set up. The setup process does take some time, but it is only done once and it is worth it in the long run. I have prepared a PowerPoint Presentation

showing the steps to e-mailing interims. I would be happy to send anyone a copy, if you would like one. I can send it by e-mail in just a few seconds. Just e-mail me at vlmeadows@appomattox.k12.va.us

I would like to caution all teachers about randomly sending e-mails. I would get written permission from any parent before I started sending an e-mail. Grades are confidential and I would want to make sure that the parent was the one getting the e-mail. Work e-mail addresses frighten me. Can just anyone get the interim at work or is it secure so only the parent gets it? Start slowly at first. E-mail only a few and see how it works. Eventually, e-mail more until any parent that wants an interim by e-mail has one.

I am sure that parents will appreciate your effort to let them know about their child's grades. Would you want to know what your child is doing and still have time to intervene if necessary? I would.

If anyone would like to sit down with me and go over the steps to setting up the e-mailing of interims, just e-mail me and I will make myself available. I am willing to stay after school just about any day. Let me know when you would like to do this.

Happy E-mailing!



It takes very little effort to send the interims once the system has been set up.

The setup process does take some time, but it is only done once and it is worth it in the long run.

Assistive Technology - The AlphaSmart

The AlphaSmart 3000 allows you to enter and edit text, then send it to any computer for formatting or directly to a printer. Its portability allows students to use it anywhere and anytime-in the classroom, at home, or on field trips. It comes with a word processor but is expandable by purchasing applets for calculator functions, keyboarding instruction, quizzes, outlining, and word prediction. The AlphaSmart

3000 is a smart way to extend your technology dollars. It can run over 700 hours on 3 AA alkaline batteries. It is lightweight, rugged, and ergonomic in design. It weighs less than 2 lbs. and is virtually indestructible. It is especially helpful for those students whose lack of handwriting skills get in the way of the writing process. Each school has a number of these if you would like to try one before you order. Check with your SPED department.

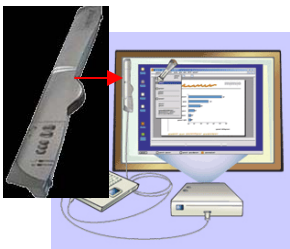


April Workshops**April 7th**Internet Resources,
ACHS
Open Lab, APS**April 7th**Inspiration, AES
Library**April 11th**

WebQuests, ACHS

April 14thScholastic Keys, AES
PC Basics, AMS**April 25th**

PowerPoint Games

**Quizzdom****Digital Microscope****Mimio****Appomattox County School****Board**124 Court Street
Appomattox, VA
24522**Phone:**

(434) 352-8251

Fax:

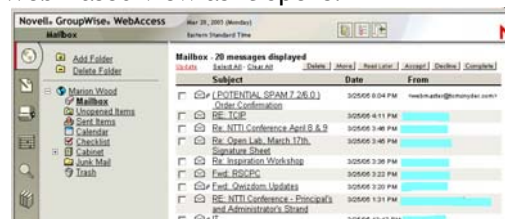
(434) 352-0883

E-mail:

mjeagle@appomattox.k12.va.us

Groupwise - One Program, Two Views (Web-Based and Client-Side) *By Marion Wood*

ACPS staff has access to ONE email box with the web-based view. However, as staff receives NEW computers, they also have access to the client-side- one mail box, two ways to view the same info. The Web-based view is important because you can access your account from any computer, anywhere. It is a more limited view, however. Below is a picture of the Web-Based view as it opens:



A good Quick-Start Guide to the Web-Based view can be found at:

<http://oit.wvu.edu/support/tss/groupwise/65web.pdf>

You will benefit from the added capability that the Client-side adds. It has the familiar feel of many windows programs. It is a more powerful program and is worth the time spent learning to use it. You can only access the client-side from within the school system.

Below is a view of the Client-Side view:



A good Quick-Start Guide to the Client-Side view can be found at:

<http://oit.wvu.edu/support/tss/groupwise/65intro.pdf>

Open Lab at ACHS & APS *By Susie Fisher*

"Wow! I didn't know we had that!" Those were the words most often spoken at the latest technology fairs held at ACHS and APS.

Many teachers came out to see the latest technology the county schools have to offer. The newest piece of technology, the Mimio, was taken straight out of the box for the fair at APS. The mimio is a product that turns any white board into an interactive white board (like the SmartBoard but you hook it to the white board in your room). The Smartboard is still a popular item for teachers too.

The SchoolPad is another new piece of equipment. It lets the teacher walk around the room and at the same time display items electronically on a computer or projected onto a screen via a video projector. Students can even graph problems from their desks and have them displayed on the video screen.

Quizzdom drew the largest crowd with the high school faculty. Quizzdom is an



interactive remote response system for the classroom. The students respond to questions that are projected onto a screen using a remote control. The software with the Quizzdom system lets the teacher enter her own questions. The students love the remote and the results are immediately available to the teacher.

The digital microscope was another fun tool. This microscope hooks right to the computer and displays pictures of magnified objects. The pictures can be saved right to the computer.

Also on display were flash drives, PDAs, tablets, mobile labs, digital camcorders, digital still cameras, and more.

Learning and Succeeding in a Caring Environment
We're on the web at www.appomattox.k12.va.us