

TECHNOLOGY TIMES

Rockaway Township
Public Schools



Management Information Services: Mike Valle, Director of Technology; Jeannette Ferranti, Project Manager; Wanda Jenkins, System Support Specialist; Ed Toth, Network Technician; School Educational Technologists: Birchwood: Joyce Schulze, Copeland Middle School: Maura Ollo, Bill Hartmann, C.A. Dwyer: Erin Borino, K. D. Malone: Karen O'Donnell, D.B. O'Brien: Hal Conover, Stony Brook: Karen Orlando Web site address <http://www.morris.k12.nj.us/rocktwp/default.htm>

By Mike Valle, Director of Technology

New Technology Initiatives Ready for Opening Day

The autumn is always a time of new beginnings in our school district. For the Management Information Services Department fall is the time to see the efforts of the summer come to fruition throughout district classrooms. This summer has been an especially busy time for the MIS team but a very productive and rewarding one as well. Computer labs and servers were upgraded at all locations as part of our technology plan.

Through ARRA funds the use of interactive electronic white boards has been significantly expanded in all schools this summer. Electronic White Boards were installed in a total of 119 classrooms. These state of the art interactive white boards will allow students to be actively engaged in every lesson. Every board has full internet capabilities and will allow students to fully participate in the learning process. On-going training will be provided to district teachers to insure the maximum use of this powerful tool for learning is achieved. The Hitachi fully supports 21st century learning skills and our NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards. Interactive white boards were specifically mentioned in the guidelines for ARRA funds as an excellent use of technology to support our students in the 21st century.

An additional educational enhancement that was implemented this summer is the use of on-line lesson plans. Every district teacher will now have the ability to develop their lesson plans from any PC that has internet access and will have the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards at their fingertips. The MIS team continues to strive to move our technology program forward in a fiscally responsible manner. ***“Our Vision is to provide all students with the means and opportunity to reach their potential through the use of technology as a tool for life long learning.”***

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS: DR. GARY J. VITTA

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

New Technology Initiatives Ready	1
World Wide Communication from Your Desktop	1
Lesson Plans Online	2
Video in the Classroom	2
Copeland Adds Laptops to the Technology Mix	3
Online Computer Testing	3
Every Child Shines with StarBoard	4
Teachers and Technology	4
New Technology Tools	5
Students & Teachers Smile When Using StarBoards	6

By Mike Valle, Director of Technology

World Wide Communication



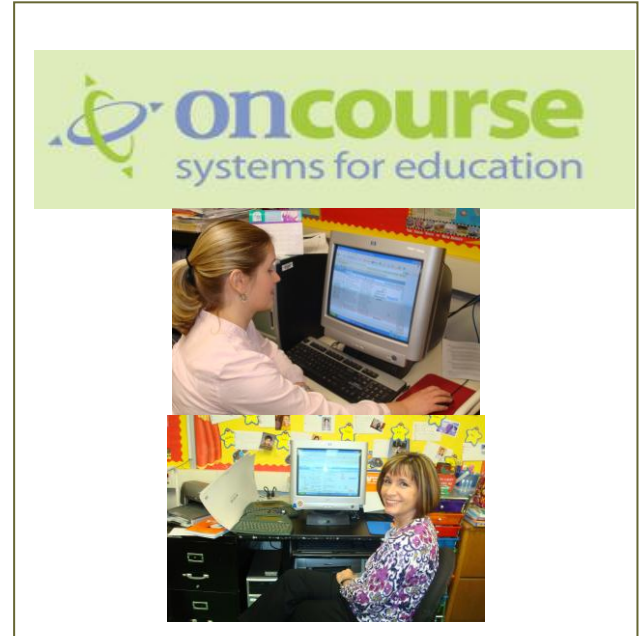
Imagine the possibilities of being able to communicate with students and teachers anywhere in the world with a few clicks of your mouse button! Now imagine what it would mean to the world of education if this communication included both audio and video at no cost for the call! This type of technology is currently being explored in Rockaway Township and has tremendous potential for all areas of the curriculum. It would certainly give our students a better global perspective of the issues of the day that affect all of us. The only hardware involved in this type of communication system is a webcam attached to your existing PC which provides the video image and the software is a free internet download known as Skype. This software works with most internet connections and allows you to chat away without concern about cost, time or distance. Our district will begin exploring this exciting technology in our district labs working with our Educational technologists and then expand the program to additional classroom applications.

By Karen O'Donnell, K.D. Malone Educational Technologist

Lesson Plans On-Line

Rockaway Township teachers continue to be on the forefront of technology use in their daily teaching and planning. They now have access to a web-based lesson planner. With the OnCourse lesson plan program, teachers write and store their lessons online using a format that ensures all lesson plans are consistent and complete.

Teachers now have access to their lessons from any Internet-connected computer, and administrators can review and annotate any teacher's lesson plans from their office or home computers. The principal can provide feedback to teachers quickly and easily as well as generate reports about what's being taught by grade level, teacher, subject and/ or standard. Teachers can choose to create and update lesson plans in less time than with the traditional paper-based approach. They can easily map lessons to educational standards, which are available in a convenient online database. One of the best features of the program is the sharing ID that allows teachers to share their lessons with other teachers. In summary, OnCourse increases flexibility and productivity and addresses all federal and state standards. This in turn gives teachers more time for student instruction and interaction.



Rockaway Township teachers now have access to their lesson plans from any computer that has internet access. Shown above are KDM fourth grade teachers: June Beck and Donna Zirkel.

By Bill Hartmann, Copeland Middle School Educational Technologist

Video in the Classroom

Lights... Cameras... Action!

These words can now be heard in Mr. Hartmann's Eighth Grade Computer Literacy class as students are trying their hands at making videos.



Students are now making public service announcement in the form of a Television Commercial. The process includes creating a story line, writing a script, using props, and determining where and how to choreograph the action. Students then, with video camera in hand, film various video clips to be used in their commercials.



Then, it is off to the computer lab to edit the clips and create a commercial. Using *Windows Movie Maker*, students are able to add an introduction, transition slides, and blend together various video clips to put together their presentations. Finally, audio and music clips are also added to complete the process. Some commercials have included such topics as: warnings about smoking, bullying, and illegal drug use. So the next time you come for a visit; don't be surprised if you hear "Lights... Cameras... Action!"



All district schools have digital cameras with video capabilities for student use.

"The access to state of the art technology will continue to enhance the learning experiences for all Copeland students."

By Maura Ollo, Copeland Middle School Educational Technologist

Copeland Adds Laptops to the Technology Mix

“Teachers need to integrate technology seamlessly into the curriculum instead of viewing it as an add on, an afterthought, or an event.” - Heidi Hayes Jacobs, Educational Consultant

In recent years, the teachers at Copeland have made fervent efforts to integrate technology into the curriculum seamlessly. As the use of technology has increased, the school’s three computer labs have become more and more active with classes of all grades and subjects. Over the last few years, teachers began to have difficulty scheduling classes for lab time as often as needed to complete the projects they envisioned.

The purchase of three laptop carts last year has enhanced teachers’ ability to have the needed technology available to their students. There are three laptop carts at Copeland. Each laptop cart contains 30 network-ready student laptops and a networked printer. Teachers may sign up for a laptop cart in advance through the EdTechs, Bill Hartmann and Maura Ollo. The EdTechs then deliver the laptop cart prior to that day and the cart remains in that room for the entire day. Many teachers use the laptops for several days in a row in order to complete research or projects.

The Copeland laptops are also used for the *After Hours Math* and *After Hours Language Arts* programs.

By Hal Conover, D.B. O’Brien Educational Technologist

Online Computer Testing

All of the schools in Rockaway Township are using Children’s Progress Online Assessments. These tests are administered to children in kindergarten through third grade three times during the school year. The tests evaluate progress in reading and math with detailed reports for each student and for the class in general. These tests help to tailor instruction to the needs of the children. They are not used for grades. These tests are done in the computer room using the Children’s Progress webpage. Each child is signed in individually and does the test that is written for their grade and for that time of year. There are colorful graphics and a variety of questions that keep the children engaged. The tests usually last for one forty five minute period and the results are available to the teacher immediately. The reports that the teachers see help them decide what subject needs to be stressed with a few children, or with the whole class. The language reports cover skills in phonics, writing, and



Three laptop carts consisting of thirty laptops each have been added to Copeland to meet the needs of all three grade levels at our middle school.

Several teachers have commented that students are so eager to use the laptops that they are very conscientious and motivated to work when they use them.

Sixth grade Language Arts teacher Jackie Moffitt recently stated that, “Having the laptops in my classroom really helps us make efficient use of class time.” She went on to describe that when she has the laptops in her classroom students can work on various stages of a project at the same time and work at their own pace with less time constraints than when they have to travel to the computer lab. And that’s really what it’s all about. Motivated students. Efficient use of class time. Using technology to improve education.



reading. Math reports cover measurement, number operations, patterns, and functions. Along with the test scores there are suggested activities that can be done in school or at home. The activities are pencil and paper challenges with fun titles like Secret Character, Mistakes Galore, Antonym Dominoes and Sentence Stumpers. Don’t they sound like fun?

The Children’s Progress assessments are just one of the many ways that the computer room and technology are being used to match teaching materials to children’s needs. A few of the other new technologies are STI Assessment tests in the upper grades, OnCourse online plan books, and Interactive whiteboards.

By: Karen Orlando, Stony Brook Educational Technologist

Every Child Shines with StarBoard

“What did you learn in school today?”

“Oh, it was really neat. During our Science class, my teacher handed me the stylus, asked me to go up to our StarBoard and write the word frog. When I tapped on the word I wrote, the handwriting changed into text. Then my teacher showed me how to tap on the word frog and connect to the Internet. It brought up a picture of a frog which I dragged onto the board. Everyone in the class was amazed at how easy it was for us to find the frog picture to start our discussion about the life cycle of a frog.” This is not a conversation that takes place in the future; it is happening right now in our district schools.

The newest technology tool to be introduced to our district schools is an electronic interactive whiteboard called the StarBoard. Mounted at a height easy for students to reach, this device displays images from the teacher computer to the board allowing users to take advantage of its touch-screen capability. Teachers are finding the available state-aligned activities and lessons valuable as their students use the StarBoard daily in all curriculum areas. This is what students say:

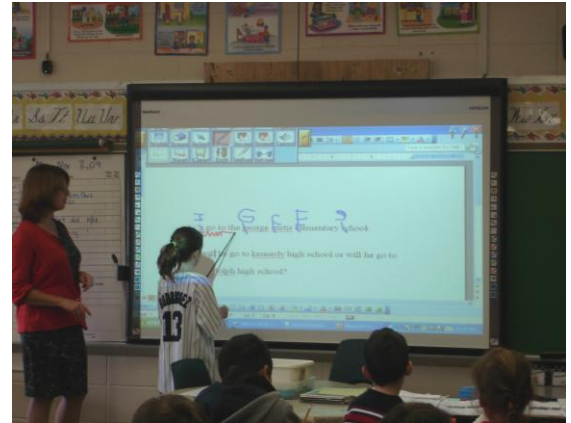
- Science - “(using the StarBoard for our Jeopardy activity) helped me to understand the question...allowed the teacher to stay at the front of the room.”

“The use of the StarBoard has greatly enhanced interactive learning in our district in all areas of the curriculum.”

By Mike Valle, Director of Technology

Teachers and Technology

Rockaway Township has been very fortunate to have the district support needed to create a technology program that we are all proud to use. We are even more fortunate to have such dedicated teachers that invest the many hours needed to master and use our new technologies to improve instruction. Here are just a few glimpses of our learning community working together to explore the StarBoard as a tool for learning.



- Music - “...it (the StarBoard) made a noise for kids that learn better by hearing ... you can touch for kids that learn better by touch and you can look at it for kids that learn better by looking.”
- Math - “students moved numbers into their proper order ... helps us learn logic and work on our thought process.”
- Language Arts - “...teacher made a chart that was labeled: verb, noun, adjective. We got to go up and drag the word to its place.”
- Math Multiplication - “...played trapdoor...got picked one by one to go and put the answer in by touching the board...is a fun and exciting way to learn multiplication and division...encourages us to get the right answer and think fast.”

Handwriting recognition software converts script on the board into text, and with a few touches of the board, the user can connect to the Internet, highlight important facts and insert and label an image. The multi-user button allows for interaction on the board by two students at once. Ask your child what they learned today? You will be amazed at their response!

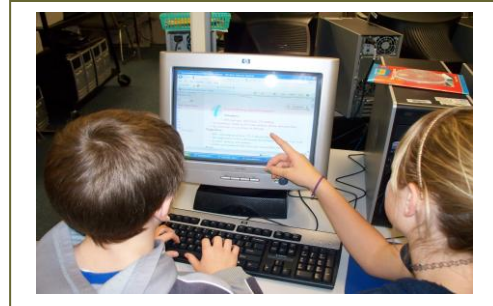
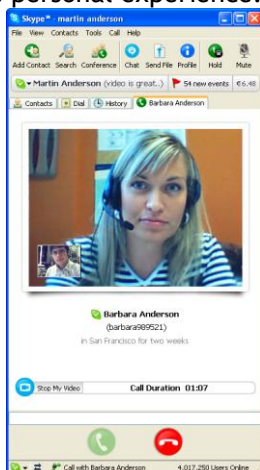


By: Erin Borino, C. A. Dwyer Educational Technologist

New Technology Tools

In the past couple years, what we are able to do on the internet have evolved to a more interactive level. What was previously used as a tool for research and communication has now become a platform for global collaboration, social networking, digital media, streaming video/audio and much more. Hence the term read/write web or web 2.0. Web 2.0 is commonly associated with web development and web design that facilitates interactive information sharing, interoperability, user-centered design and collaboration on the World Wide Web. Examples of Web 2.0 include web-based communities, hosted services, web applications, social-networking sites, video-sharing sites, wikis and blogs. A Web 2.0 site allows its users to interact with other users or to change website content, in contrast to non-interactive websites where users are limited to the passive viewing of information that is provided to them. These tools will allow us as teachers to transform our students into global citizens without leaving the classroom. Using tools such as Skype, Wikis and digital storytelling, students will become digital citizens and be able to collaborate and easily communicate with other students in their own community as well as across the globe.

One such example is the use of Skype. Skype is a free software application that allows users to make voice and video calls over the internet free of charge. With a webcam, and the Skype software, teachers can connect with their classes and provide a collaborative experience to students. There are also resources available to teachers such as the Skype an Author Network. At Dwyer, one of the 5th grade classes used Skype in September to connect with a 6th grade class in Canada. The students asked each other basic questions comparing their schools. Since the students in Canada had also seen President Obama's speech to school children, this became a topic of discussion between our 5th graders and the 6th grade class in Canada. They asked our students their opinions on the speech and what they thought it meant to them. This year, the Dwyer 4th graders will not only be writing to their pen pals in Jersey City, they will also be Skyping them throughout the year. Connecting their classrooms in this fashion will provide for a richer and more personal experience.



Wikis are websites which can be edited by anyone the owner allows. In our case, teachers allow their students to edit class Wikis. Wikis are more versatile than a class blog or website, because blogs and class websites are typically one way communication and Wikis are updated by teachers and students. Wikis are a free teaching and learning technology tool for teachers to use in education settings. Wikis have become very popular in education since 2006. There are currently over 100,000 registered education Wikis. The collaborative nature of a class Wiki allows teachers to move their teaching to a new level. This new level involves students in the teaching and learning process. Miss Greenwald's Solar System Project is an example of this type of collaborative use of Wikis by students.



The students worked in pairs researching a planet. Then, using the Wiki, they created a "travel guide" to their planet. This type of collaborative document allowed them to work together in the computer lab or individually at home. They were able to leave feedback comments for each other as well as edit each other's work. The students' learning of subject content was raised to a whole new level because of their ability to easily collaborate in the learning process.

As these new technology tools are being integrated into the curriculum they are enabling teachers to create 21st century digital learners. Collaborative projects present students to a different audience and introduce them to the world.

By: Joyce Schulze, Birchwood Educational Technologist

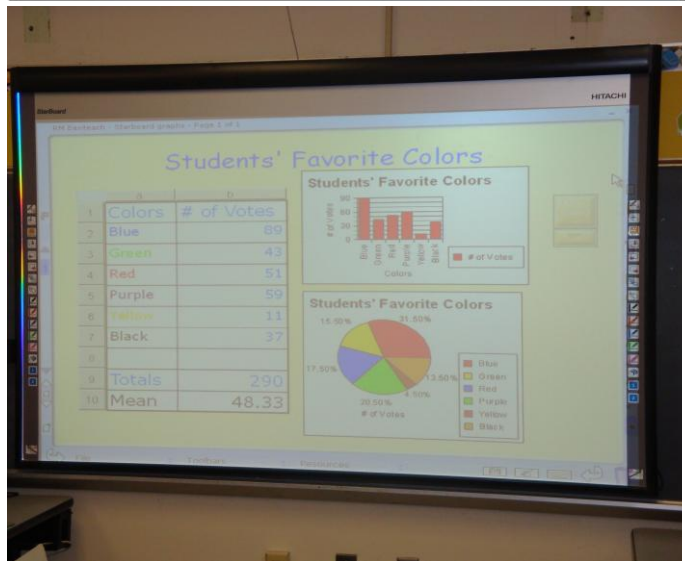
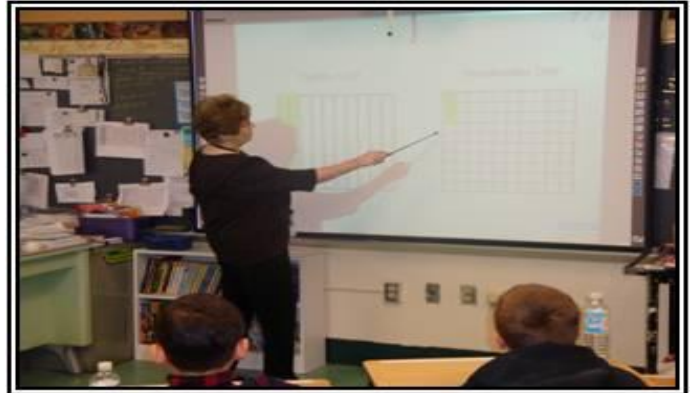
Birchwood Students & Teachers Smile When Using StarBoards



Amazing, Awesome, Fun... These are just a few of the words students have used to describe their experience with the Starboards.

It makes my day to see how happy the children are when using the Starboards. I love to see their excitement as they navigate through programs and websites with this new technology. However, students aren't the only ones who are excited; teachers are excited as well. They keep asking to learn more. Even the principal was spotted using the Starboard with students. Teachers are using the StarBoard to model math problems. Students are very motivated to practice computation when it's done on the Starboard. They have also been having fun with the function machine which is part of the Starboard software. During health class, the health teacher wrote the word skeleton on the Starboard, converted it to print, and then linked it to a website about the skeleton. Students have been practicing skip counting and building words using the puzzle pieces with the EasiTeach Software which accompanies the StarBoard.

Teachers have been accessing maps via the Internet and then drawing the routes of the famous explorers. Students learned how to create tables and graphs using the Spreadsheet component of the Easiteach software. During language arts, sentences were displayed and students were able to write on the Starboard as they practiced capitalization and punctuation skills. During vocal music, the teacher used Electronic Big Books. She was able to project the song, from the CD-Rom, onto the StarBoard to highlight certain parts/symbols of songs the children were working on. We are truly fortunate to have this wonderful technology in Rockaway Township.



S.T.A.R.S.

"Students and Teachers
Achieve Real Success"

