

Technology in the Classroom Presentation
Thursday, November 19, 2009

On November 19, 2009, the UDHS PTO hosted a presentation for high school and middle school parents on the use of technology in the classroom. Stephanie Hultquist made introductory remarks, which were followed by 12 separate presentations by teachers and other staff members. The presentations were set up in classrooms throughout the school, and were offered to demonstrate different facets of the use of technology in the classroom. The program was divided into four 15 minute time periods, and you could select 4 presentations to attend.

The first presentation I attended was Destiny/Library technology, presented by Sue Mowery, UDHS librarian. The high school has recently acquired a new computer catalog system called Destiny Quest, which offers a lot more than the old card catalog system most parents grew up with. You can search the library databases throughout the Upper Dublin school district and reserve and renew material online. You can access reviews about books, and see a list of the books that are checked out most often (Top Ten List). In addition, Destiny includes websites pre-selected by the librarian that are available online, which can be utilized for research purposes.

One of the database services that the library has available is a service called Proquest Database, which is used at Penn State and other colleges. Through Proquest, literally thousands of magazine and newspaper articles can be accessed, as well as a selection of journals. Electronic tools (Noodle Tools) are also available for creating bibliographies and corresponding note cards. The 11th graders have been trained in the use of these wonderful new resources. In January, after the library has been moved to its new temporary quarters in the east gym, the Seniors, Sophomores and Freshmen will receive training.

The next session I attended was called Mixbook, presented by Christina Iezze, a middle school writing teacher. Christina introduced Mixbook to the middle school, as a great way to get reluctant 6th and 7th grade writers to become excited about writing. In this online offering, books can be created, and include a composite of writing and photo downloading to create on-line books. It is fun for the children to write and illustrate their own books!

Dan Greenberg, UDHS history teacher, gave a presentation on his use of Wikispaces and Google Documents. Dan has a Wikispaces that he uses extensively in his classrooms. In using the Wikispaces, groups of students, and even separate classes working together, create on-line books, reports and other projects. Mr. Greenberg also uses his Wikispaces for scheduled online study blogs, which can be entered into by his students when they are studying for tests, where they can ask questions and share thoughts, and which is moderated by Mr. Greenberg. Mr. Greenberg also spoke about how it is possible for anyone to create their own I-Google home page.

For my last session I went to two presentations. Internet Literacy for Parents, hosted by SRMS teacher Richard DiMarco, addressed the introduction of the utilization of the web for 6th

grade students and their parents. Mr. DiMarco provided a list of websites that are interesting to entering Middle School students and are a great way to get them immersed in the use of the internet to enhance their learning. I also stopped in at InterWrite Board, presented by Middle School teacher Ruthann Heywood, which covered how interwrite boards (the big white boards that are connected to a computer) work and ways they can be used in the classroom at any educational level.

The remaining 7 presentations, which I would also have liked to attend, included the following: SRMS Orange Team Wikispace, presented by Brad Lieberman; EMedia Music/Guitar Software, presented by Rick Smith; Upper Dublin School District Website, presented by Katie Braun; Moodle (which I hear is very popular in the middle school but since I was unable to attend, still have no idea what it is!) was presented by Dorothy Weiss; Naviance, presented by Al Dell'Angelo, Jessica Sachson, and Jennifer Hopkins; Greenfield Youth Film Festival, presented by Ruth Favin; and, InterWrite, PowerPoint & Document Camera, presented by Alissa Hart.

Submitted by Marian Racette, UDHS PTO Secretary.