ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON'S

School 2 Home NEWSLETTER

Publication & Culmination

Theme of the Month

This month and next month's themes are Publication and Culmination, both of which can be integrated across all content areas.

As this school year comes to a close, it is time to look back and reflect upon a year of learning. So, this month we are asking teachers to create digital portfolios with students. Google Docs, a tool that all students should have access to using their MyMail account, is a great place for students to create a digital portfolio. Students simply create a collection of best works of the school year for each class and share the collection with others including teachers, parents, and peers.

The number one goal these next two months is to get students to bring their laptop to school every day! The best way to get students to bring their laptops to school every day is to give students opportunities to use their laptops in class regularly. It has also been effective for teachers to assign participation credit for students bringing laptops.

Goals of the Month

1. Require your students to **bring** their **laptop to school EVERY DAY**!
2. Have students create a digital portfolio of best works in their MyMail Google Docs account.

🛠 Tech Tips

Digital Portfolios: Students can easily create a digital portfolio of best works online using their MyMail Google Docs account. All they have to do is create a *Collection* (AKA a folder) that is shared with you and add artifacts of best works with a description of why each assignment was selected. To make assignments not completed on a computer digital, students can take photos of their work using their laptop's webcam and insert the pictures into a Google Document. Their work can also be scanned and uploaded into Google Docs. Now, students can simply open their *Collection of Best Work* to showoff during student-led conferences.

Technology Champions

Project Goals
- Develop a digital lesson database for Stevenson teachers to contribute to
- Improve upon School2Home teacher professional development
- Work with department members to develop a culture of computer using educators

Commitments
- Meet twice each month for a total of 4 hours
- Collaborate with colleagues on technology planning and open classroom for observations

Members: Pamela Stiles and School2Home Consultants, Jorge Chia, Tony Wang, Frank Rodriguez, Georgene Acosta, Kit McConnell, Jeannette Schaller, and Geoffrey Oram. There are currently no Science or PE representatives.

May/June Line-up

Technology Professional Development: REGISTER
- 5/11 - Creating Surveys using Google Forms
- 5/16 - Podcasting in Windows Movie Maker
- 5/23 - Creating a Website using Google Sites
- 6/2 - Creating Digital Portfolios in Google Docs
- Other Requests – Complete this **Request Form**
- **District Run Technology PDs: ITO Workshops** - lots of great summer opportunities!

Others
- 5/2 - Email Parent Workshop (8:30-10:30am)
- 5/17 - Technology Champs Meeting - Bonnie Marks and Micheline LeBlanc campus visit
- 5/25 - PLAS Technology Instructional Rounds
- 5/30 - End of the year School2Home Evaluation
- 6/7 - School2Home Culmination Ceremony
- 6/10 - Student Laptop Collection (*tentative*)

Curricular Resources

Math
Middle School Portal – Middle School math and science activities, lesson plans, and project ideas. This particular link is to 6th grade probability.

Fractions Recipe Project – A blog of ideas for teaching multiplying fractions using food! Check out latest entry.

English Language Arts
10 Alternatives to Book Reports Using technology to help bring excitement and creativity to the traditional book report while still displaying students' understanding of the reading.

The Game is Afoot (unit) – A great writing, reading, art, and research project for students in the mystery genre.

History
JFK's Interactive Desk in the Oval Office – A collection of real artifacts including video clips, sound clips, photographs, and fun facts.

Science
How to Teach Students to Think like Scientists – An article with several strategies for realizing this dream.

Art & Music
The Carrot Revolution – A fine arts education blog and resource page for art educators.

April at a Glance
 # Teacher Surveys Submitted: 52
Hours of PD & Collaboration: 53.5
Total Teacher Attendance: 77
Hours of Technical Support: 60
 # Laptops Reported Stolen: 1
Hours of Fun using Laptops: Tons

All Content Areas:
Helping Students Motivate Themselves – Strategies for helping students discover what motivates themselves.

6 Important Lessons from Maine's 1:1 Laptop Program Great ideas to consider.

Engaging Parents in School – A collection of teachers' blogs that discuss how they engage parents.

Parent Engagement Strategies

Since these next two months focus is on publication and culmination, this is the perfect opportunity to invite parents into your classroom to be a part of culminating task presentations. In previous editions, there have been similar recommendations, but it is such an important parent engagement strategy that it's being revisited in this issue.

Include parents in the presentation process. Have parent or family interviews be required research for each student. Then invite parents in the classroom on presentation day. Give a good two weeks notice to parents via email or a letter home with students, with the presentation schedule. Research shows that parent participation is highest when asked to attend an event that involves their child being *on stage*. This is a great way for teachers to get to know parents and talk to them about their child's progress.

After classroom presentations, send home a simple rubric or questionnaire with no more than five questions in English and Spanish for parents to complete. Sample questions for parents: Did you learn something new?; Was the presentation fun to watch?; Do you think your child worked hard on this project?; Do you believe your child demonstrated a proficient understanding of the topic?; What did you like best about your child's presentation? It is very important that parents give their child praise for their work.

Just For Fun

Looking for some adventure on a tight budget? Well then Geocaching is just for you. **Geocaching** is a high-tech treasure hunting game played all over the world that involves a GPS device (a smart phone), a cache, and a treasure hunter. The goal of the game is to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, outdoors and share your experiences online. The GPS coordinates of geocaches are listed online **here**. All you have to do is plug in the GPS coordinates into your GPS enabled device and head outside to find the cache. Watch this **video tutorial** to learn more about it. Check out **Geocaching for Educators** for ideas on how to do this with your students.