Tech Talk

Brunswick School Department

September, 2012
Volume 3, Issue 1

News from the Main Office

Welcome to our Third year of Tech Talk

Tech Talk is a newsletter that is put out every other month by the technology department. The newsletter is filled with information about technology use in the district and tips on using technology.

Summer is our busiest time of the year, and this past summer was no exception. Besides updating all teachers and student computers, the department replaced seven computer labs, two lab carts, four servers, and a network cabinet.

The following changes have been made in order to supply the district with the most technology support as possible for the first month of school:

High School's support person is now Mike Nelson.
    With additional support provided by:
    Mike Hedger on Monday, Wednesday and Friday
    Jerry Cross on Monday and Thursday
    Sue Woodhams on Tuesday

Junior High's window support person is now Jeff Hathaway.
    Jeff works at both Coffin and BJH and he will be at
    BJH on Monday, Wednesday and Friday
    (and at Coffin on Tuesday and Thursday)
    Jerry Cross is the apple support person and he will be
    at the Junior High on: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday
    Sue Woodhams will be there on Thursday

Harriet Beecher Stowe's support person is Jill Bernier.
    With additional support by:
    Mike Hedger and Sue Woodhams

Coffin shares a support person with BJH. Jeff will be at
    Coffin on Tuesday and Thursday.
    With additional support by:
    Mike Hedger and Sue Woodhams

Technology Department Staff

District
Sue Woodhams –Director of Technology Integration
Matt Engstrom System Administrator

Jeff Hathaway Network Administrator
Mike Hedger Technology Support Specialist (the floater)

Brunswick High School
    Mike Nelson
    Mike Hedger
    Jerry Cross

Brunswick Junior High School
    Jeff Hathaway - Windows
    Jerry Cross - Macs
    Dan Dearing – Integration

Elementary School
  Coffin
    Jeff Hathaway
  HBS
    Jill Bernier
Gwen Christman – Elementary Integrator

Summer Fun

This summer we were able to implement new servers, storage systems, and operating environments that will give us future expandability and increased performance. All faculty, staff, and student data was migrated to a new storage system. A few servers were replaced, and a couple of new servers were put in place in the district. The hard work on the "behind-the-scenes" improvements in the technology department will improve stability and performance throughout the district. We hope that everyone enjoyed their summer vacation.
-Matt

Hi all,

Welcome back to the Brunswick School District and virus incubator! It's been a great summer and without having to close schools, move equipment, and open a new school, I even managed to take time off.

This summer had us bringing in about one half of the new equipment we brought in last year with the majority going to BJH and BHS seeing as they missed out on the elementary school technology surge last year. Our new Mike (we were planning a morning show but someone said Mike & Mike in the morning was taken) has been rapidly addressing a ton of issues and images and is already not only up to speed but frequently violating the limits thereof (not on the drive into the school though Officer Bailey – reaaaaalllllyyyyy).

I would like to thank those of you who have found the time to keep us techs extra busy in the past few days and let viruses into your computers. We've missed the opportunities to watch you sweat wondering if your files were really gone (Oh if I only had a penny for every kb of recovered files ☺)or just hiding again. Just a reminder to one and all; the schools are a virus incubator for more than one type of virus! Some quick reminders, One – There is not really a banker in Nigeria who needs your help to extract millions from an estate. B – No one from the School Department will contact you asking you to change your password and sign it webmaster. Third – when pop ups start inundating your computer please, please just power down and call us; chances are it's still a quick fix at that point.

Also we are right in the middle of transitioning from Windows Operating System XP to Seven which has a different look when logging on. When logging on it is important to verify that you are logging on to the Brunswick Domain as opposed to "this computer". There are a number of systems out there that may have been logged into as administrator of "this computer" over the summer so as you come across those make sure the bottom window in CP says Brunswick and in Windows 7 the top window should just have your username (or say specifically Brunswick in really small letters underneath the password box). Keep in mind if at first you don't succeed – try again until you password locks then call and yell at the nearest geek!

Now as it's the first newsletter of the year I will restrain myself (as I understand I am the only one I can restrain) and keep it brief. That said . . . Cry Havoc and let loose the - nah it's been said. Just cry havoc.

Mike Hedger

News from the High School

As one of the "New Kid[s] in Town", I'd like to introduce myself as the newest team member of the Technology Department supporting the Brunswick Schools. My name is Michael Nelson. Though I normally go by "Mike", I understand that being the second "Mike" on the team it will be incumbent upon me to reduce confusion by responding to another name. According to Google I could go by "Mike_14786567" but it seemed that people would be out of breath saying "mike fourteen million seven hundred eighty five thousand five hundred sixty seven" . . . plus it kind of defeats the purpose of a nickname so I'm still shopping around for one. At the moment I'll responding to just about anything.

I graduated from Brunswick High School in 1980. It's good to see some of my old (I mean previous) teachers are still around . . .as well as some of my former classmates. A few years after High School, I joined the Marine Corps to get a marketable skill and became a computer programmer. Over the next 20 years I worked on mainframes, personal computers, local and wide area networks, built and administered servers, taught technology classes, and worked on various technology projects. After retiring from the Marine Corps in 2003, I returned to Brunswick and took up with MSAD 75 across the river. Both my sons went through these hallowed halls so I needed to give them space and worked at Mt Ararat Middle School for five years. I followed that with a few years commuting to Portland to work with an experiential marketing company and then a brief time with Bowdoin College. I've touched just about every aspect of computers in my almost 30 years in the field. While predominantly supporting Windows machines in a corporate networked environment, I've spent the last nine years working with integrating Apple Macintosh computers and devices into corporate networks. I look forward to serving our community with you and supporting you as best as I can in the coming year. I hope to meet with every department in the High School to talk about how you use technology and how I may help you improve your tools.

– Mike Nelson

BHS and BJH Integrator

As August arrived I sent out an email to remind everyone that I would be teaching summer technology classes. I was certainly surprised and excited to see the replies roll in. My excitement soon turned to worry as the requests for joining the Wordpress classes grew and grew. By the time the sessions arrived 40 spots were reserved to make websites with Wordpress. Fortunately, I was able to divide the groups over two days with beginner and advance lessons.

Along with web design I had a great turnout for all my other classes. A few of the topics covered Laptop 101, Pages, Keynote, Garageband, and iMovie to name a few. Teachers earned CEU's as they learned new software and prepared projects for the upcoming school year.

I plan to offer addition classes during the school year and will send out information as those dates approach.

Dan

Summary Software Updates

Summer Software Updates

This summer approximately 130 staff laptops were updated with the latest MLTI software, including the operating system (Snow Leopard, 10.6.8), applications, plug-ins, and many system settings. Personal data was transferred to the updated laptop system. Thanks for your patience working through the glitches and being without your favorite laptop.

Repairs

Approximately 200 staff and student MLTI laptops were repaired over the last ten weeks. Most repairs involved cracks in the "top case". This is the part of the laptop where you might rest your hands while typing. Cracks in this part of the plastic case have plagued this MacBook design. Last year about 250 were sent for the same repair.

Cleaning

With the help of ed techs Narumi Wigandt and June Shankle, and student Devon McDougal, hundreds of staff and student laptops, including keyboards and screens, were cleaned of labels, adhesive, and grime accumulated from months of daily use. Many thanks to June, Narumi, and Devon!!!

MLTI part III Year 4

Each MLTI cycle last four years. This is the fourth and final school year of the current cycle. Right now we don't know what form the next cycle will be like, starting in July of 2013.
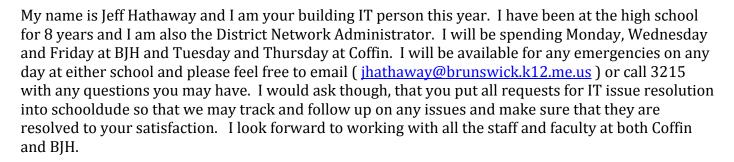
Currently, the State project team is working on construction and wording of a new Request For Proposals (RFP). This document describes the type of device, tech support, professional development, and other details each vendor must provide for the 2013-2017 MLTI program.

Later this year, the RFP will be made available to vendors so they may each submit their program costs and details. Sometime in the Spring, the winning vendor and program will be announced.

Until then, we don't know what type or brand of computers and software we may have, so it will be very important for you to become comfortable with backing up your movies, music, pictures, and documents.

Jerry

BJH News and Coffin

My name is Jeff Hathaway and I am your building IT person this year. I have been at the high school for 8 years and I am also the District Network Administrator. I will be spending Monday, Wednesday and Friday at BJH and Tuesday and Thursday at Coffin. I will be available for any emergencies on any day at either school and please feel free to email (jhathaway@brunswick.k12.me.us) or call 3215 with any questions you may have. I would ask though, that you put all requests for IT issue resolution into schooldude so that we may track and follow up on any issues and make sure that they are resolved to your satisfaction. I look forward to working with all the staff and faculty at both Coffin and BJH.

~Jeff

HBS News

I would like to introduce myself to everyone at HBS. I am Jill Bernier and have been with the district providing tech support since 2006 at Brunswick Junior High and Coffin School. My experience is mostly pc based. Prior to working for the Brunswick School Department, I contracted for a year at LLBean in their IT department and worked at Fairchild Semiconductor for 18 years in a variety of capacities (programming robots, programming business systems and providing computer security).

Enough about my background and into the present day! The past week has been a whirlwind with getting staff laptops ready, setting up equipment and readying the lab for NWEA's. I look forward to meeting everyone and helping in any way that I can. Please remember to submit requests for assistance through SchoolDude!

Have a great year!
Jill

Elementary Integrator

Word Press is our new web editing software and over the summer I familiarized myself with the program. I'll be offering workshops on Word Press throughout the year for both Coffin and HBS staff. I know many of you attended Dan's summer class and are ready to get going. Please let me know when would be the best time for you to start. I recognize how busy you all are at the beginning of the school year and don't want to add anymore to your plate until you are ready.

Math In Focus has an entire bundle of technology resources for both teachers and students. All elementary staff were introduced to this component during recent professional development days. Trainers will cover these activities during our first IWB (Interactive White Board) meeting. I will keep you updated on any new information that arrives. Please feel free to contact me if you need help with this beforehand.

IXL accounts have been updated which promoted all existing students to their new grade level. New student accounts will be created as soon as I am notified of their arrival. All 1st grade studentswil be added by September 14th. Any new classroom teachers that need an introduction to the program and help creating a class roster should email me.

Happy Computing!

~ Gwen