

Tech Talk

Brunswick School
Department

September, 2015
Fall

News from the Main Office

Welcome to 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 Mike Nelson.

With additional support provided by:

Matt Enstrom on Monday and Wednesday

Mike Hedger on Tuesday and Thursday

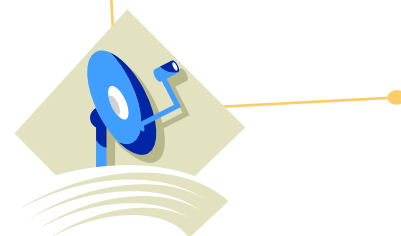
Junior High's support people is Jerry Cross and Mark Rineer

Harriet Beecher Stowe's support person is Bill Congdon

Coffin shares a support person is Mark Rineer and Jerry Cross

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SchoolDude Tip

Please remember to submit a Technology SchoolDude incident when requesting technical support. You will find a SchoolDude link on the left side menu of the HBS Web page. Remember that when filling in the web form for a SchoolDude the password to submit it is simply: "password" without the quotes.

Big Phone System Upgrade

As with each summer, the tech support department worked diligently on upgrading, replacing, and servicing new and existing computers, servers, and networking equipment. The goal every year is to improve the operations of computer systems in the district, as well as keep our equipment as current as possible. One critical element that, unfortunately, had not been able to be updated in previous years was the current phone system. The system has been in desperate need of an update, but this maintenance item has been the unfortunate victim of necessary budget cuts. Thankfully, this year we were able to upgrade part of the phone system. We were not able to update the entire system, due to budgetary limitations, however, this partial upgrade puts the district on a solid upgrade path for the entire phone system over the next few years. As it stands right now, we now have a fully up-to-date phone network between HBS and the central offices at the Hawthorne building. We hope to be able to upgrade the phone equipment at the bus garage offices this year, which will get us that much closer to a fully upgraded system.

While this maintenance is a huge improvement for the upgraded systems, it does have its caveats. There is now one phone network running on the most current hardware and software platform, and a legacy phone network running on a version of hardware/software that is more than three generations old. Unfortunately, the disparity of this operating environment, in addition to the necessity of splitting one system into two separate logical networks, means that there are some quirks and operational difficulties to the new hybrid phone system. You will notice that your external caller ID information will display the base system phone number for the district (319-1929). Additionally, you will notice a difference in the ring tone for any calls placed between HBS and the supts office, and the rest of the district. These formally internal calls are now, for all intents and purposes, treated as an external call, between two separate systems. The calls do not actual leave the district's phone network, but they have to be routed differently than before. These are not major difficulties, but there will be an adjustment period for everyone.

We look forward to being able to get the entire phone system upgraded within the next few years.

Tech Talk or in other words Geek Speak!

Welcome back everyone it's been an exciting summer from swimming with sharks in the outer banks (the Mako was delicious) to upgrading twelve year old printers to four year old ones. Okay, kidding they were new.

As Bob Dylan (or someone like him once said) the times they are a switching and speaking of switches Jeff Hathaway retired giving me the opportunity to shift into the Network Administrator role. This has led to an increased understanding of the switch and port count in the district. To sum this up there are a lot of switches with many wonderful, wonderful ports. Unfortunately going to any of them won't put me on a cruise ship to Havana.

To make a short story long and tedious we are in the process of reviewing our current and future switch and port needs and will be working to reduce, reuse, and replace where we can to make our network even more robust, secure, and something you should never have to ask questions about. But if you do have questions please email them when the server is down – no wait I mean just let me know and I'm happy to walk you through any process.

Now to switch things up this change has not relieved me of the opportunity to help in the individual schools (switching schools from week to week) and I will be trying to work in each school a little bit all year so look for my smile periodically and usually it will be irritating as usual. Upon personal requests I can switch to a smaller smile but it will switch back promptly so usually I simply don't switch.

Looking forward to a great year with liberty and justice – no wait that's taken let me switch that. Looking forward to seeing you all again and making sure things are switched up just the way you like them.

Michael Hedger



SchoolDude

We'll have additional support at the High School as this year starts. Matt Engstrom will be helping Mondays and Wednesdays and Mike Hedger will be helping Tuesdays and Thursdays. Therefore it will be critical that problems are submitted through SchoolDude rather than e-mail so that they are able to assist quickly. Tech-Emergencies may still be called in but we do ask that a follow-up SchoolDude be submitted so that we can continue to show our support needs.

Laptop Carts

Laptop carts have been pulled from departments and will be available for checkout through the library. Like the Black Lab, the carts have a corresponding public calendar folder that is accessible through Outlook where they can be reserved. Two carts will be kept upstairs and be checked out by the tech support specialist and the other two will be available in the library downstairs. Specialized programs will be installed on the Windows laptops.

Chromebooks

One of the carts that will be available is a cart of Chromebooks. These computers use the Brunswick School District provided teacher and student Google accounts for login. The Chromebooks are all labeled to facilitate assigning a Chromebook to a student for use in each class. All documents are actually stored in the Google cloud, not on the laptop, but assigning the student to a laptop should reduce the login time and the number of login profiles on each computer saving both time and drive space. To use a Chromebook, simply open the laptop to power it on and when the login screen appears, select the appropriate profile from the list of profiles or select "Add User" to login with your Google Drive credentials and create a profile. Only brunswick.k12.me.us accounts are authorized to use the Chromebooks. Immediately upon logging in start the web browser and manually enter a URL, such as "www.brunswick.k12.me.us/bhs" on the address line to force the computer to authenticate to our Internet Content Filter (Rocket) otherwise the computer will not function properly when attempting to create, modify, or print a document. To print from the Chromebook, click on the printer icon in the top-left corner of the window, or click on File>Print. If the printer that you want to use is listed as the destination, you may then set the desired print options and then click "Print." If you need to change the printer destination, select the appropriate printer via the "Change" button and then continue with the aforementioned print process. All of the printers that will be used on the Chromebooks will be "Google Cloud Print" objects, and they will be named according to the existing naming convention (e.g.: BHS-BlackLab).

Printers/Copiers

We've installed new printers throughout the building as well as a couple of new copiers. I'll continue to work through setting up staff printing, especially to the copiers. Please remember that print jobs in excess of 25 pages must be sent to a copier or through multiple jobs with varying page ranges (for example, for a 52 page document, print pages 1-24 on job 1, pages 25-48 on job 2, and 49-52 on job 3). If a printer is sent a job that exceeds one copy or 25 pages it will simply reject the job, nothing will print, and no notice is sent.

Mike Nelson

District Integrator

Google Classroom continues to be a great tool for creating a digital class environment. Please contact me to help introduce Google Classroom to your students.

Google Classroom has 4 helpful updates which were implemented during the summer.

1. Ask and answer a question: Teachers can now post a short answer question to students in the class stream at any time, with options to allow students to edit their own answer, and to see and reply to classmates' answers. Students answer the question in the class stream, and teachers have the option to grade answers.
2. Reuse a post: Teachers now can reuse existing posts (announcements, assignments, questions) from a current or previous class. You can also retrieve assignments from Archived Classrooms.
3. Move a post to the top of the class stream: Teachers can change the order of posts in the class stream by moving any item to the top of the stream to give it priority. Just click the 3 dots in the upper right corner of a Post and choose "Move to Top."
4. Visual refresh: Classroom has a new simplified design for creating and posting assignments, announcements, and questions and for viewing assignment details. The design updates enable quick and easy access for teachers and students. Students will see their view of their classroom refresh as soon as the teacher updates, or creates a new item.

Dan

BJH News



I'm excited to be working with the newest member of the BSD Tech Department, Mark Rineer. Mark has a background in education and years of experience with Windows, Macs, iPads, printers, and so on. As part of the Tech Dept working in Junior High and Coffin schools, we will be working hard to help keep you productive in your teaching and administrative work.

The beginning of school is a busy time of the year, so please remember to use SchoolDude for your tech help requests. Mark and I, as well as other members of the tech department, receive alerts to these requests. This helps us respond more efficiently as well as keep a record of your requirements.

Jerry



BJH News and Coffin

Hello All,

I wanted to take the time to introduce myself, as I am a new Technology Support Specialist supporting both the Junior High and Coffin Elementary Schools. I have been working in this role for multiple school districts for the past decade. I am originally from Lancaster County, PA and have relocated to the Brunswick area over three years ago with my wife and three children. Most recently I had been employed by Oxford Networks here in Brunswick and had previously worked in technology support for Lewiston Public Schools in all things technology related. I will be working with Jerry Cross and will be supporting both the Mac and Windows platforms. I am both excited and grateful for the opportunity to work alongside and to assist in any of your technology needs.

Thanks So Much,

Mark Rineer

HBS News

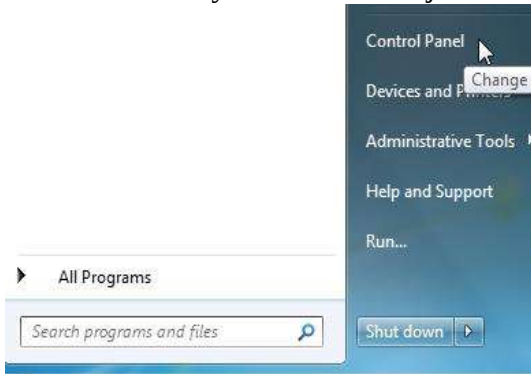
Tech Talk Info from HBS

Welcome back to a new school year at HBS! We have several new changes to technology to start the year. Of note, all staff laptops have been replaced with new Dell Latitude 3450 laptops, many old printers have been replaced, all older classroom student desktops have been replaced, One laptop cart has been upgraded to a newer model, and a new student desktop computer has been added to all tutorials.

Continued on the next page

Adjusting the TouchPad on Dell Latitude 3450 laptop

I have received a few comments on the sensitivity of the touch pad on the new Dell Latitude laptops. If your touchpad is too sensitive or over precise or if you want to just turn it off completely if you happen to have a mouse attached you can make adjustments for this:



1. Select Control Panel option from the Windows 7 Start Menu.



2. Select Mouse from Control Panel item listing.



3. Select Click to change DellTouchpad settings link



4. Adjust Pointer Speed, Touch Pressure, Palm Rejection or Set the Touchpad On/Off as desired.

WARNING - If you turn the TouchPad off, you cannot use the Touchpad unless you have a mouse installed.

What no CD/DVD Player?

The new Dell Latitude laptops are thinner and lighter but do not come with a CD/DVD player. Portable USB CD/DVD players are now available in the Library for checkout.

Connecting to Brunswick School Department Network from Home

After a successful pilot at HBS last year, we are again offering the ability to connect to the Brunswick School Department network from your home or any public Internet connection using the new Dell laptops. Connecting to the school network from an external Internet connection will provide you access to the same network resources you would get while here in the building. You will specifically be able to access all of your network files and get access to School Master etc. Remotely connecting to our school network is a multistep process which starts with discovering the local wireless network which must have access to the Internet and connecting to it with any required password. Once connected to the wireless network you can follow the instructions in the word document in the "Connect From Home" folder that is on your Windows Desktop.