

# TECH TALK

by Sharon Kubica



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## **TECHNOLOGY UPDATES**

Over the summer, all district computers received necessary software, security, network, and maintenance updates. In compliance with our district replacement schedule, new computers were placed in some high school and middle school labs and most administrative offices. Nearly all district computers run Windows XP and Microsoft Office Suite 2002. These two programs are very robust and require abundant memory and processing speeds. Some of our oldest computers (4 and 5 years old) are being taxed to their capacity but are still performing at a productive rate. If you have issues or questions regarding the performance of your work station, please don't hesitate to contact tech staff.

## **DESKTOP BACKGROUNDS AND SCREENSAVERS**

Charlotte Schools creates and deploys standard workstation desktops (Icons) with a specific background and screen saver to maximize computer performance and assist in maintenance of district computers. District policies and guidelines require users to maintain the desktop as deployed. Please do not change backgrounds or screen savers since doing that will use memory resources. It is also recommended that users not save files or folders to the desktop since this also uses computer resources and can inhibit the computer's performance. If you have questions regarding your desktop icons, their arrangement, or items you wish to save to the desktop, please contact your building tech support or Ida Balko at ext: 5753.

## **CLASSROOM STUDENT STATIONS AVAILABLE**

Each classroom in the district has the capacity for up to 4 student access computers. Some rooms have casework provided for this use, other rooms will require the use of computer carts or tables. A few classrooms throughout the district have reached this capacity; however, most classrooms have only 1 or 2 computers for student access. If you wish to increase the number of student access computers in your room, please contact your building tech staff by October 7 so that we can meet your need.

## **DIGITAL CAMERA USE**

Each building media center has digital cameras that can be checked out for use in classrooms. New cameras for the elementary buildings will be arriving soon. Digital pictures can easily be added to PowerPoint presentations and then used for teaching activities on your classroom large-screen monitor. The most economical way to have digital pictures printed is to use commercial printing options like those provided by Meijers or WalMart. Printing digital pictures on district printers is very expensive and is not recommended.

## **CPS MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY SERVICES ICON**

Each teacher and office computer has an ICON called "CPS Media & Tech Services". This program allows you to view a computer lab or media center use schedule, enter a request for technology support, enter a request for maintenance support, and view scheduled technology training sessions. All staff is encouraged to use this program. If you need assistance, please contact media or tech staff in your building.

## **SPAM ISSUES**

Charlotte Schools continues to manage SPAM using a SPAM blocking software. Over a 7 day period from September 15 through September 21, the district received 26,456 e-mails. Nearly 16,000 (60%) were identified as SPAM. The system automatically deleted 8,886 and redirected 7,046 to a mailbox that tech staff checks each day and forwards on those messages that were incorrectly identified as possible SPAM. The remaining e-mail messages (@1,500 per day) are delivered to mailboxes. Unfortunately, some of these are also SPAM but are not detected because their "point value" is not high enough to have them identified by the software as SPAM. As a result, some users may still receive SPAM each day. SPAM that you do receive should just be deleted. If you receive an item that reoccurs or is offensive in anyway, please forward it on to [kubica@charlottenet.org](mailto:kubica@charlottenet.org) and we will add that address to the "not allowed" list. Additionally, if you think you are not receiving e-mail from a specific address, please send that address to [balko@charlottenet.org](mailto:balko@charlottenet.org) and it will be added to the "allow" list. You may also forward offensive SPAM to [spam@uce.gov](mailto:spam@uce.gov) where the FTC will handle it.

## **DISTRICT VIDEO DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM**

This summer, a video contractor completed some work needed to tune our video broadcasting system. If you feel that the reception on the TV in your classroom is not what it should be, please report the problem to your building Media Staff. Reception should be clear and crisp on all Cable TV channels (3–17), district video bulletin channels (20–25), and on cam-cart broadcasting channels (26–34).

## **WEB PAGE UPDATES**

CPS desires to have current, accurate information on the district Web Site. Staff that has a web page is asked to review the information posted for accuracy and timeliness regularly. Building information should be reviewed and updated often. If you notice building or district information posted on the site that needs to be changed, please contact Jeff Haston at [hastonj@charlottenet.org](mailto:hastonj@charlottenet.org).

## **VOICE MAIL USE TIP**

A number of teachers have begun to use their "temporary greeting" to communicate with parents. By recording the day's assignments in the "temporary greeting", parents are able to keep informed about the work for their students each day with minimal effort for the teacher. Temporary greetings can be "turned on" before you leave each day and easily removed each morning. If you need help using this feature, please contact Gloria Wilson at ext: 5750.

## **PRINTER CARTRIDGES**

This is just a reminder that classroom DeskJet printers are the most costly printing option available to staff. A limited number of B & W (2) and color (1) cartridges are available each year to support their use. The district network copiers and printers are the most cost effective for printing of multiple pages and copies. Your help in containing these costs is appreciated.

## **TECH TRAINING COMING!**

A schedule for tech training is under development for October through mid-December. If you have a specific training need, please contact Sharon Kubica at ext: 5751. Sessions will be offered on BlackBoard (a web site for communication with students and parents), United Streaming (educational on-line digital video), using the Classroom Performance System (a system to receive immediate feedback from students), and other topics as requested. Sessions will be offered before and after school as needed. Your input is requested and appreciated.

