

Media Musings

Riverside Brookfield High School Library Media Center

Using the Computer Labs

A perennial complaint is that there isn't enough access to computer labs. The Leadership Council and Technology committee have been working to increase your access by opening up the Business Lab (157) for all teachers to use in the periods when there is no class permanently assigned there. But access to a lab without a lab assistant (as in 252 and 258) has raised some issues:

Due to damage that some computer labs have sustained this year, we realize we must be much more clear in expressing the expectations for teacher supervision in the computer labs. These "classrooms" have expensive furniture and equipment which YOU are responsible for

protecting when your class is in a lab. Please realize that your vigilance is our best resource for maintaining attractive and well-functioning facilities.

When you sign up to use a lab, please:

- Create a seating chart -- and then enforce that students sit IN the seat assigned.
 - * Blank seating charts are available in the sign-up folders on the R drive
 - * You can use the same chart for each lab -- whatever number you assign to each student can be their "lab number" in each lab
- Be sure you are set up to use LanSchool to monitor students

- * Any lab assistant can help to set you up on the system.
- * Students will often stay on task if they even THINK you might be watching

- Keep your time at the teacher computer to a minimum. This is not the time for updating your Skyward account, checking your email, or preparing a lesson.
- Circulate around the room to answer questions, encourage on-task behavior, or offer individual guidance or instruction.

Thanks for your cooperation as we all work together to fully and safely utilize the technology available.

Load Your Arms!

Will you finally have time to read this summer? Stop by the library to pick up some books. Check out the attached list for summaries of our newest acquisitions.



A Better Sign-up System

We are looking into buying a web-based software program that will allow teachers to reserve computer labs from any Internet-access computer. So

you could sign up from home. But there are some bugs to work out first. Stay tuned for more information as we finalize this change BEFORE August!



Each department has a representative on the committee. Ask your rep for an update!

Tech Committee Doings

NEW AUP

The Acceptable Use Policy (required by the federal government) has become outdated, and so a new one has been written. Everyone with access to our network (students, teachers and staff, administration, and School Board members) will be required to sign a new

form in August. Watch for your copy in the summer mailing. Return signed copies to either the library or the IT office.

OFFICE 2007

If you haven't already, stop by the library to check out an installation disk for your home computer. There will be

training available the week prior to our Opening Institute Day on August 20, as well as a short session on that day.

NEW COMPUTERS

The classroom teacher computers, the oldest in the building, will be replaced this summer in the current year of the 5-year replacement cycle.

“Consider offering students extra credit for reading from the Abe list, to jump-start their grade in your class”

Abraham Lincoln H.S. Book Award

Although RB's summer reading program has morphed into an extended curriculum model, we also encourage students to read a variety of books for pleasure. In addition to using their own public library (and perhaps joining in on the summer reading program run by the library),

students are encouraged to select books from the Abe Lincoln list. Each year a group of school and public librarians as well as a Student Reading Panel nominate about 25 books for this list. Then students read books from the list, and in April those who have read at least four are invited to vote for

their favorite. Votes are compiled, and the “winning book” is announced. Past winners include *City of Bones*, *Crank*, *Twilight*, and *Uglies*. For this year's list, go to the district Summer Reading website or to this link: <http://www.islma.org/lincoln.htm>

Web 2.0—cool sites to try out

Prezi.com

An alternative to the ubiquitous PowerPoint, with the advantage of teamed input, this tool has taken RB by storm. Talk to Sarah Johnson, John Izaguirre, Kevin Turk, or Wendy Cassens to see how it went with their students.

Weebly.com

Students and teachers have been using this super-easy but graphically-pleasing website creation tool. Melissa Gordon and Chris Stiel have created their own easy-to-edit websites, and Bridget Wilmot had all of her students in Creative Writing

create their own websites, too. What a wonderful preparation for their life after RB!



Make presentations with some visual pizzazz!



Teacher Feature: Christine Stiel

In an attempt to solve several instructional challenges, Stiel revised much of her curriculum to infuse technology into both teaching and learning. She introduces web-based background knowledge as a precursor to experiencing novels or films. In her own words, these web-based assignments “give struggling students a new way to interact with text and advanced students another tool to make sophisticated literary arguments, specifically in analyzing short stories, poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. “

In justifying the importance of this integrated curriculum, she cites John Clifford, UNC-

Wilmington: “instruction in reading in the digital age needs to involve more than traditional verbal texts. Reading should include images of all kinds, from photographs, comics and painting, to ads, television, and film. Being fully literate means being able to decode, interpret and evaluate a multiplicity of texts. Today that simply must involve the visual and the verbal.”

Her assignments can be found on her website, linked from the Curriculum Pages. Check out her Creative Writing pages, especially the one entitled “Poets in Southern Spaces.” Here you will see how she clearly states the assignment, and

links to the resources in a variety of formats (videos, text, images) which students are expected to view and analyze.

Stiel identifies several goals that are accomplished with this type of assignment, such as differentiated pacing and students’ ability to access the assignment and resources from home. She also loves that linking to online resources saves paper and ink — if she tried to reproduce this quantity of material for her students on paper, it would be costly and wasteful. Students have increased ownership of their work, and utilize multiple learning modes as they build context for the novels or films they will be studying.



Visual literacy and Visual Rhetoric were the themes of Stiel’s evaluation project this year

Join Us For Book Club This Summer

Even if you never have time during the school year, you are invited to join the Faculty/Staff/Retired Persons Book Club this summer. We will be meeting monthly outside of RB — just contact Doreen Fritz for last-minute plans. Or watch your school email—announcements will be sent out.

Next week on Wednesday, June 16th the group will meet at 4:00 pm at Doreen’s house in

Lombard to enjoy drinks, snacks, and a discussion of high school reunions—inspired by Elizabeth Berg’s novel *The Last Time I Saw You*. Call Doreen (630-495-4276) for directions and to RSVP.

At noon on July 20th we’ll meet in Chinatown after reading Nicole Mones’ *The Last Chinese Chef*. First read this novel about a young widow’s trip to China, and then we’ll re-

create the experience in our own ‘backyard.” Call Barbara Dunn for information about this one!

Then in August we’ll be discussing *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, by Rebecca Skloot. The date is set: Tuesday August 17th. But the place is yet to be determined. If you are willing to host, please call Doreen to volunteer.

Have a great summer—and happy reading!

“There is a temperate zone in the mind, between luxurious indolence and exacting work; and it is to this region, just between laziness and labor, that summer reading belongs.” ~ Henry Ward Beecher



Our book for June 16th. Meet at Doreen’s house

Games? What's Wrong With Games?

HELP! We need your help to maintain consistency with the policy of computer / Internet “educational-use-only “ from 8–3. This policy has been supported again and again as committees have reconvened to update the Acceptable Use Policy, and to discuss expectations for lab usage.

Although it could be reasonably argued that checking out the ESPN website is not different from reading the sports pages, or that playing an online game is similar to playing a game of chess, others argue that students make plenty of

time for leisure and fun after school, while some have difficulty fitting in time for studies. To maintain high academic standards and expectations for excellence, we need to maintain our stance that “school time is learning time.”

To that end, would you please send me your suggestions for online games, puzzles, or activities that truly address your learning goals. Submit the URL along with a rationale for including your suggestion on a list of “appropriate learning games” which students could go with the occasional 10-or-so minutes they might have at the

end of a period.

I will create a “Curriculum Page” for Educational Games. The first one on the list is Freerice.com, where students can challenge their skills with vocabulary, grammar, math, geography, painting identification, world languages, and more. But we should offer options. I know that Math has students practice a logic game. And the SEE team has a survival game. Should these be included? And what else would increase our students’ achievement?

Send your links to fritzd@rbhs208.org

Get Caught Reading – And Win!

Just like last summer, the RB Library is offering prizes for teachers and staff who submit photos of themselves reading in “interesting” poses or places.

No matter where you’re going, be sure to take a book and a camera—and then send me a digital copy with a short description.

Last year we had Laurence Forberg in Paris, Lori Sullivan perched near a Native American cave dwelling, Jen Waldock in an African canoe, Kellie Dean and Lindsay Mynaugh in assorted locales in the Pacific Northwest, and Marsha Hubbuch reading on a beach with her granddaughter. Can you top these?



Could this be you?