

Instruction & Technology Weekly Bulletin



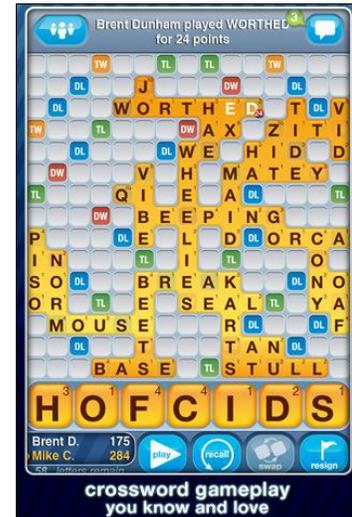
Volume III, No. 7

August 15, 2011

“ Every failure is a step to success.”
- William Whewell

Upcoming Events

- Fri., Aug. 26 – Women’s Equality Day
- Mon., Sept. 5 – Labor Day (Recess)
- Sun., Sept. 11 – Patriot Day/ Grandparents Day
- Sat., Sept. 17 – Constitution Day/ Citizenship Day
- Sat., Sept. 23 – Native American Day/First Day of Autumn
- Wed., Sept. 28 – Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown
- Thurs., Sept. 29 – First day of Rosh Hashanah



A Message from Mike

I am so thrilled to be coming back to work...no I really I am. Two weeks is the longest I have ever been away from any office I have occupied. I have been working on the entry below for a while. I hope you enjoy it, and I look forward to seeing everyone.

“This is pathetic,” our neighbor Gina remarked as she, Theresa, Emma, and I sat in the garage playing games of iPhone/iPod games of *Words with Friends* with one another and various other distant, random opponents. *Words with Friends* is a *Scrabble*-like game that you play asynchronously with people you may or may not know. There the four of us sat in the same room connected but not really. We’re not alone though. According to Apple’s website, over 20 million people play *Words with Friends* regularly.

I have loved *Scrabble* since high school (this is where Theresa would say “nerd alert”). I would play with my girlfriend’s parents. Her dad was an English teacher, and I made him sign the score card the one time I beat him. I think that piece of paper might still be buried in the recesses of my old bedroom at my parents’ house.

A few nights after the pathetic, technology-enhanced socializing I started describing above, someone suggested that we play real live *Scrabble*. So out came my Deluxe Diamond Edition *Scrabble*, and four adults sat in the garage on a warm summer night and kicked it old school with real *Scrabble*. It’s pretty cool when virtual reality inspires real reality.



- **Staff News**

- ❖ Wedding bells were ringing for Sue Owens's daughter, Meghan, on July 30th. As you can see, both Meghan and Sue looked beautiful when Meghan married Archie Olson. Meghan and Archie met and continue to teach 6th grade at The Boston Prep Charter School in Boston, MA. Meghan teaches Reading and Writing, Archie teaches Math, and Sue couldn't be more proud.



- **Staff Reminders**

- ❖ Time and Attendance – On our website in the “Employee Center” for Instruction and Technology Services, you will find the time and attendance information booklet, as well as information on the misconception of biometric time and attendance systems. Here is the link to take you directly to the employee center <http://www.monroe.edu/techServices.cfm?subpage=2236>
- ❖ PSP Staff – Any time you request and receive approval for a 2 hr. absence, you should immediately record the time in SEMS. With the new time and attendance procedures it is imperative that all absences are recorded as soon as possible.
- ❖ Vacation Requests/Personal Day Requests – Please submit all requests to Brenda Simonson, she will date stamp it and obtain supervisor approval. Once approved she will notify you that your request has been approved.
- ❖ Security has asked me to help them update their records. If you have a BOCES key and have not notified me of the number on it, please do so by Friday, August 19th. Also, if you have a key you no longer need, please return it to me. I will ensure that it is returned to Security and their records are updated.

-Carolyn

Technology Tip of the Week

Thanks to Doug Evans for sharing this Tip of the Week:

Lithium-Ion Batteries

Many people go by the old rule of thumb which is, laptop batteries have a memory, and it's better to drain them down completely before charging the battery. This is not the case with lithium-ion batteries. In fact, this can actually damage the battery, and shorten its life. Here is helpful information regarding lithium-ion batteries.



- Lithium-ions can be ruined if the voltage drops below a certain level. Avoid letting your notebook battery drain completely and repeatedly. The chemistry behind lithium-ion is better served by partial discharges before charging as opposed to a full discharge, meaning it's preferred to recharge your laptop battery before it drains all the way. There is no harm in recharging computer batteries after a partial discharge.
- If you plan on not using the notebook battery for a month or longer, fully charge the laptop battery and store it in a cool place. The laptop battery will lose its charge while stored, and will need to be recharged before you begin using it again.
- New notebook batteries need breaking in. To break in the new notebook battery, fully charge the notebook battery, discharge it down to 20% remaining and then fully charge it again, repeat this 3-4 times. This should get it charged to its maximum.
- Exercise the notebook battery. At the minimum you should use the notebook battery at least once every couple weeks. If you haven't used your laptop battery in sometime, then use the break-in procedures again as described above (don't just leave them plugged in for extended periods of time.)
- Properly store your notebook battery. If you will not be using it for an extended period of time (one month or longer) fully charge the laptop battery, and store it in a cool, dry and clean place.

(Anyone is welcome to submit a tip.)

Steve's Space

This week ends the Challenger Summer Camp season. The team ran five summer camps reaching well over 100 local students. There were several repeat campers from last year, and one out-of-town camper's family stayed at a hotel for the week just so he could attend camp. All of the mission commanders who ran camps should be proud of the positive impact they had on these kids. Job well done.

-Steve

Regional Services Updates

At recent RIC Directors' meetings, there have been discussions of assessment models and statewide online assessment systems. One element within this discussion is the possible use of personal devices in schools. A BYOD -- bring your own device -- model for schools, while creating a robust mobile learning environment with a wealth of benefits, also creates risk. There is a need for balance in creating an engaging online learning environment while maintaining network security, AUPs, and CIPA compliance. With increased ownership of personal mobile devices, and a desire to use them in school, there is a need for a filtering solution which creates a safe and reliable learning environment. A possible solution is Lightspeed Systems. Lightspeed Systems is a comprehensive mobile learning solution which offers anywhere filtering (by using a Lightspeed policy server to reference a content database and either allow or block a request). Lightspeed Systems includes a component called My Big Campus which offers secure access to Web 2.0 resources through an educational resource library (including thousands of videos [youtube], wikis, documents and websites). The system is customizable (including reporting) and integrates with SIS and Active Directory. Obviously, this is only one option, but with the present momentum at the state level for creating dynamic mobile learning environments it is an intriguing solution.

-Glen

JENerally Speaking... [Library, Media, and Arts News](#)

It was clear from the first few emails sent from the cohort attending the training in Albany last week that Text Complexity was going to be a major focus. This was exciting news to hear as this is related to what our school librarians have been working towards. For years, librarians have been working to provide a well-balanced collection that meets the needs of all students for both academic use and personal use. In the last few years, librarians have been pushing themselves to integrate tools that will provide students with the appropriately complex text. This has been done through selecting a library automation system that has the potential to integrate Lexile levels and Fountas and Pinnell levels right into each search a student completes while searching for a book. Our librarians are also providing databases that allow students to search not just for the perfect journal article on their research topic, but also for the article that will provide the appropriate level of understanding and challenge as the student reads the text.

As teachers work to find the right complex texts for their students I highly recommend they collaborate with their school librarian. This new challenge from the state can be met when the professionals in the building work together.

-Jen

Connecting with a Colleague

Each week, a staff member will be randomly selected to complete a brief questionnaire to help us get to know him or her.

This week we are connecting with **Doreen Pietranton!**

- **Primary Responsibilities:** *"Creating and facilitating professional development opportunities for educators for everything from SMARTboard training to creating websites. Providing instructional multimedia resources for educators and maintain instructional multimedia databases. I also dabble in Distance Learning and the Arts and Enrichment CoSers and the*



School Library Systems.”

- **How long have you worked at BOCES?** *“This October will mark my 4 year anniversary.”*
- **What is your favorite part of your job?** *“I like connecting with educators and the creative side of the job when we create workshops, and those wacky and engaging videos. I love when I get to work with students such as the Erie Canal Project, pushing into classrooms as guest speaker, or helping in a learning environment.”*
- **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?** *“I attend a lot of soccer and football games supporting my children. My husband and I love to go to movies. I am also an avid reader of anything from the sports page to romance novels.”*
- **What is the one thing you would like people to know about you?** *“I’d love to think of a witty answer for this section but . . . all I can think of is that I started my career as a Mechanical Engineer, and after 2 children changed focus to education.”*
- **Is there anything else you would like to share?** *“I’m trying not to panic as my oldest daughter is headed to the University at Buffalo on August 25th!!!”*

Look for a different colleague to be profiled each week. If you are interested in participating before your name is “randomly” selected, please see Carolyn or Mike.
