A Short Message from the TechTrainer

Welcome back to a new publishing year for the TechTrainer newsletter. You can once again enjoy all of the tips, tricks and news from the tech department, as well as exciting new articles on the proficiencies the corporation is adopting, technology timelines, and spotlights on tech in teaching in one convenient package. The Trainer will again be available via email and posted on the corporation website for convenience. Along with the publication you will also have the opportunity to download or watch monthly tutorial videos involving the proficiencies and other technology subjects. These too will be posted through our corporation website. Big changes are occurring, not only in technology, but also in teaching and the Trainer looks forward to sharing thoughts, reviews, and insights with you. The Trainer will be weekly once again but will have a two week rotation, focusing on a standard layout and a proficiency layout.

Since this is the first issue of the year it will be a bit longer than the impending weekly issue schedule. There are several reasons for this, foremost being as we have come back from our summer break, there are many new and exciting things you need to know about right now. With that said, some of what this first issue holds may be a bit technical, especially the part about DVD playback through a computer. If you need help with any of the information covered in this or future issues please let the publisher know and he would be happy to help you one-on-one.

We have an exciting year ahead of us as our netbook pilot takes flight, we begin implementation of a wireless and paperless campus, we explore new technologies, and we learn to use current technology in new ways. It is truly a groundbreaking time to be in education! Please do not hesitate to ask any of the tech team for help. Thank you, and let's have a wonderful year in education!

THE TECH TRAINER

Michael K. Berg   *michael.berg@eastern.k12.in.us*

Vol. 3 1

Welcome to a new year in tech!
We hope you have a great one!

Technology Deployment

This year holds major changes not only for the classrooms, but for the core of technology at Eastern. Check back often for info on technology timelines and news. Listed below are a few of the changes coming to Eastern:

1. Full campus wireless access
2. New network switches for more reliable speed and connectivity
3. NetTrekker access for extensive online activity searches and digital curriculum
4. mClass Wireless Generation testing for grades k-2
5. Acuity testing spreading to the elementary in grades 3-6

Forms: Submission and Troubleshooting

Have you filled out an electronic form before? The corporation is in the process of going "paperless" and that means everyone has to learn how to submit forms in a new way. Everyone will at some point need to fill out a form of some kind. The process for submitting a form varies depending on what you would like to do. Listed below are a two reliable ways to submit online forms:

Method 1:

1. Navigate to the correct document library category and click on the "view" button for the form you wish to view
2. Fill out the form once it loads
3. Select the envelope icon in the upper left hand corner of the pdf window and your file will be attached to a blank email message (note you may have to sign into your email when prompted if you are not already logged in)
4. Fill out the address field along with the subject and a brief message about the submission and click the send button

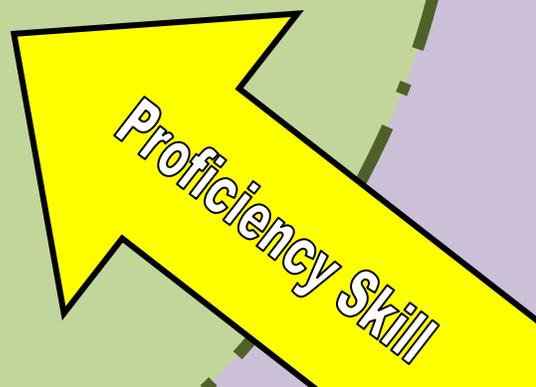Problems you could encounter with method one and solutions:

1. Your browser says you do not have a pdf reader installed
   a. Download and install adobe acrobat from adobe.com
2. The email button is hidden because of yahoo or google toolbars or other add-ons
   a. Press the F11 (or select full screen from the view menu) key one time to enter full screen mode, select the email button, and press F11 (or uncheck the full screen option from the view menu) again to return your toolbars
3. The email button is missing from your options at the top of the pdf window
   a. Right click near the save icon or print icon and select the option to show the email button.
4. Internet Explorer will not load the pdf file
   a. Check compatibility view settings

Method 2:

1. Navigate to the correct document library category and click "download"
2. Give the document a descriptive name and save it somewhere on your computer
3. Navigate to the file save location and open the file
4. Fill out the file and save it
5. Open your email client, fill out all email information and attach the file
6. Select the send button

Problems you could encounter with method one and solutions:

1. Your file does not have a pdf viewer
   a. Download and install adobe acrobat from adobe.com

Proficiency Skill

Amazing Web Resources

Looking for some good sites online for kids and class? Here are a few for your consideration:

http://illuminations.nctm.org/

http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/Comix/

http://www.juliethompson.com/SMART.html

Open Source Spotlight:

Impressive!

Have a pdf file that you would like to use as a presentation? Well, Impressive does just that. Impressive inserts transitions between pages of a pdf and allow you to draw attention to different areas of the page without having to convert the file for use in Microsoft PowerPoint or Open Office Impress. Tools included such as the spotlight and the highlighter allow you to emphasize areas of importance as you flip through the document. You can find the homepage for Impressive at http://impressive.sourceforge.net/ .

DVDs and Your Computer

Those of you with projector systems in your room have grown accustomed to using your computer and projector to show educational materials in class as well as interacting with students in new ways. For those times that you need to show video from a DVD you will be using a new "player" called VLC. VLC is a media player that is free with the ability to decode and play DVD format videos. Previously you would just need to pop a DVD in and wait for windows media player to run, however windows media player no longer has the ability to "decode" and playback the DVDs without third party software. To make sure you can play a DVD without problem, you may need to take the following steps each time you want to play a DVD or perform the second procedure in this article for automatic playback:

1. Insert your DVD into your DVD drive
2. Open "My Computer"
3. Right-click on your DVD drive
4. Select "play with VLC media player" from the menu that appears

If you prefer to have VLC open DVD discs automatically you can opt to do the following one time procedure and then the disc should be recognized on insertion and the player should launch without any intervention from the user.

1. Insert the DVD into your computer
2. Navigate to "My Computer" and right click on your DVD drive
3. Select "open" from the menu that appears
4. You should now see a "Video TS" folder—double click to open it
5. Right-click on any of the video files (the video files should have a orange and white cone icon) inside and select "Open With" from the menu that appears
6. Select the option to "Choose Program"
7. Select VLC from the list of programs that appear or browse to find VLC (usually under the "c:/program files/VLC" or "c:/program files/VideoLan" folder)
8. Check the box at the bottom of the dialog that says "always use the selected program to open this kind of file" (this message may be a little different depending on which version of windows you are using)
9. Select "OK"

The controls for VLC are almost identical to Windows Media Player so you can use the buttons to fast forward and rewind as needed as well as pause or stop.

Tech Tip of the Week

Organizing files on a computer leads to better productivity. As we begin to go more "digital" you might want to think about an organization scheme. Develop a hierarchy and create it using folders under your "My Documents" area. Nest folders to allow yourself a logical order to your files. You can easily create a new folder by right clicking in an open area and selecting "new">"folder" from the menu that appears. Name the folder according to your plan.

App of the Week

Mercury Web Browser—The paid version allows you to save entire web pages for offline viewing. It also allows for tabbed browsing. iPad and iPod/iPhone $0.99