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Methods for Teaching Middle and Secondary Mathematics

Technology Reference Guide: *Website*

In a modern-day classroom, technology is an asset that can be used to increase student learning and improve communication. Students are learning how to use technology early in life, whether it is at home or in schools. Teachers can help students gain familiarity with computers by building a classroom website. This website will include many educational aspects in hope to expand upon students' knowledge and skills.

A website should begin with a short biography about the teacher. This can include his/her background, hobbies, interests and previous education. It can provide useful and interesting information for the students and help them relate to their teacher. By designing a classroom webpage, the teacher can provide a better and more effective means for parent and teacher communication. At open house, parents can be given a web address in which to access the teacher's site. The teacher can then update the site with information parents should know, such as due dates, homework help and current material. Information including learning standards and curriculum would be helpful. This way, parents can be in tune to what is happening in the classroom and will be able to provide help, if needed. They will be able to view all the same information as their son/daughter would obtain during class.

Websites should be designed to reinforce what is being taught in the classroom. The teacher could provide an electronic version of class notes for students who missed a couple steps here and there or for absent students wishing to catch up at home without having to physically come to school. If class notes are too difficult to word process, teachers could scan a copy of

them onto the site or simply provide a couple useful links leading to other websites explaining material relevant to theirs. That way, students can still be aware of what is going on in the classroom. Struggling students can confidentially re-look over notes outside of school at their own pace. Interested students can find links to sites with other applications or reinforcement. Absent students can stay current with material and not fall behind. Use of websites can be made beneficial to all students.

A great way for teachers to stick to their goals and expectations is by making sure their students are aware of what they are. By simply placing a version of the class syllabus, policies and rules online, teachers can be sure that everyone has a copy of what is required for their class. They can list required materials and a calculator policy, if they chose to. Parents would also be able to access this, so there would be no discrepancies in the future. This would also be a prime location to post teacher availability so both students and parents will be able to get in contact with the classroom instructor. This should include times before, during and after school that they can provide assistance and also a possible email address and phone number, if needed. This will be very helpful if a parent wishes to meet with a teacher in a private conference or simply if a student needs outside homework help.

Use of the classroom website can also, if you wish, represent a portion of a students' grade. They could be asked to do online quizzes, participate in question and discussion forums, or can obtain a participation grade by providing proof they are following along with it each week. When it comes to academics, students should be able to easily find the teacher's grading policy and expectations. The teacher also has the option of posting grades online in a confidential way. This way, students can always know where they stand in class, especially if five-week reports haven't

been distributed yet. A website provides an easy and accessible means to stay current with information.

One of the most important things a website should include is a calendar of events. This provides, for both parents and students, a schedule of upcoming events, due dates, school activities and days off. If the teacher keeps the site updated, parents will know when their student should be home studying for a test and can provide assistance, if necessary. If they need to pull their son/daughter out of class for a doctor's appointment, they can schedule it around a test so the student won't have to miss that day and fall behind. The website can provide friendly reminders about upcoming tests, quizzes and projects so that students are fully prepared and ready for them.

Technology can be used to better the classroom learning environment and engage parents, teachers and students. A website provides a means in which everyone has access to the same information and provides students an environment for success and achievement. A website also keeps the teacher and parent relationship in better context because the parents have away to find out about important events and due dates.

## Reference Guide for Webpage

(This reference guide uses Microsoft Publisher 2007.)

### To Start Creating a New Webpage:

Open Microsoft Publisher. A "Publication Types" window will appear. Select "Web Sites". Several templates appear. Select one that is appropriate for the type of site you would like to create.

### To Create a Title for your Webpage:

Select "Tools" then "Web Page Options". Enter a title for your webpage and click "OK".

### To Create Text on your Webpage:

Click "Insert" then "Text Box". Click on the webpage and the text box will appear. Type the necessary text. You can highlight the text to change the font style and size.

### To Insert Pictures on your Webpage:

Click on "Insert" then "Picture". From here, you can insert clipart, WordArt, ClipArt or a photo from a file. When inserting a picture or clipart, it will prompt you to browse to the place in which the file is stored. Once the picture is inserted, you can select it to move it around on the page or resize it.

### To Create Hyperlinks to Other Pages:

Select the text that you want to hyperlink by highlighting it. Select "Insert" then "Hyperlink". You can browse to an existing webpage, a different page in your Microsoft Publisher 2007 document or an email address. Then click "OK". The text that you selected will either be underlined or a different color or style text, indicating that it is a link. When this text is clicked on, it will take you to the page that you linked to.

### To Create a Table on Your Webpage:

Click "Table" then "Insert" then "Table". Select the number of rows, number of columns and table format. Then click "OK". Once a table is inserted, you can type information into the table, and move from cell to cell with either your mouse or the tab key. Rows and columns can be resized by selecting and repositioning them. The font size and style can be changed when the text is selected. Also, the table can be repositioned on the page by selecting and moving the table.

### To Insert a New Webpage:

Select "Insert" then "Page". A window will appear prompting you to select the type of page that you wish to create. As you select the different types of pages, the general layout of the template appears to the right of the window. If you select "More", you can select the number of pages that you wish to enter, whether you want the page before or after the page that is currently on the screen (the page selected) and the options for the page that you are entering (blank, one text box, duplicate objects and hyperlinks). If you do not wish to add a template, select "Blank" and click "OK".

### To Delete a Page:

Select "Edit" then "Delete Page". You will be prompted by a window asking if you really want to delete the page and all of its objects. Either select "OK" to delete the page or "Cancel" if you do not want to delete the page.

### To Publish Your Webpage:

Select "File" then "Publish to the Web". Select the place in which you want to save your index file (the webpage created). The index file, along with all pictures, clip art, sound clips etc. must be in the same directory as the index page, otherwise these files will not load when published to the web.

To Change the Information about your Page:

Select "Insert" then "Business Information". A window appears that will allow you to enter personal information about this page. This information is optional, but if entered, may appear on your webpage depending on the template used.

To Create a Master Page:

Select "View" then "Master Page". The master page will allow you to create text or pictures on one page that is carried through to every page created. Creating this page is optional. Click "Close Master View" to return to your webpage.

General Information about Microsoft Publisher:

- You can Cut, Copy and Paste just about anything, similar to any other Microsoft product.
- The "File" menu has almost the same options as other Microsoft products (i.e. Save, Print, Open, etc.).
- General formatting techniques (font size, style, colors, alignment, bullets, paragraph spacing, spell check, etc.) is the same as other Microsoft products.
- You are able to rotate, flip, order and nudge pictures or objects.