



Technology Newsletter

TCEA 2012: Discover Your Power

PN-GISD sent 24 teachers/staff to the 32nd annual convention and exposition of the Texas Computer Education Association in Austin from February 7-10. This year's theme was Discover Your Power: Embark, Engage, Energize, Empower, Educate. TCEA's annual convention is one of the largest educational technology conventions in the nation and the largest in Texas. Keynote speakers included Tory Belleci and Kim Komando. Tory began his work on Discovery Channel's "MythBusters" in 2003 doing work behind the scenes and in the second season was featured as part of the show's build team. Kim Komando hosts a weekly 3-hour, call-in talk radio show on her own national radio network and hosts a Digital minute radio feature 5 days a week! The week was full of astounding professional development, hands-on and peer-to-peer learning opportunities, exploration of new trends through interactive learning environments, and in-depth presentations from educational technology experts. TCEA was a great staff development opportunity for those who attended and they have brought back lots of resources to share. Check out these teacher-recommended TCEA Resources on page 3 & 4 of this newsletter.



Lisa Noland &
Kim Komando



Education Appreciation is an excellent resource for our teachers and can be found at www.educationappreciation.com. The password for the site is **PORTNECHES**. The website has easy access to the TEA STAAR and TAKS Study Guides and materials for teachers and for students from home or school. Teachers will find lessons organized by objective. There is also SAT/ACT practice for students on the student site, www.edhelpforparents.com. Use the password: **PORTNECHES**.

2011-2012 Technology Task Force Members

Each campus has a representative on the Technology Task Force. If you should have any questions about the meetings and/or agenda items, please contact your representative.

Kenneth Leavins, Michelle Mitchell, Lisa Noland, Holly Sartin, Kim Davis, Ann Woodall, Stacey Richards, Alysha Daniels, Rhonda Bourgeois, Pam Choate, Diane Leckich, Laura Shipman, Sarah Guarnere, Julie Gauthier, Mary Jane Moore, Tanya Davis, Stephanie Gaspard, Brock Boudoin, Lauren Harvey

Remaining Meeting Date: May 10, 2012

Reading Discovery with Barbara Bush

Groves Elementary was chosen as an interactive site for the *“Reading Discovery with Barbara Bush”* videoconference on February 2, 2012. Students from twenty schools throughout the United States and Canada were able to ask Mrs. Bush all types of questions. Britney Brevell, a fourth grader at Groves Elementary, was able to ask Mrs. Bush what her most important job was as the First Lady. Mrs. Bush summed up her response by saying, “My most important thing to do was to do something every day for someone else.”



Here are a few points Mrs. Bush shared with the students:

- One of her sons had a reading disability. She encouraged students that “practice makes perfect” as that is one thing her son did over and over to improve his reading skills.
- She stressed the importance of family literacy. It is important for parents to be literate so they can help their children become better readers.
- She supported her husband as much as she could on the campaign trail, but being a mother of five made that very challenging.
- She does think that iPads and other ebooks will promote reading and she does have an iPad herself. Her advice was, “Don’t play too many games though!”
- *Pride and Prejudice* is probably her favorite book and she has read it over and over. Jane Austen is her favorite author.
- She said everything in life depends on reading, and she encouraged the children to “work hard, love your family, and be a good friend!”

Students from Jamie Perkins’ 8th grade Theater Arts class at Port Neches Middle School were able to watch the presentation from their campus. Groves Elementary and Port Neches Middle School students who were in attendance will receive a copy of the book Mrs. Bush read.

Here are other questions that were asked:

North Dakota: Have you ever thought of running for office and what would you change if elected?

Michigan: What was your goal in starting the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy?

Illinois: Why do you think it’s so important for students to be good readers?

New Jersey: How did your children feel about having a father as president?

Virginia: Why is it important for students to know the process of electing a president?

Canada: What was going through your mind when your husband won the election?



**To learn more about Mrs. Bush’s
Family Literacy Foundation visit:
<http://www.barbarabushfoundation.com>**

TCEA Resources: Great “Finds” from TCEA Conference...

Great Websites!

Learning.com/texas/time/: Has a new and free digital resource called “TIME” which brings your teaching to life. TIME is designed for Texas and provides a single point of entry for teachers to search for, obtain, create and assign educationally proven, TEKS-aligned, and safe digital content!. You won’t believe this site!

Evernote.com: A personal digital assistant used to organize information. Can be downloaded on computer or there is an app for iPhone.

Classdojo.com: Realtime behavior management system; can enter class roll and keep up with student behavior; can project it onto a screen or on computer or smartphone; can also print reports or email reports to parents; can give parents login information so they can check in on students.

Vistaprint.com: Teachers can get good discounts on posters, magnets, calendars, banners, etc. The more you order, the cheaper the shipping costs. Often have special offers.

Pics4Learning.com: Images that are appropriate for school and copyright approved.

Signupgenius.com: Free online tool for managing group sign-up sheets; teacher/parent conference sign up; class parties, etc.

Spoon.net: A portal for putting all your websites and applications in one place. Log into one site and all your websites are there. Can also push updates and sites to multiple computers at once instead of one a time.

Titanpad.com: A website where students can simultaneously collaborate, revise, and write documents together.

Littlebirdtales.com: A fun, unique way to create, record and share stories online...capturing the voice of childhood!

Gethuman.com: Get phone numbers for companies so you can avoid the automated nightmare...talk to a live person!

Wufoo.com: Build forms online.

Collaborizeclassroom.com: A free online collaborative education platform that allows students and teachers to transcend the boundaries of their physical classroom to engage in an online collaborative learning environment.

Gosoapbox.com: Allows interaction between the audience and the speaker.

Typewith.me: Allows for real time single document collaboration.

Sifteo.com/product: Set of three clickable, full color LCD display cubes for interactive play. \$149/pack of 3.

GameStarMechanic.com: A great website to teach computer gaming basics to students.

Iswifter.com: The world’s first cloud-based content streaming platform built specifically for mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets.

Tammyworcester.com: Awesome site for tips, resources, and activities for students.

Learning.com: There are lessons on just about anything you might need to teach.

QR Codes: QR stands for Quick Response Code and tons of information can be encoded into a QR code which makes it extremely useful in education. They can be used to create a scavenger hunt, test review (answers would be embedded in the QR code), flash cards, sorting games, main idea summaries, book recommendations, self-check homework, bonuses or hints on tests, etc. Visit Digitalgoonies.com for more on QR codes and more technology application suggestions. QRjuice.com gives more information on how QR codes are being used in our world today.

There's an App for That!

Did You Know?

- Apple's first iPad was released in April 2010, and the iPad 2 came out in March 2011. The company typically upgrades its mobile products about once a year. Apple is planning to introduce an upgraded version of its iPad tablet at a press event early next month, according to people briefed on the company's plans. An Apple employee said that the version of the new iPad that is being tested inside the company is "essentially the same size and shape as the iPad 2," with an improved and "truly amazing" screen. The tablet will include a faster processor, said the employee, who did not want to be identified because Apple is not fond of leaks. It's unclear whether the product will be called the iPad 3. Over all, Apple has sold more than 55 million iPads to date.
- TCEA is forming a new special interest group for robotics. The ROBO-SIG's mission is to become a network hub for educators involved in robotics. Check the TCEA webpage www.tcea.org for more information.



Great Apps to Check Out!

iPad Academy: Will help you master the Apple iPad. Get valuable iPad tips and tutorials. Find easy-to-follow instructions for making the most of the iPad, apps and accessories.

ABC News App: This app is designed to provide several interactive ways to browse the latest stories, videos, and photo galleries on ABC News. Choose the globe, site, or live stream buttons to choose how you view your news.

WeatherBug: Access the largest network of professional weather stations in North America and thousands of locations around the world.

AppAdvice: Tells you everything there is to know about apps and your iPhone or iPad. Gives detailed guides and advice on what apps to download right away.

AppsGonefree: Every day hundreds of apps reduce their price to free for a limited time to try to stimulate excitement. This app will provide you with 5-10 awesome free apps each day.

AppShopper: Keeps you up to date on the newest App Store apps, sales, and freebies. Organize apps in your own customized Wish List and automatically get notified when there is a sale or update.

iBooks: An amazing way to download and read books. iBooks includes the iBookstore, where you can download the latest bestselling books or your favorite classics.

NOOK: From Barnes & Noble offers an incredible reading experience for NOOK books, magazines, and newspapers.

Kindle: Gives you the ability to read Kindle books, newspapers, magazines, textbooks, and PDF's.

Disneyland Explorer: Explore the sights and sounds of Disneyland Resort with this official Disney Parks application. Discover the Magic as you swipe your way through an incredible photo-fantastic re-creation of Disneyland.

Bestipadapplist.com: Great place to find suggested apps by teachers. The ranking is based on user ratings.

Mrcoley.com: Offers lots of iPad information.

Password Caddy app: A secure password manager. It is a fairly inexpensive app at \$2.99.

Groovy Grader app: Replaces the old EZ Grader and doesn't cut off at 32.

Word lens app: Translates what the camera sees (the app is free, but each language is \$9.99)