

## Olympia Technology Department Technology Issues

### TOPIC: PROPER SUPERVISION OF TECHNOLOGY USERS PART 2

**PROBLEM 1: It's Not Foolproof** - There is a misconception that Olympia technology can be configured such that students can't go anywhere they are not supposed to go on the network and the Internet. THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE. The technology team works to make it more difficult for users to go astray, but there are opportunities for students to step outside the boundaries.

**PROBLEM 2: Your Files Are At Risk** – Remember the metaphor of the buses and roads used in Part 1 of this topic? Here's where the metaphor breaks down: steering the bus outside the boundaries in real life can cause a crash: horrible for the passengers but not usually damaging to the road itself. Students on our computers, given enough unmonitored time, can get outside the boundaries and *cause real damage* to the road – the network. For example, when unmonitored students find ways to load and install games or other programs to their X drive, there is a genuine risk that other data on the X drive could become corrupted or deleted; any teacher or staff member could be a victim. Of course, the greater concern is *preventing harm to kids*, but we also have to think of *protecting the system*.

**PROBLEM 3: We Can't Do It Alone** - It is clearly the responsibility of the technology team to monitor and prevent abuse of the computers and the network, but we see ourselves as partners in that mission. We must share that mission with the entire staff, and especially with those having direct supervision over students as they are the *front line* for preventing abuses of the technology. **Attentive supervision from the teacher is the most efficient and most effective protection for both the students and the technology resources.**

**PROBLEM 4: Techno-Generation Gap** - Kids embrace new technologies so much more readily than adults - it is *intimidating*. Consequently, we adults sometimes bring a *hesitancy* with us: we hesitate to question a student at the computer because we aren't sure if he is doing something wrong. But as grandpa said, "If you don't ask questions, how ya gonna learn?" Asking a student what he is doing gives the adult an opportunity to learn something from the student and gives the student the chance for some *positive attention*; that is IF he is doing something constructive. If he is not, it is an opportunity for the adult to *refocus* the student.

**PROBLEM 5: The Great Distracter** – let's face it, the computer can be a *great attention grabber* and a student focused on the computer is a less disruptive student. But if the technology use has no instructional purpose, if it fails to bring the student to a better understanding of the world and of content-based concepts, principles & information then we are providing nothing more than a *distraction*.

*What's the answer?* There is no magic potion, but as mentioned in Part 1, when using technology in an instructional environment there needs to be (1) a clear purpose..., (2) specific activities for students..., and (3) a set of rules governing student behavior...

If we all work together to make sure those three items are part of student technology use, we will address all these problems and reap two important benefits:

- a consistently healthy network of technology tools, and
- *great opportunities for our students to learn and grow*