FROM THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

Steve Smith

Student Privacy

In CPS we take every precaution to protect the privacy of our students. As very useful and effective online educational tools become more prevalent the protection and security of all student data becomes more challenging.

CPS has a number of policies and procedures in place to ensure our students’ privacy is protected, most of which are encapsulated in the “Web 2.0 Procedures”. At times this process and the required contracts etc. seem to hinder the innovative use of new technologies in CPS. We are constantly trying to balance the promotion of innovative tools to support teaching and learning while at the same time ensuring the privacy of our students.

We often hear that CPS is more stringent when it comes to these procedures than other districts. In some examples districts encourage the use of any online tools with no controls in place at all to protect the students’ privacy. Finding the middle ground, best approach, is the optimum we strive for.

Recently the US DOE Privacy and Technical Assistance Center published their official guidance on Protecting Student Privacy while Using Online Educational Services. While this document is very comprehensive and informative it also confirms the CPS approach to protecting our students’ privacy. The article highlights the best practices as;

- Maintain awareness of other relevant federal, state, tribal, or local laws.
- Be aware of which online educational services are currently being used in your district.
- Have policies and procedures to evaluate and approve proposed online educational services.
- When possible, use a written contract or legal agreement.
- Extra steps are necessary when accepting Click-Wrap licenses for consumer apps.
- Be transparent with parents and students.
- Consider that parental consent may be appropriate.

It is reassuring to know that the US DOE recommendations for protecting student privacy while using online educational services mirrors the practices put into place in CPS. These are exciting times as we see the potential for technology to be leveraged to enhance the teaching and learning process. Balancing student privacy while encouraging innovation is our challenge. CPS is navigating these challenges well!
A Mac lab buzzes with the sounds of bubbling cauldrons and raucous witches as a 10th grade ELA class remixes Macbeth, a group of second graders and their guidance counselor participate in a violence prevention activity, an APC team of Math teachers watch best practice videos available in MediaCast, a Social Studies teacher segments a PBS show she recorded on her classroom computer, ESL students analyze and reflect upon their video recorded cultural presentations, an AP ELA class excitedly embarks upon their first Voicethread project.

One element these diverse teaching and learning moments have in common is that they were supported by the work of the Teachers’ Resource Center (TRC). Whether procuring and loaning curriculum materials, co-planning technology-infused projects with classroom teachers, guiding and supervising student media projects, supporting classes in the Mac lab, leading technology workshops, co-producing professional development video or locating journal articles for administrators, the resources and professional staff of the Teachers Resource Center support enrich and extend teaching and learning across the District.

Located on the 3rd floor of CRLS, the TRC is staffed by Melanie Nash, Library Media Specialist and Nicole Hart, Media Technical Assistant. Open between 7:15AM and 4PM daily, the TRC offers teachers and CRLS students a range of resources and services. The services the TRC provides fall into several categories: research, collaborative curriculum design and delivery, professional development, teaching resources -- ProQuest Education Journals, BrainPop, video on demand, DVDs, professional books -- media-making equipment, laptops, and audiovisual equipment and technical support. “We work in collaboration with, and in support of, very dedicated, intrepid, talented teachers in a time of rapid change,” according to Melanie Nash. “We reinvent ourselves as the needs of our constituency change and that keeps the work fresh and exciting.”
Connecting with Authors and Illustrators: Near and Far

By: Marjorie Berger
Assistant Director Library Media Services

Few will argue the value of extending and enriching the reading experience for students by providing opportunities to connect with authors and illustrators. This exposure motivates and encourages reading and writing, demystifies the process of writing and sparks students to write their own stories. But with tight library budgets that don’t allow for many actual author/illustrator visits, library teachers are using creative ways to make these connections happen with partnerships, technology and outreach.

Connecting with the Cambridge Public Library

On February 10, the Cambridge Public Library Main Branch hosted author and graphic artist, George O’Connor for 200 3rd and 4th graders from Cambridge Public Schools. For Free! If you have never seen students have the opportunity to see and talk with a favorite author or illustrator, it is akin to a rock concert. They are star struck! George writes a graphic novel series on the Greek Gods called *The Olympians*. “Why?”, asked a student in the audience.

“Because I love mythology!”, replied George. “As a child I went to my school library and read all the books on Greek Mythology, then I saw on the same bookshelf all the other mythologies so I read them!” His enthusiasm for his passion was contagious. As he projected his graphics for one Greek God after another on the screen, students shouted out who they were. He was impressed. He shared with them his steps from research to publication with an engaging slideshow. After his presentation, he answers questions from the audience and then signed books for all who had one in hand, taking time to chat and interact. “Wow, look what he wrote to me!”, said one starry eyed 4th grader.

A similar scene took place on November 22 when CPL hosted Tommy Greenwald, author of a hilarious series about “the most reluctant reader ever born” named, *Charlie Joe Jackson*. The 100+ students who came for the free presentation learned his main character is named after his three sons, Charlie, Joe and Jack who were all reluctant readers as young boys until their father, the author, wrote about a boy who “would rather stare at a blank wall than read!” He started a series of books about “how to avoid reading” which of course are always checked out by our eager readers!

Using Technology to Connect

If you can't bring the author to your school in person, several school librarians have used technology to create virtual visits with authors and special guests or view archived “visit with author” videos.

Using Skype, a free online service for video chats, students have recently visited with:

- Haggerty Lunch Book Club organized by Librarian Sarah Novogrodksky:
- Eileen Beha and her real dog Tango-author of *Tango, the Island Dog*, a MCBA nominated book
• Rasheeda Abdul-Musawwir, daughter of Library Teacher Aishah Abdul-Musawwir (FMA), who is currently teaching English in Bangladesh as part of a Fulbright Scholarship. The book club students read *Rickshaw Girl* by Mitali Perkins, which is set in Bangladesh.

• First time children’s book author, Leah Pileggi met with the Haggerty 5th graders via SKYPE to introduce her book *Prisoner 88*. She told the children how a spontaneous visit to a penitentiary outside of Boise, Idaho led her to research the life of a ten-year old prisoner in 1885, known as Prisoner 88. The writing process for this book began while sifting through primary sources belonging to the prison and to the state of Idaho. When she had immersed herself in the time period, she began to create the character of Jake. He “spoke” to her and she put him down on paper. Many fifth graders were eager to read the book after her presentation.

• Yuyi Morales-Pura Belpré award winning author & illustrator “visited” Amigos students as part of a Hispanic Heritage Month celebration organized by Melisa Paulino, Library Teacher.

**Live Webcasts:**
At the Amigos Library: Wed. January 29th, 3rd & 4th graders attended Jarrett Krosoczka’s Free Virtual Book Talk about his Lunch Lady series. He answered a few questions from Amigos students via Social Stream.

**Archived Video visits with authors:**
Kennedy/Longfellow 5th graders got to know Newbery medal-winning author Christopher Paul Curtis using TeachingBooks.net, a resource provided to all teacher and students through Library Media Services before they read *Bud, Not Buddy*. The students got to hear an interview with him as well as a reading from his award-winning book.

**Real-time Visits**

Award-winning author **Melissa Stewart** visited the Peabody School students in Gr. 2-5 in December. She shared the process of research and writing her non-fiction books with the students. This event was funded by the Peabody School.

**George O’Connor** made a special visit to Baldwin 4th and 5th graders thanks to Porter Square Books. His presentation was similar to the one at the Public Library. Thanks to generous Baldwin families, the school was able to give away ten books to students from low income families.

**Haggerty Book Club** students are reading *Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate, about a Sudanese “Lost Boy” who ends up in Minnesota on a farm. Sarah, the librarian has made contact with two local Sudanese men who came to the Boston area and came for a visit to share their own personal stories of survival.

**Upcoming Visits to Schools**

**Melissa Stewart** will be visiting Cambridgeport, King Open and Tobin Montessori Schools in March and April. Students are preparing by practicing a reader’s theater, thinking of good questions to ask her about writing and science and reading lots of Melissa’s books. Funding for her visit is being pulled from various sources (school/department/parent organizations) at each school.

Rhode Island Authors **John Rocco** and **Jay Primiano** will visit PAUS 7th and 8th graders to share their first book, *Swim That Rock*, about the summer they worked together on a small commercial quahog boat. Author Rick Riordan called their book, “a page-turner full of storms, mystery, danger, mobsters and even the odd pirate.” This event is sponsored by Candlewick Press.
By Gina Roughton

The CPS Educational Technology Library Media Learning Expectations has identified Media Literacy as one of six areas of essential skills to prepare students for lifelong learning, effective information seeking and responsible decision-making. This new curriculum, targeted at grade 5, uses advertising as a lens to accomplish the following objectives:

- understand the role of media in society
- build the essential skills of inquiry and critical thinking
- analyze and evaluate the purpose, meaning and perspective of media
- apply their learning to create thoughtful, original media

The morning professional development session included an opportunity to get “hands on” with this new curriculum and new digital video cameras purchased for each K-5 school, as well as, discussed ways to integrate these and other digital tools into the classrooms and curriculum.

For more information about Digital Learning Day, click here.
By Kathy Walsh-Malone

As the Kennedy-Longfellow School entered the third year of its technology partnership with Lesley University, the decision was made to transform the computer lab into a Maker Space. The school benefits from a generous grant from the Merck Foundation. This grant has enabled the Kennedy-Longfellow School to acquire new technologies to scaffold learning that is thoughtfully planned out with Kennedy-Longfellow staff and the Lesley Partnership team.

The Maker Space allows students and teachers to explore and learn together. This is a free flowing workspace where the room can be easily reconfigured to meet the needs of the learning activity at hand.

The room is equipped with many emerging technologies. Students have access to interactive whiteboard, Raspberry Pi, Bee Bots, Lego WeDo Kits, littleBits, MaKey MaKey, Robot Turtles, video cameras, electric circuits, green screen for video production, mini-sound booths, a station of desktop computers, access to mobile labs and student iPads. The room includes furniture that allows for easy movement that can facilitate whole group, small group, and individual work areas. The inventory of other materials in the Maker Space continue to expand as we acquire items including recyclables for students to incorporate into projects.

This creative workspace provides an engaging learning environment outside of the traditional classroom. The Maker Space is also the hub of the Kennedy-Longfellow student created newspaper and where the KLO Scratchers meet weekly. Many interesting learning opportunities have occurred this year that include but are not limited to kindergarten use of the green screen for video production, design challenges that included student created electric circuits, and a variety of coding opportunities utilizing Scratch, WeDo Legos, Bee Bots, and littleBits. The creative energy is more than exciting as our students participate in this innovative work. Many will tell you that they are having lots of fun.

When it comes to using the Makers Space the possibilities are endless!
We ♥ Photos

Students, artwork, facilities, school projects, events, you name it, we want it!

Web Services is in need of approved photos to be used in CPS online, print, and social media entities. As you know, a picture is worth a thousand words. Adding fresh new pictures to CPS's online presence and printed materials are the most effective way to capture a moment and elicit an immediate emotional response in a viewer.

Got pictures? Great. Please email them or interoffice a CD to Lisa Waters. Be sure to check all media releases beforehand. You can login to Apsen to check media releases or ask your school clerk. Verbal media approval is prohibited. CPS must have the signed Media Release Form. Thank you in advance!

Classroom Websites

Need a classroom website? It's quick and easy when using the CPS Google Sites templates. All the design work is done for you. Just simply login to your Google Docs and you are one step closer to sharing announcements, events, homework assignments, and classroom news with your students and families. Click here to get started.

share it@CPS

Coming Soon!

Cambridge Public Schools is an active district with students, families, staff, and community members engaged across Cambridge. To keep up with all the upcoming meetings, district and school events, news stories, and announcements, CPS has developed an innovative way to share information effectively.

Soon to be launched is a new system called, ShareIt@CPS. This system allows approved account holders to easily submit postings for possible inclusion in CPS online, print, and social network entities. ShareIt@CPS allows users to post their events, news, and announcements in one central location so it is available to be shared across the District in multiple platforms.

Staff involved with communications at the district will have the ability to login to ShareIt@CPS and search and view postings for inclusion in their online and printed materials.

ShareIt@CPS will also provide event coordinators with marketing guidelines, strategies, and checklists to ensure their events are efficiently and effectively advertised to maximize event participation.

CRLS will be the first campus to use ShareIt@CPS. After a successful launch at CRLS, ShareIt@CPS will be launched across the district at the start of the new school year. So, stay tuned and get ready to share it!
Preparing for PARCC
Technical Services & Educational Technology Working Together

By: Kevin Keegan and Gina Roughton

This Spring, Cambridge Public Schools will participate in the PARCC Field Test. The Partnership for Assessment and Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) has designed a next generation assessment that utilizes technology to present content and test items in new ways that measure against the recently adopted Common Core Standards. These new technologies span both the technical setup for the assessment administration, as well as, the teacher and student interaction with the assessment environment.

Proctor caching and kiosk mode are two of the “backend” setup technologies that the Technical Services department is currently configuring. By creating a proctor caching station at each of the schools participating in the online assessment, the encrypted test content is pre-downloaded to a dedicated computer and student devices are able to access the content more efficiently. This also decreases the overall load on the district bandwidth and impact on other users across the district. Many of the schools are using Chromebooks as the student device, and thus will be using kiosk mode which will only allow the installed “TestNav” software to run during the testing session. The Google Management console that Technical Services uses to assign Chromebooks to groups will also allow kiosk mode to only be applied to those devices being used for PARCC, and for it to be disabled immediately after the test session to allow for full functionality again.

On the “frontend,” students will be using the TestNav software to take the assessment. PARCC has released a training module that will familiarize students with how to navigate the computer-based environment, including advancing, going back, toolbar, embedded supports and accommodations. In addition, PARCC has provided sample test items so students can engage with sample test content prior to the actual administration. The Educational Technology department staff are currently reviewing these in order to prepare an appropriate lesson to share the tutorial and sample items with students to ensure understanding. Beyond this specific preparation, students have been using the Chromebooks and honing their technology skills all year through curriculum that integrates online applications.

In the weeks prior to the PARCC Field Test, schools participating in the online mode will go through an Infrastructure Trial or “dress rehearsal” that will simulate the testing environment, network load, and provide access to the tutorial and sample test items. This will not only measure readiness for the Field Test, but also the success of the collaborative efforts between the Technical Services and Educational Technology departments to support a next generation assessment.

Tobin third graders thank Dillon Alexander, Technology Support Technician, with a thoughtful card for demonstrating the components of a computer and how to disassemble one. Kudos to Dillon!
The Media Arts program serves middle school and high school students during and after the school day in a wide array of classes and clubs, a work-study program, and special projects that expand our curricular focus. This year we have embarked on a series of special audio production projects to develop a more comprehensive approach to new audio technologies.

Rhythm 454
The daily lives of teens are punctuated with the soundtracks of their favorite music, and many experiment with their own audio creation. One of the most popular spaces in the Media Arts Studio is the audio room, where students crowd together to create their own sounds and record their own stories. Last spring, the Media Arts Studio piloted an audio production curriculum that successfully created the Watershed Audio Report from Fresh Pond (http://www3.cpsd.us/radio). Rhythm 454 will build upon the success and lessons learned from this pilot.

Audio Documentary and Music Composition
In two after school workshops, students will learn the art of audio production and media making, and gain valuable communication, presentation and technical skills. Workshops will include Audio Documentary and Music Composition. Curriculum will be developed in these areas to support mastery of the technology, and in developing new ways to learn, present and share knowledge. Learning objectives include skill development in elements of storytelling, documentary production, and post-production - understanding point of view, editing, and distribution.

Audio Documentary: Where Have All The Honeybees Gone?
CRLS students will research the decline of the honeybee population, known as Colony Collapse Disorder. Using audio equipment, and cell phone videography and photography, students will conduct interviews with local experts and collect sound effects to tell the story of honeybee population reduction. They will create sound-rich podcasts with accompanying visuals to explain the importance of the honeybee population to our food supply.

The Music Composition workshop will teach the basics of creating music in various genres. From making beats to producing songs, students will learn to record, edit and distribute their projects. We will use ProTools, GarageBand, and shareware to take audio ideas from conception to final product.

Stay tuned for completed projects that will be shared on CEATV channels as audio documentaries and archived as podcasts on our web site.

To view these and other original MAS productions, please see schedule info for our cable channels and streaming link at http://www3.cpsd.us/98. Or visit our website for viewing on demand. Cambridge students who wish to learn more about media making opportunities are invited to visit the Media Arts Studio at 454 Broadway (directly across from CRLS). For more information, call 617.349.6744 or email us.
Find us on Channel 98 and 99 on the Cambridge Cable Line Up

**SMART TV98** (Student-Media-ART Television) cablecasts professionally produced educational programs, original work from students and faculty, school events including sports and programming acquired from other educational access facilities.

Streaming at: http://www3.cpsd.us/98

**CPS TV99** (Cambridge Public School Television) highlights school news and information including school committee meetings and programs from other educational, nonprofit, and government sources.

Streaming at: http://www3.cpsd.us/99
CPS Media Arts Studio hosts Alliance for Climate Education workshop, Going Viral: Climate & Media Production Training for students from across the state. 

Pictured: MAS student mentors Gregorio and Mystikal with students from Boston, Somerville, and Manchester.