

December 2014



Tech Times

The Information Technology Department is pleased to bring you our fourth issue of Tech Times.

It is our hope to keep administrators, teachers, staff, parents and students up to date on what's happening with technology in our schools.

Our newsletter will be brought to you each semester with the latest information available to us.

From all of us in IT, we hope you have a wonderful winter holiday and a happy new year!

Jeffrey B. Early, Ph.D.
Assistant Superintendent for
Operations

Contact:
Jeff.Early@pcs.k12.va.us



MAP and IA: Where to Go with What You Know

Winter testing is complete. What do you do with the data from the assessments?

Print your MAP Class Report by [RIT](#). Your ITRT will be offering training to help you use this report to better group your students and to understand how the standard deviation can drive how you teach the strands tested.

When looking at your Achievement Status and Growth Report, remember that statistically, only about 60% of students meet their projected RIT. Rather than focusing on the percentage of students who did not, compare their Fall RIT to their Winter RIT, looking for growth. Look at the "overall percentage of projected RIT met or exceeded" for your class. Remember that **MAP measures growth, not proficiency.**

The Learning Continuum will be searchable by SOL, hopefully by next fall. Until then, use the CTRL+F key command to open a search box into which you can type a word to help you locate learning statements within the continuum.

View Interactive Achievement assessment results using the third tab, "SOL & Item Analysis." Use the "view by" sort to select "Bloom's Taxonomy." Consider how your students are performing at the higher levels of Bloom's. Sort by SOL. Consider performance on various SOL tested items. View the questions to determine if students are struggling with TEI (Technology Enhanced Item), multiple choice questions, or the SOL in general. Use these data to target instructional needs.



★ WHEN DO WE GO? ★

What's Going On At STEM?

Read what your colleagues have to say!

"1st STEM visit for 7th Graders was a fantastic tie-in from prior knowledge of 6th Grade Science with energy and motion to 7th Grade Lab Investigations. Students loved building their cars for the egg drop and came up with really intriguing designs for how to 'Save the egg.' Smiles were beaming from ear to ear!"



Susan Duff of Tunstall Middle

"STEM has given students who would never be interested in science, technology, engineering, and math an opportunity to explore these worlds, and they have loved this exploration. The freedom that the well designed lessons provide has refreshed the students' hunger for knowledge. Well done, STEM!"

Sarah Reece of Dan River Middle School

"It is exciting to see how engaged every student gets at the STEM Academy. I find the most rewarding aspect of the STEM Academy is witnessing the students with the "I don't care" attitude towards school in general, excel and really get involved in the activities presented by the instructors."

Jacob Thompson of Tunstall High

"Our students have enjoyed STEM lab every time we have gone. I think each time has been so different it is hard to comment on just one. But, I think the one I saw children the most engaged and challenged was the ROBOT visit! The delight in their eyes said it all when they adjusted the program and their ROBOT actually did what they wanted it to do. WOW! That visit really incorporated the whole STEM lab experience!! Thanks for such a great opportunity!"

Natalia Heffinger of Brosville Elementary

"STEM provides students with unforgettable experiences that may lead them into exciting scientific, technological engineering or mathematical careers."

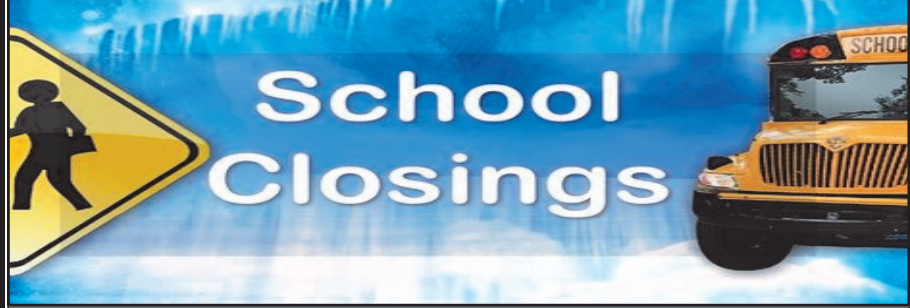
Ellen Waltman of Dan River Middle

"It is so nice to see a student who struggles in a regular classroom, but attends STEM and demonstrates his true ability."

Chris Weber of Gretna Elementary

"The STEM Academy is a great investment in our students' education. The team works hard to engage students and bring out each student's curiosity and excitement about learning. To see my students light up and be able to answer and explain concepts and then apply that knowledge, there is nothing more rewarding."

Elicia Michelle Owen of Chatham High School



WHY DIDN'T I GET A CALL FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT?

Make sure that office personnel are updating both **home** and **cell phone** numbers for yourself as well as your students. You don't want to miss an important announcement from our superintendent!



Pittsylvania County Schools has installed a new filtering appliance called **"iboss."** This robust service will greatly enhance the classroom and work environment with the features it includes. While we are tweaking the installation, you may encounter instances where sites are now blocked which were previously available.

While no filter can give 100% guarantee to block sites which do not meet the educational standards of Pittsylvania County Schools, we are reassured that the ultimate filter in the classroom is the supervising teacher. [Step-by-step instructions.](#)

Meet the Early Birds! Bobby Clowers, Area Network Specialist



Bobby Clowers has been a member of the Information Technology Department long before he ever graduated from Tunstall High in 2000. Bobby first started his IT career as a summer intern under the supervision of Greg Cox, Wireless Network Specialist. Upon graduation, Bobby became a part of the IT Department and currently holds the position of Area Network Specialist assigned to the Tunstall district.

Bobby is married to the former Ashley Barker, who is employed as the Analyst for Information Technology Department. Together they have two children, Jacob and Adriana, both of whom attend Dan River Middle.

The Clowers family is very active in Kentuck Baptist Church where Bobby serves on the A/V committee as well as running the sound system for Sunday services. Bobby likes all sports and his especially proud of his family's accomplishments, spending many evenings and weekends cheering Jacob on the baseball field and Adriana on the soccer field. His brother, Shawn, is not only a former Graduate of Merit and former baseball superstar from Tunstall High, but is also a high profile pitcher for the Liberty University Flames, recently named on the watch list for the 2014 Gregg Olson Award.

It's not just local sports that Bobby enjoys. When football season begins, you can count on him to be in front of a TV pulling for his beloved Miami Dolphins. In the rare times Bobby isn't working at school, at home or at church, he enjoys travelling with his family and names the beach as his favorite vacation spot. Bobby Clowers is a quiet soul, typically putting all his attention on everyone else in his life, rather than himself. This time, however, it's his turn. The IT Department is proud to shine the spotlight on Bobby in appreciation for years of his dedicated service always provided with his signature warm grin and congenial personality.