



Fall 2009

BITS & BYTES

Technology @ Cheltenham



New computer lab at Myers Elementary School

HOW TO LOGIN TO YOUR COMPUTER

This summer, all of the PCs in the district were reimaged and loaded with a standardized set of software and settings. As a result of this process, the method for logging into the computers has changed.

Generic teacher accounts have been removed from all computers. Teachers and other staff should now login with their e-mail username and password. Over time, more systems in the district will allow you to login with this network account. When logging in, always make sure that the third field is set to "ADMIN2" (see picture on right).

This school year, all students will login with a generic account that has been created for their respective school. (See login information in the next column.) Next year, all students will have their own username and password to use to login to any computer.

Generic Student Accounts:

- Cheltenham Elementary: cestudent
- Glenside Elementary: gsstudent
- Myers Elementary: mystudent
- Wyncote Elementary: wcstudent
- Elkins Park: epstudent
- Cedarbrook: cbstudent
- High School: chsstudent

The password for all student accounts is:
1234

Within the next year, teachers will have access to network storage. Saving documents to this location will allow them to be accessed from any Windows PC in the district (and eventually any Mac as well). The network storage will also be backed up on a regular basis, ensuring that your data is safe. More information on network storage will be sent out soon!

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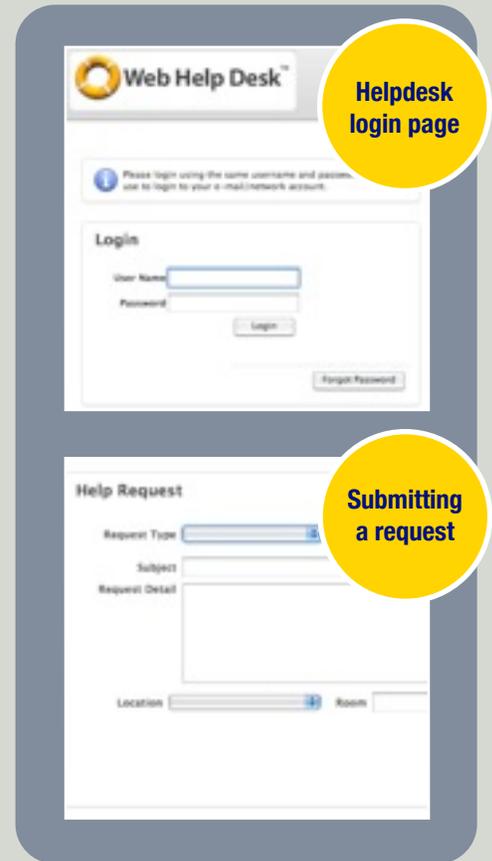


HELP! HOW TO GET TECH ASSISTANCE

If you're having a problem with technology, help is only a web browser away! Over the summer, we have implemented a web-based helpdesk system. All of our technicians will be working exclusively from this system to ensure that issues are dealt with in a timely manner. We kindly ask that you use this system to notify us of your issue.

To get to the helpdesk, use the Technology Helpdesk quick link on the district web site or go to the following web address: <http://helpdesk.cheltenham.org>. Log in with your e-mail username and password. Once logged in,

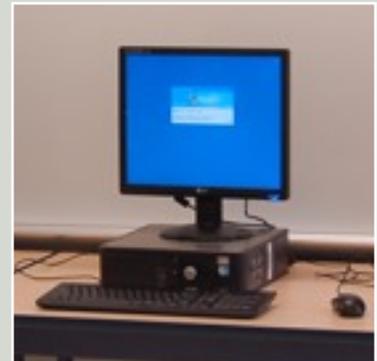
click on the "Request" button at the top of the page, fill in the information requested, and click "Save" to submit your request. You will then receive an e-mail with details about your helpdesk request. When the request is received by us, we will assign it to the correct technician. You can track the status of your request at any time by logging into the helpdesk and clicking on the "History" button. You may also receive e-mails when a technician updates or resolves your request. These e-mails will list any notes that the technician has made regarding your request.



NEW COMPUTERS

This summer was a busy time for the technology department:

- Over 200 outdated machines were removed—these machines were picked up by a company that will recycle and resell the parts
- 300 new computers were installed throughout the district
- All existing Windows computers were re-imaged
- Some computers upgraded with additional memory
- All Windows computers are now running Windows XP, have at least 1GB of RAM, have a consistent set of software and anti-virus protection, and are integrated with our network systems



CHANGING OUR FILTERS

This summer, we upgraded the spam/web filter and replaced the firewall. These devices control what goes in and out of our network. Some useful information that you should know:

Total Traffic Control Web Filter

The web filter controls and logs all access from inside our network to the Internet. Sites are categorized according to their content and certain categories of sites (such as Education) are allowed, while other categories (such as Pornography) are blocked. This year, teachers and other staff will have access to more categories than students. If you are blocked going to a site that you feel you should be able to access, here are two things you can do:

- Make sure that the web filter knows who you are (see sidebar on right)
- Submit a request to have the site unblocked — we will review and unblock if appropriate

Spam Filtering

Each morning, you should receive a Mail Summary e-mail from our spam filter (see below). This e-mail lists all of the messages from the previous day that were marked as spam and

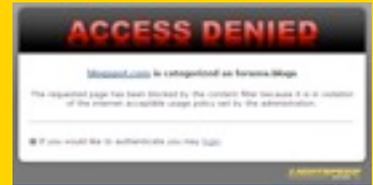
separately lists any good messages. If an e-mail is mistakenly marked as spam, simply click on “Always Allow” and the e-mail will be delivered to your mailbox. Any future e-mail from that address will not be blocked. To view a rolling list of the past two weeks of spam, click the red “click here” link in the Mail Summary. **Please note:** you do not need to delete these spam e-mails; they are retained for two weeks and then automatically deleted.

We recommend that you check your Mail Summary on a daily basis at the beginning of the school year. This is to catch any parent e-mails that may have been incorrectly categorized as spam. As the year progresses, you will likely have few, if any, messages that are incorrectly categorized as spam.

Unfortunately, no spam filter is perfect and at some point, you may end up getting some spam e-mails. If this happens, please just delete them from your mailbox. If you get an excessive amount of spam e-mails in your mailbox, let us know by submitting a helpdesk request.



BLOCKED?



Getting this message when trying to go to a web site? Click the “login” link, enter your e-mail username and password, and click “Login”.



If you still are blocked, click on the “submit it for review” link, type in your e-mail address and the reason why the site should be unblocked, then click “Submit for Review.” We will review the site and unblock it if the content is of value.



THINGS TO COME

Network overhaul, server upgrades, network storage, and Mac integration to name a few...

With the summer soon behind us and a new school year about to start, technology upgrades are still taking place. Our commitment to the district is to provide cutting edge technology and a robust infrastructure to support it. We know the frustrations that you have faced and we are working hard to eliminate them one-by-one. Here are some of the things that we have in the pipeline:

Network Overhaul

The existing networking equipment that connects all of the computers together is outdated, unreliable, and slow. It is unable to support the technology demands of the district. In order to meet the current and future needs of technology, the entire networking infrastructure will be replaced over the next few months. Every network switch and hub in every network closet in the district will be replaced. When finished, computers that once shared a 10-megabit link will have a 1-gigabit (1,000-megabit) link to the network — an increase of 100-fold.

The upgrades will be completed during the evening hours and will be done one building at a time. The process will involve untangling the mess of wires in each closet, making sense of them, and moving them from the old switching equipment to the new, one cable at a time.

Next summer, we will also be replacing our connectivity between buildings. This will increase our bandwidth between buildings from 10/100-megabit to 1-gigabit and beyond.

Server Upgrades

As with the networking equipment, much of the server hardware is outdated and is not adequate for the needs of the district. We are already in the process of replacing many of these servers and in many cases, consolidating multiple servers into one server to reduce the power and cooling required.

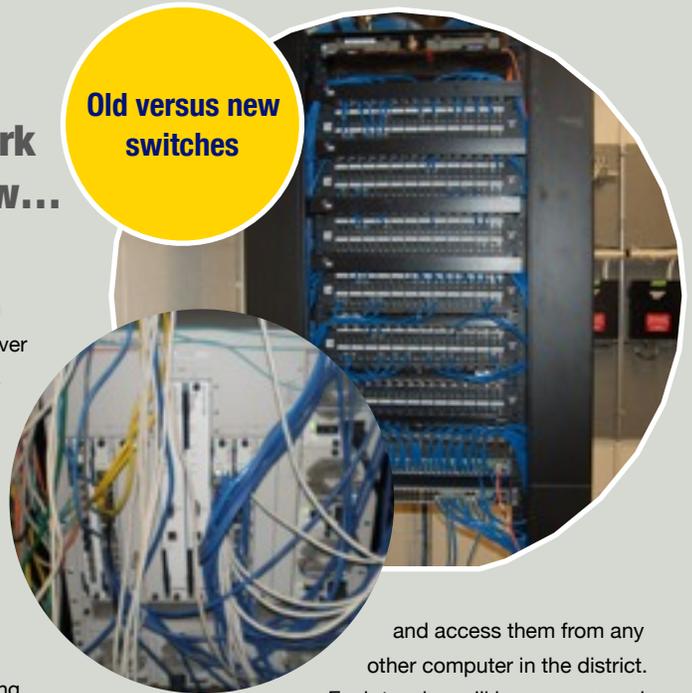
Network Storage

Past practice in the district has been to save documents locally on each computer. Several issues arise from doing this:

- Documents are only accessible on the computer where they were saved
- If the computer stops working, all of the documents are inaccessible
- Documents are not secure and may be viewed by others that use the same computer

To alleviate these issues, we have set up every Windows computer to require users to logon with their e-mail username and password. By doing so, once the appropriate servers are in place, teachers will be able to save their documents to a network drive on one computer

Old versus new switches



and access them from any other computer in the district.

Each teacher will have a personal network drive that only they can access. In addition to a personal drive, teachers will also have access to a shared volume where they can easily share documents with teachers and other staff throughout the district.

Macintosh Integration

While many of the upgrades this past summer have focused on Windows computers, we have not forgotten about the Macs. Apple has recently released the latest version of their operating system, Snow Leopard. Over the next few months, we will be testing Snow Leopard and eventually deploying to all of the Macs across the district. More importantly, we will be integrating all of the Macs into the same systems that the Windows computers are using to enable access to the same network storage and other district resources. Stay tuned!

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Technology Requests

<http://helpdesk.cheltenham.org>

or, e-mail your request to:

helpdesk@cheltenham.org