

# Teach Technology

The Technology Newsletter for Educators

## The New Social Order

Before I got into teaching three years ago I had heard a little about twitter, FaceBook, Myspace, texting and that kids loved to use these tools. But I had never really paid attention to it. I spent my time trouble shooting computers as the IT manager of a small museum. Once I got into teaching I decided to look at what students were doing. What sites were they drawn to, and how can we as educators learn to utilize these tools to reach our students.

It was not until I was a sponsor for the Junior / Senior prom did I

realize how technology has changed the social behavior of todays students. In a room with a few hundred students, a crowd on one side of the room would text students on the other side of the

room. Students were posting images and thoughts on their facebook pages so others could see what they were doing at the prom. News is traveling faster than a cell phone call, or even walking to someone across the room.

These technologies can also be used to reach students and help them stay informed about school. Many schools have a good start with the use of a school website, or the use of a Blog that utilizes RSS feeds.

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### Learning Curve

One of the many differences between digital natives, and individuals who have had to adapt to the digital world, is how fast we learn. Individuals who have grown up in this technological age don't fear pushing buttons, or trying things without instructions. They seem to have a natural understanding of how the technology functions. However it is the older generation that has a harder time grasping the technology at hand.



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/poer/3684295598/>  
The Facebook application on the iPhone is one of many ways students socialize online

As educators this effects us in a way that is opposite of standard learning. In many cases we are working harder to learn many technology concepts that many of our students

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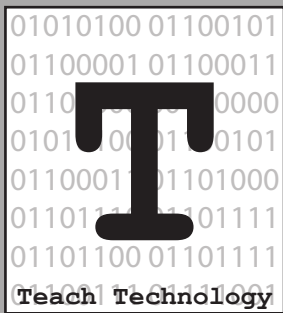
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## New Social Order - from Page 1

But it is important for schools to step beyond the basics of a web page and blogs and become part of the new social order.

Facebook can be a wonderful tool that can offer a new direction in how schools communicate with parents and students. Instead of a parent or student seeking information on the school's web site, a message can be posted on the school's facebook wall and other facebook users who follow the school's postings receive the information.

Text messages are another tool to get messages to students and parents, such as school closures, reminders of assignments, and

status of how a student is doing. In each case a message can be sent to a student or a parent phone instead of them choosing to go to a web site.

The key factor in all of these options is that the school or educator is choosing to reach the parent or student at their level. This may be while a parent is working, or while students are hanging out with each other away from a computer.

This allows a more social interaction with both parents and students while improving communications with both sets of individuals. This can improve scores and overall image of the school.

## What DOS that Mean?

DOS stands for Disk Operating System, and it is the main program which allows the computer to run all the other programs that are installed. We are familiar with Windows or the Macintosh Operating System, but these are a Graphical User Interface (GUI) that runs in association with the DOS.

Many years ago computers would boot to a command prompt and we would type in commands to do what we wanted. These tools are still helpful today. One DOS command I use often in Windows is the XCOPY command.

The XCOPY command is a robust copy command that can help distribute files to other computers in your classroom. For instance I have 30 workstations that I often choose to send files to those workstations in order for students to work on an assignment. I can use the XCOPY command to send the file to the target computer(s).

If I have a file on my desktop, that I want copied to a workstation desktop, I can open a command prompt and type the following:

```
xcopy file_name.doc
\\computer_name\C$\ "Documents and Settings"\ "All Users"\ "Desktop"
```



Image by © Royalty-Free/Corbis

Students and his Instructor learning in detail about social networking.



Info International Island, Second Life by HVX Silverstar.  
 This is an information center that avatars in second life can access.

## A Second Life

Many people get up and go to work, come home, and do the same thing day after day. But some people look choose to live a second life, and the often turn to a virtual world called Second Life.

In Second Life, you choose an avatar (a computer graphic that represents you) and define your look. While many people choose to have an avatar that looks like them, some choose to explore more creative possibilities.

The wonderful thing about Second Life is that it offers so many educational opportunities. First it offers the understanding of interacting with individuals all over the world in a global environment. But it also allows for an introduction into 3D design, graphic design, architecture, program

scripting, business, and marketing. Because it is a virtual world, you do get uncertainties that you might also expect in the real world.

Students can learn to build an object such as a clock using graphics and 3D design, and then using a scripting language the clock will actually function.

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### Learning Curve - from Page 1

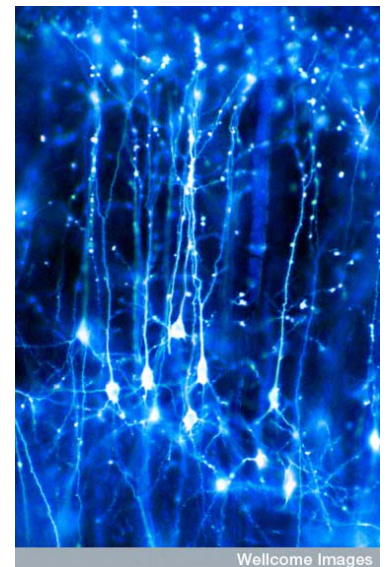
already know. By providing a more of a equal level learning between us and the student we the educator can make it through the learning cure much faster.

Students and teachers working together to educate each other can improve communication, respect, and opportunities for other students as well as the school or the district.

## Did You Know?

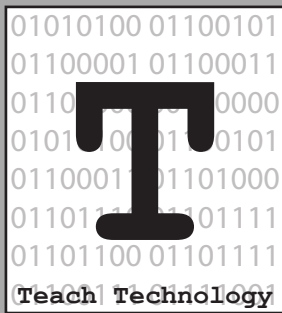
The original concept of the Internet was not developed by a rising member of congress, nor by a student sitting in his dorm room. It came from a man who studied physics, mathematics, psychology, and psychoacoustics (how humans perceive sound).

In the late 1950s J.C.R. Licklider wrote a paper describing how libraries and people would share information over connected computers. His inspiration came from his studies of how neurons in the brain connect to each other. When a neuron is created it attaches to several other neurons creating a connectivity of shared information in which information or memories are associated.



Neurons in the Brain  
 The Internet connectivity is very similar to how neurons connect in the brain.  
 Dr Jonathan Clarke. Wellcome Images





<http://www.flickr.com/photos/michael-ann/389149362/>

Teachers at the Texas Computer Education Association Conference in Austin, TX

Teach Technology  
609 Bois D Arc  
Grandview, TX 76050

## Upcoming Events

TCEA Conference	Austin, TX	February 8-12
TATN Event	Austin, TX	February 9th
ITEA Conference	Charlotte, NC	March 18-20
ISTE Conference	Denver, CO.	June 27 - 30

Dr. Yearwood  
Lamar University