

NOTABLE EVENTS

5.18 HCSF Banquet 6:00
Lambuth Inn

5.19 Academic Awards 6:30
Auditorium

5.20 Band Concert 7:30
1st Methodist Church

TUSCOLA High School

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT



Cell Phones and Education

As Mr. McDonald is currently busy planning for the Dept. Chair summer retreat, the agenda is filling quickly. Two issues that rise to the surface each year are cell phones and hats. It seems that the educational community at Tuscola can never quite solidify around the appropriate use of these items that seem to be very important to our student population. Each year we debate the issue in one forum or another with the outcome generally involving a slight change to the rule governing use. Although I could probably write a complete article about hats alone, I would like to focus on cell phones in this issue.

With a faculty as large as ours there are many people who are passionate about a lot of different issues concerning education. The arguments range from the need for more technology to the need for more uninterrupted instructional time. Each program has needs that must be evaluated in light of the available resources, school goals, school board policies, and the law. It is the administration's duty to perform these evaluations. Although we try every day, I often hear from various sources that we cannot make everyone happy, but we should be able to convince faculty, staff, parents, and students that a particular course of action is best for the school even if it is not the course that they would have chosen themselves. The infrastructure of school leadership is not designed as a democracy, but all stakeholders are given some means of communicating their opinions. In order for the school to be successful, everyone must buy into the final decision or the result will be confusion among the students.

Although I am no longer teaching in the classroom, I can understand the frustration that a teacher might experience concerning cell phone disruptions. I have experienced the disruption created when a teacher gets up to leave a parent meeting and take a call when his/her cell phone rings. I have experienced a teacher texting during a conference with me. I have seen principals texting during meetings with the superintendent. I have had to wait while a sales associate finished talking to someone on his/her cell phone before ringing up my purchases. My point is that cell phones can be disruptive if used improperly, but can also be very productive if used properly. This incredible wave of technology is still evolving and new applications are discovered every day. The problem is that people have resisted any terms of etiquette that have been developed by society. It is telling that legislatures have had to pass laws banning the dangerous practice of texting while driving.

I am also torn about the proper way to handle this dilemma in schools. It worries me that the school is being asked to explain to colleges why students with excellent academic records have been given ISS or OSS. I worry because teachers are being asked to spend precious time to send work and remediate students who have missed seven hours of instructional time due to a cell phone violation at lunch or walking between classes. What is the true disruption of education? I worry that I will no longer be able to explain this to parents in a satisfactory way. Banning cell phones completely is a vast drain on time and resources.

Some schools are embracing cell phones. Although I am not sure if this is the way for Tuscola to go, it does have some merits. Applications are being developed for smart phones that convert them into graphing calculators, periodic tables, and carpentry levels just to name a few. Educators are also discovering productive methods for using cell phones in everyday teaching. By allowing cell phones for educational purposes, it would provide a sensible avenue for teaching students the proper etiquette for cell phone use in school as well as the workplace. Cell phones are not a fad. If educators keep resisting cell phones, we will not prepare our students to succeed in the workplace beyond the classroom. This is not something that we should rush into, but I think the discussion should begin. Mr. McDonald has provided two links to articles and websites associated with cell phones and education for you to browse as discussion starters. I encourage you to visit the Tuscola curriculum blog and contribute to the discussion. Please post any research that you may find about this issue in your own studies.

Jason Heinz

Please visit the Tuscola Curriculum Blog to comment on Cell Phones. Just copy and paste the address below into your browser.

<http://theinnovativeeducator.blogspot.com/2008/05/value-of-using-cell-phones-to-enhance.html>

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/16/technology/16phone.html?_r=1

<http://teacher.haywood.k12.nc.us/jheinz/tuscola-newsletter-entries/>

Our mission is
to achieve
student success through
focusing on the whole child
as a lifelong learner!



Happy Birthday to You!



5/19-Tyla Moody

5/24-Jane Gladden

“I am a great believer that any tool that enhances communication has profound effects in terms of how people can learn from each other, and how they can achieve the kind of freedoms that they’re interested in.”
-Bill Gates

“Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower.”

“People think focus is saying yes to the thing you’ve got to focus on. But that’s not what it means at all. It means saying no to the hundred other good ideas that there are. You have to pick carefully.”

-Steve Jobs

UPCOMING MEETINGS

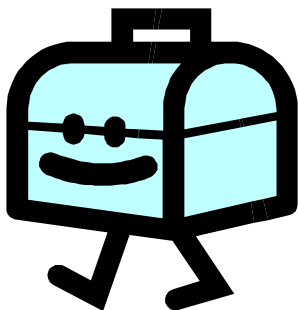
- Monday** Faculty Meeting for Test Administrator Training at 3:05 in Media Center.
- Tuesday**
- Wednesday** Dept. Chair Meeting at 3:10 in A-7.
- Thursday**
- Friday**

All meetings are open to any faculty or staff member.

Duty Schedule Changes On Thursday!
Lunch Duty Schedule
For the week of May 18th
Monday is the 163rd day of school!

In the Cafeteria
A Lunch– D Building
B Lunch– E Building

Weekly Bell Schedule
Regular Schedule
Monday-Friday



Days 161-165

“A” Lunch		“B” Lunch	
Howard	L	Rich	L
Francoeur	C	Myers	C
Johnson	A	Gunter	A
Porter	C	Wise, T.	C
Finger	ISS	Kuykendall	ISS

Days 166-170

“A” Lunch		“B” Lunch	
Howard	C	Rich	C
Francoeur	A	Myers	A
Johnson	C	Gunter	C
Porter	ISS	Wise, T.	ISS
Finger	L	Kuykendall	L

Sports Schedules can be found at
www.highschoolsports.net