

Hawkins County Schools Community Connection

September
2009

Hawkins County Schools opened their doors to students for another exciting academic year on August 10, 2009. This year is sure to be full of new accomplishments for students and staff. Several new initiatives have begun to change the face of education in Hawkins County.

The [*Tennessee Diploma Project*](#) will impose stricter guidelines for students and increase rigor in the classroom in order to better prepare future graduates for life after high school. Our future graduates will be better able to compete in a global market with advanced skills learned in today's classroom.

Students today are preparing for jobs that have not yet been created. Consequently, a widening gap has formed between the knowledge and skills students are acquiring in schools and the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in the increasingly global, technology infused 21st century workplace (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2005). Hawkins County Schools are rising to the challenge of meeting the goals of the Tennessee Diploma Project in order to turn out prepared graduates.

This generation of students has grown up in a technology infused world full of high definition, instant messaging, and video games. Not only do students have access to their communities, they have access to individuals on the other side of the world. Research shows that students learn in new and innovative ways. Young people can learn faster and multi-task better than adult learners.

In order to continue the pace of learning, Hawkins County Schools has invested in technology to enhance learning. Distance Learning, promethean boards, and pod-casting are a few of the new additions.

Technology and materials are only part of what makes learning happen. To ensure quality teaching, Hawkins County Schools provides ongoing professional development for teachers and staff. This professional development promotes researched based teaching strategies in order to encourage higher order thinking and problem solving among students.

All faculty are required to acquire two days of professional development in order to expand their teaching skills and knowledge. A few of the topics covered this past summer included; Teaching to Meet the Needs of All Learners, AIMS Education Foundation Training, Mathematics Strategies that Engage the Brain, Integrating Promethian Boards with Daily Instruction, and Meeting Diverse Learning Needs in the Mathematics Classroom. All professional development courses are built on research and brain-based learning.



The mission for the Hawkins County School System, in partnership with all stakeholders, is to **Educate and Graduate Each Student.**

DISTANCE LEARNING

Distance Learning **via** video conference is getting off to a great start in Hawkins County Schools. Beginning this semester (Fall 2009) there are three courses being offered. Volunteer High School Students are receiving Geometry from South Greene High School. Volunteer High is broadcasting Mr. Chris Broadhead's French 1 Class to both North Greene and Chuckey Doak. Also, Mr. Tracey Beets, Geography Teacher at Cherokee High School, has a class of fourteen students at Clinch School which he instructs from room 402 at Cherokee.

With this technology students are able to take courses that otherwise would not be available. Dual Enrollment courses from East Tennessee State University and Walters State will be made available via video conferencing Spring 2010 in Hawkins County. Career and

In addition to obtaining professional development during the summer months, teachers stay up to date with various educational topics through small learning communities. Many school principals hold study groups with their faculty to discuss current trends in education.

To further promote professional growth, Hawkins County Schools conducts an annual Leadership Academy for teachers interested in pursuing administrative and supervisory positions. During the 2008-2009 school year, twelve members completed the series of classes. The group focused on the Tennessee Leadership Standards (TILS) set forth by the Tennessee Department of Education.

While Hawkins County Schools are educating students, teachers are becoming students as well. Hawkins County teachers are committed to staying up to date with the latest research in order to better *Educate and Graduate* their students.

To remove your name from our mailing list or if you have questions, please e-mail us at communityconnection@hck12.net or call 423-272-7629 ext. 156.

In Hawkins County, Career and Technical Education courses are not currently available to students at Clinch School, but with this technology in place, it is now a possibility. Adrian Smith, Technology Curriculum Specialist, has been instrumental in helping the teachers and students prepare for the new technology.

Distance Learning in Hawkins County Schools has been made possible by the Russ Grant from USDA, The Niswonger Foundation, and funding provided locally by the Hawkins County Board of Education. Hawkins County Schools, in partnership with Greene County Schools, received the Russ Grant in Spring, 2009.