



## Success with the Read/Write Web: A School Division that Uses Weblogs, Podcasts, and Wiki-Wikis

John Hendron,  
Instructional & Web Technologies Specialist—  
Goochland County Public Schools

[jhendron@glnd.k12.va.us](mailto:jhendron@glnd.k12.va.us)

- **SY 2002-03** Teachers begin using **blogs**; *Movable Type* used to help manage district website
- **SY 2003-04** Weblogs continue, *Plone* content management system implemented for teacher **webpages**—12 participate (200 total teachers)
- **SY 2004-05** *Plone* use continues, 48 total teachers
- **SY 2005-06** **Weblogs** required of all teachers; first **podcast** published: *TechTimes Live!* with host John Hendron, **wiki** used for staff-development signup mechanism; students begin blogging (16%)
- **SY 2006-07** Blogging Initiative continues, teachers begin **podcasting**, **wikis** used for administrative groups; students continue **blogging**; some teachers using **wikis** in classroom

I have come to really enjoy keeping my blog updated daily. I think **it helps the parents feel like they get to see a little of what is going on in their child's day at school** without actually being there. Parents have also told me that it has helped them talk to their children about what they have done in school instead of the typical "stuff".

—first grade teacher

—high school chemistry teacher

**I am all excited about using the camera to show some concepts in the class now. The little movies on the blog are very nice. Just wish I could have stayed in the blogging a little longer to practice more. I have stopped cursing it a long time ago, cause the kids like it so much. **Actually I have gotten more positive feedback from the parents on the blog than any other thing I do.** Guess it turned out okay after all.**

—4th grade teacher

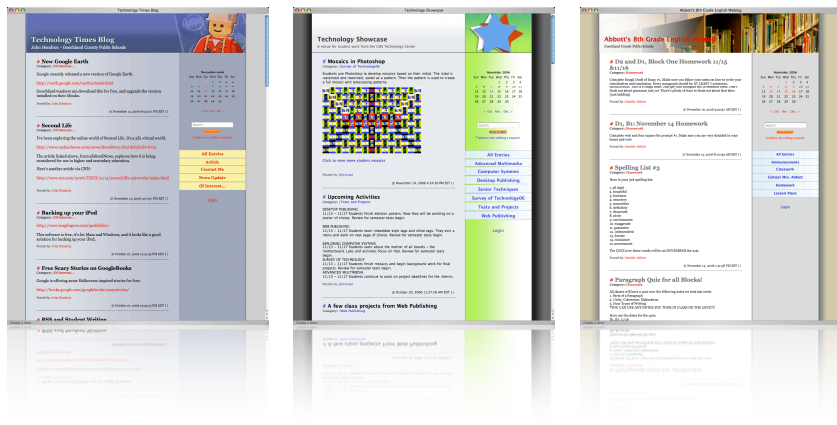
I've really gotten in to blogging this year. And I am trying to come up with ways to make it more interactive for the kids and less of a virtual newsletter.

Thank you so much. I am doing the weekly blogs and giving students monthly calendars of assignments in an effort to make sure every student is well-informed about my class. I appreciate your help as I have learned to use technology better.

—high school English teacher

## Blogging Examples

<http://www.glnv.k12.va.us/weblog>



A screenshot of the Goochland County Public Schools website. The page features a large red "G" logo in the top left corner. The navigation bar includes links for "about goochland", "instruction", "school board", "employment", "contacts", and "our schools". Below the navigation bar, there are links for "Instruction", "Curriculum", and "Technology". The main content area is titled "Audio and Video Podcasts" and features a photo of a group of students. Below the photo, there is a text box with the following text: "Have you ever listened to audio-only content on the Internet? This act of publishing a recording on the Web has a new name, and is really blossoming now on the Internet. The phenomenon is called podcasting. It's a perfectly fine name, but it really does not get to the core of what is required, or simply, what the phenomenon is all about. Many podcasts (the MP3 files you download) are in the form of a radio show. The content varies as widely as what one will find in the millions of weblogs, but the idea behind it is this: you will subscribe to a show (a podcast) that you like. Your". Below the text box, there is a section titled "TEACHER PODCAST LINKS".

<http://www.glnv.k12.va.us/podcasts/>

“This is one of the **greatest things** we’ve done... it’s so easy... and everyone here can contribute to the agenda before the meeting starts. **I just love this wiki!**”

The screenshot shows a wiki page titled "Photography" with a navigation menu on the left and a main content area. The menu includes links for "Wiki Home", "GCPs Home", "Wiki Groups", "Curriculum Classes", "Documentation + Handouts", "Library Meetings", "Lead Teachers", "Career and Technical Education", "Guidance Counselors", "Leadership Team", "SACS-CASI Title I", "Elementary Leadership Technology Team", "KlubKagan", "Moodle-iPod Project", "meta Wiki", "Basic Editing", and "What is a Wiki?". The main content area has a "Handouts / Photography" header, a welcome message, and a "Documentation" section with links to "Sharing Photos with iPhoto", "Using Digital Images in Microsoft Word", and "Using Video and Photos in the Classroom". Below this is a "Would you like a 36-page iPhoto manual?" section with links for "Help" and "iPhoto Getting Started". A "P.A.F. manual" section is also present. The bottom of the page features a "Resources" section with links to "Attach:LMSevaluation.doc", "Attach:GCPs\_Handbook.doc", and "Policy Manual Samples: At".



## Pragmatics

- We host our own content for control and reliability
- Clients can subscribe to content from blogs via a news aggregator or
- Mac OS X Tiger Server includes the Blojsom weblog engine
- Use iTunes for subscribing to podcast content
- The same server provides easy support for publishing podcasts
- Every teacher has a laptop computer, that can record audio
- Audio and video podcasts are served via RSS 2.0
- Every teacher has the latest, best-of-class editing software for audio and video

## Pragmatics

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- Every teacher is required to maintain the weblog at least once a week with text content
- Many teachers have participated in “PowerBlogging” training for adding attachments and pictures to blogs
- Parents can subscribe to teacher blogs using RSS and receive e-mail updates instead of visiting the site
- Principals have a blog portal on their school’s website
- One principal publishes a regular podcast with his son, who is a student at an elementary school
- Administrators monitor teacher weblogs using NetNews Wire—a leading news aggregator that organizes blog posts by date and school

## Pragmatics

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- Wikis are maintained by wiki groups
- We have used three engines to serve wikis on our own servers:
  - PM Wiki
  - Media Wiki (wikipedia)
  - Instiki
- Access to our main wiki is controlled via group access
- Teachers can use Instiki on their laptops, with students using laptops
- Wikis have changed our meeting culture and the ease by which we can share information

## Measuring Success

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- Increased Productivity
- Enhanced Communication with Families
- Using blogs as learning scaffolds
- Sharing Ideas
- Giving Everyone a Voice
- Targeting different modes of learning

## Links of Interest

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- <http://furl.net/members/willrich/Classroom%20Weblogs>
- <http://www.g1nd.k12.va.us/weblog/jhendron/>
- <http://landmark-project.com/>
- <http://web.mac.com/tntnzing/iWeb/Digital%20Education/Podcasts/Podcasts.html>
- <http://www.pmwiki.org/>
- <http://www.apple.com/server/macosx/collaborationservices.html>