September 9, 2011
Volume 1, Issue 1

Welcome to Technology!

Robert Gray Middle School 5505 Southwest 23rd Avenue Portland, OR 97239 (503) 916-5676

Important Dates

- 9/19—Before School Study Hall begins (tentative), 8:05am
- 9/20—All School Picnic, 5:00pm
- 9/20—Open House, following picnic
- 9/21—2-hour Late Opening, school begins at 11:15am
- 9/22—After School Homework Club begins (tentative), 3:45-4:45pm
- 9/23—Picture Day
- 9/25—Depart for Outdoor School (Kapranos & Ross)
- 9/27—Return from Outdoor School (Kapranos & Ross)
- 10/9—Depart for Outdoor School (Parr)
- 10/11—Return from Outdoor School (Parr)

Homework

Some homework will be assigned for this class. Students will prepare and practice speeches. Both of these activities may require attention at home. Students will also conduct research. This might necessitate working outside of school.

Contact Information

Nick Kapranos
nkaprano@pps.net

Feel free to email or call anytime. I check my email periodically throughout the day. The telephone number is at the top of the page. The best times to reach me are from 8:30-9:00am or 3:00-4:00pm.

You're also welcome to drop by for a visit before or after school.

I maintain a website with a section for information relevant to this class. Visit:

http://www.pps.k12.or.us/schools/gray/244.htm

Looking Forward to a Great Semester

Welcome to a new year at Robert Gray Middle School. I hope you had a pleasant summer. It's exciting to have the opportunity to teach Technology this year. This class is being taught twice a day, during 1st period with Mr. Kapranos and 6th by Mrs. Ross. By the end of the year, almost every 6th grader will have taken this course. Making Technology available to only 6th graders this year allows us to build some essential skills for middle school and beyond. While the name of the class is Technology, we will be working in other areas as well. The major areas of focus during this semester elective will be: keyboarding, digital literacy, digital citizenship, public speaking, and research skills. Below in the "Curriculum Information" section are elaborations on these topics. We will meet in the school's Linux lab, located in Room 113. Here, students will have access to various digital applications enabling them to further develop their abilities through instruction and practice. Students are expected to be safe, respectful, and responsible at all times to ensure a positive learning environment. We look forward to a terrific semester.

Curriculum Information

Keyboarding

Students will work to develop proficient touch-typing skills. The ability to type will greatly benefit students going forward. This will be a major focus during the first half of the course.

Digital literacy

Students will learn basic computer skills, allowing them to use available technology efficiently and effectively. Word processing, creating digital presentations, and using web browsers will be areas given greatest attention.

Digital citizenship

Students will study what it means to be a positive member of the rapidly expanding digital community. Students will gain strategies to keep them safe.

Public speaking

Students will receive instruction in effective public speaking techniques. Through preparation and practice, students will refine their abilities to effectively deliver information orally in a variety of modes.

Research skills

Students will improve their ability to locate information through a variety of sources and evaluate its usefulness. Time will be spent working on note-taking, and students will work on citations.