



Technical High School

Pride, Respect, Responsibility

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

About seven years ago, our first Somali students began to arrive at Tech High School. Today, about seventeen percent of our kids are students of color. Back in 2001, we had just a handful of students who were not white.

I remember looking outside on a December day in 2001 and seeing a Somali young man standing still looking up at the sky. I went out and asked him what he was doing. He turned to me and said, "So this is what snow is."

This kid had traveled thousands of miles through several countries and cultures and now was standing outside Door 20 watching the snowflakes drift down. It is very likely he had experienced civil wars. Many of our students from East Africa have seen relatives and friends die in violence. Many have spent months and longer in interment camps waiting for the chance to come to America or another more stable society.

The other day, I told this story to one of our students as she made one of her frequent stops to grab a mint from my candy jar. She paused for a few moments after she heard my story and said, "You know, that's really magical." It struck me that "magical" was the description that had escaped me all these years.

It reminded me of another magical comment about snow that Robert Frost had shared with the world in his famous poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." You may remember that the poem talks about a man stopping with his horse and sleigh somewhere in the woods in the dark. The magical line: "The only other sound's the sweep of easy wind and downy flake."

The poem goes on to state that the man can't stay and admire the scene, he has places to go and things to do. "But I have promises to keep, And miles to go before I sleep, And miles to go before I sleep."

There have been thousands and thousands of words written in literary analysis about this poem. I will not even attempt to bore you with my take on it. Except to say, that I can see the link between that Somali sixteen-year-old boy and the man in the old poem. Both had traveled far and both had a long ways still to go. However, Robert Frost and his created character from 1922 could never have imagined how far our young man had traveled and what he had done and the difficult journey that lay ahead of him.

Submitted by: Roger Ziemann, Principal

TECH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Band Concert Monday, December 8 at 7:30 Auditorium
Orchestra Concert Monday, December 15, 7:30 Auditorium
Two hour late start December 16, 2008
Choir Concert Monday, December 22, 7:30 Gym
Winter Break, No School December 24 – January 2, 2008
School resumes January 5, 2008

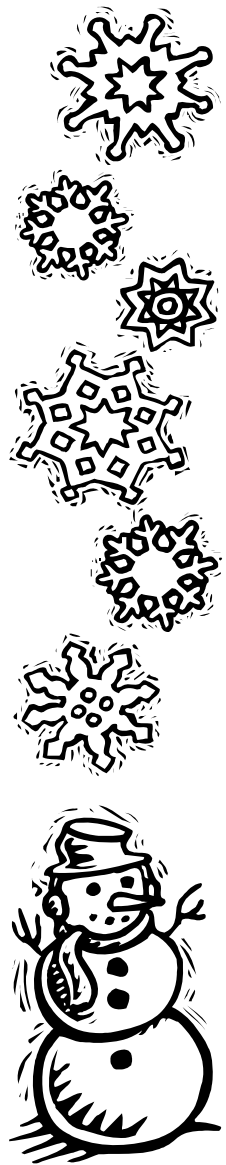


ATTENDANCE

Please remember when your child is ill or absent, a parent/guardian must call Tech attendance office at 252-2231 extension 3007 each day of absence, or students may bring a signed note to the SAO excusing their absences **the day they return to school**. Your prompt attention to reporting absences is a great help to us as we seek to maintain and report accurate attendance.

MCAII/BST Prep After School Program

Due to the low numbers of students attending the MCAII/BST Prep After School Program, there will be no classes in December. To help students prepare for the Minnesota State tests, we hope to be able to offer the after school program again in January. Please contact Cindy at 252-2231 ext. 3003 if you are interested in having your child attend.



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL NOVEMBER STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

**RICHARD ROBINSON
TABITHA SCHREINER
ASHLEY SCHINDELE
ERIK GABLENZ
MARCIA RATLIFF
MAURICE MARTIN
ABDINASIR HASSAN**

Tech's next site council
meeting is January 26 at 6:00

Reading Is Fundamental Movie Fundraiser

Saturday, December 6th, at Parkwood 18,
Waite Park

Polar Express 9:30 a.m. & 11:30 a.m.

Alvin & the Chipmunks 9:30 a.m. & 11:30
a.m.

\$2.50 per person for one movie, or both
movies for \$4.00

All admissions proceeds go to RIF for the
purchase of books.

AP Scholar Awards

Seventy-four students at Technical High School have earned AP Scholar Awards in recognition of their exceptional achievement on AP Exams.

The College Board's Advanced Placement Program provides motivated and academically prepared students with the opportunity to take rigorous college-level courses while still in high school, and to earn college credit, advanced placement, or both for successful performances on the AP Exams. About 18 percent of the 1.6 million students worldwide who took AP Exams performed at a sufficiently high level to also earn an AP Scholar Award.

The College Board recognizes several levels of achievement based on students' performance on AP Exams.

At Technical High School:

Thirteen students qualified for the National AP Scholar Award by earning an average grade of 4 or higher on a 5-point scale on all AP Exams taken, **and** grades of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams. These students are: Nicholas Donnay, Megan Duininck, Ann Goddard, Elizabeth Gorecki, Kristin Heysse, Ellen Melrose, Zameer Merchant, Ross Mullen, Nivedita Sarnath, Kevin Schneider, Allison Schuh, Sean Skow, Nathan Wicker.

Twenty-seven students qualified for the AP Scholar with Distinction Award by earning an average grade of at least 3.5 on all AP Exams taken, **and** grades of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams. These students are: Rachel Amundson, Laura Bender, Brittany Bokovoy, Nicholas Donnay, Megan Duininck, Abraham Fark, Erin Foley, Ann Goddard, Elizabeth Gorecki, Elizabeth Harrison, Kaitlyn Heisick, Kristin Heysse, Ricardo Martinez-Schuldt, Morgan Meek, Ellen Melrose, Zameer Merchant, Ross Mullen, Dominick Ormsby, Nivedita Sarnath, Kevin Schneider, Allison Schuh, Sean Skow, Ariel Smelter, Carlin Stiles, Zachary Thompson, Michelle Wagner, Nathan Wicker.

Three students qualified for the AP Scholar with Honor Award by earning an average grade of at least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken, **and** grades of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams. These students are: Vanessa Arroyo, Amber Braun, Gannon McGrath.

Thirty-one students qualified for the AP Scholar Award by completing three or more AP Exams with grades of 3 or higher. The AP Scholars are: Andrew Ahrendt, Stefan Bartell, Natalie Boehm, Courtney Bokovoy, Kyle Christiansen, Flannery Cunningham, Carlene Dooley, Gabriel Grimmer, Michael Harlander-Locke, Melissa Henderson, Jonathan Holubetz, Emily Hommerding, William Imholte, Kaashyapee Jha, Vatsalaa Jha, Mark Kaczor, Eli Kelley, Alaina Klocke, Stephen Kuebelbeck, James Kustritz, Benjamin Minke, Joseph Molde, Thomas Moore, Chelsea Nissen, Kathryn Paulson, Kari Pfannenstein, Rebecca Preusser, Kimberly Rogowski, Casey Swanhorst, Megan Thibodeau-Schuldt, Amy Wolter

Congratulations to all our outstanding Tech Tiger Scholars!

Attention all sophomores and juniors! Big Brothers Big Sisters is looking for volunteers to be matched with a child awaiting a mentor. You can be an important part of a child's life while having fun at the same time.

As a volunteer in the School-Based Program, you meet with a child for one or two hours each week at his or her school and spend time playing games, shooting hoops, working on craft projects or working on homework. You would be meeting the child over during the day or in the afternoon during Kidstop.

The program is as simple as spending a couple hours a week with a child. However, the results of this simple relationship are essential. Children who enjoy a special friendship with a "Big Brother or Big Sister" have shown greatly increased self-confidence and greatly improved attitude toward school and learning.

The purpose of the Big Brothers Big Sisters is to place a special person in life of every child who could benefit from the support of a mentor who will act as a friend, confidant, and role model while addressing the specific needs of each individual child.

Please consider what you could do for a child and what this new friend could do for you. If you are interested in something Big, please contact Mike Kieke at Big Brothers Big Sisters by calling (320) 258-4536 or emailing mkieke@bbbscentralmn.org.

TECH ACTIVITIES UPDATE

The winter season is in full swing here at Tech. We had an outstanding winter season last year and we are looking to have another great season. This year some of the activities have already started competitions. The girls' hockey team is 1-2-1. They are a very young team that will improve as the season goes on. The dance team has their first competition on Thursday, December 4th. It is an important Central Lakes Conference meet. They will be an exciting team to watch this year and have hopes to return to the state tournament. The boys' hockey team is 0-1, but lost to state-ranked Benilde-St. Margaret's. The boys' team will look to be very competitive this year.

Even though we have had no snow, the people out at Riverside Park are making it and on December 4th, the Nordic ski team will open their season. The girls' basketball team is 1-0 this year. They are a young team and look to improve with each game. The math team has had two meets this year and is 2-0. On November 3rd, the team had its highest score ever at 113 points. They are also looking for a return trip to the state tournament. The gymnastics team starts their season on December 4th against Fergus Falls. They will be strong again this year and have two-time defending vault champion Alise Post back.

Other sports and activities that have not begun competitions yet are: boys' basketball, alpine skiing, wrestling, knowledge bowl, boys' swimming, adaptive floor hockey, speech and future problem solving.

The winter music concerts will be starting up soon. The band will have its concert on December 8th at 7:30 p.m., orchestra on December 15th at 7:30 p.m. and choir will finish with a December 22nd concert at 7:30 p.m.

Other events:

If you want to see a fun and competitive gymnastics invitational, come to Tech on Saturday, December 13th at 12 p.m. and see some of the best gymnasts in the state compete.

On Saturday, January 3rd, the boys' basketball team will be playing at the Target Center against a team from Wisconsin. The game will be at approximately 8 p.m. Not many teams are invited to play in this Timberwolves classic, so come and watch! If you cannot make it, they will be on TV on FSNorth.

If you want to keep up-to-date on Tech activities there is a great website you can visit. It is at www.centrallakesconference.org. This website will give you schedules, maps, results and standings. Please use this website, it is a wonderful resource.

The More They Learn, the More They Earn

With competition rising in today's global economy, a college degree is becoming more of a necessity than it ever has been. Attending college and earning a degree opens doors to a plethora of opportunities and experiences that should not be missed. It's never too early to start thinking about college options. In fact, the journey *must* begin early so families have time to consider all of the options (there are MANY!) and plan how they will pay for the rising costs of college tuition.

As the 9th grade transition counselor for the TAME Grant (Transitions Always Made Easy), one of my objectives is to increase knowledge of and interest in post-secondary education among freshman at Tech High School. Having a purpose or long-term goal in mind (such as a desire to attend college, an aspiration to earn a particular degree, or an interest in a specific career) makes it easier to recognize the significance of all of the knowledge and skills being taught in students' high school courses. If students can connect the value of what they are learning *now* to something they will need or use in the *future*, motivation and achievement can soar to new levels.

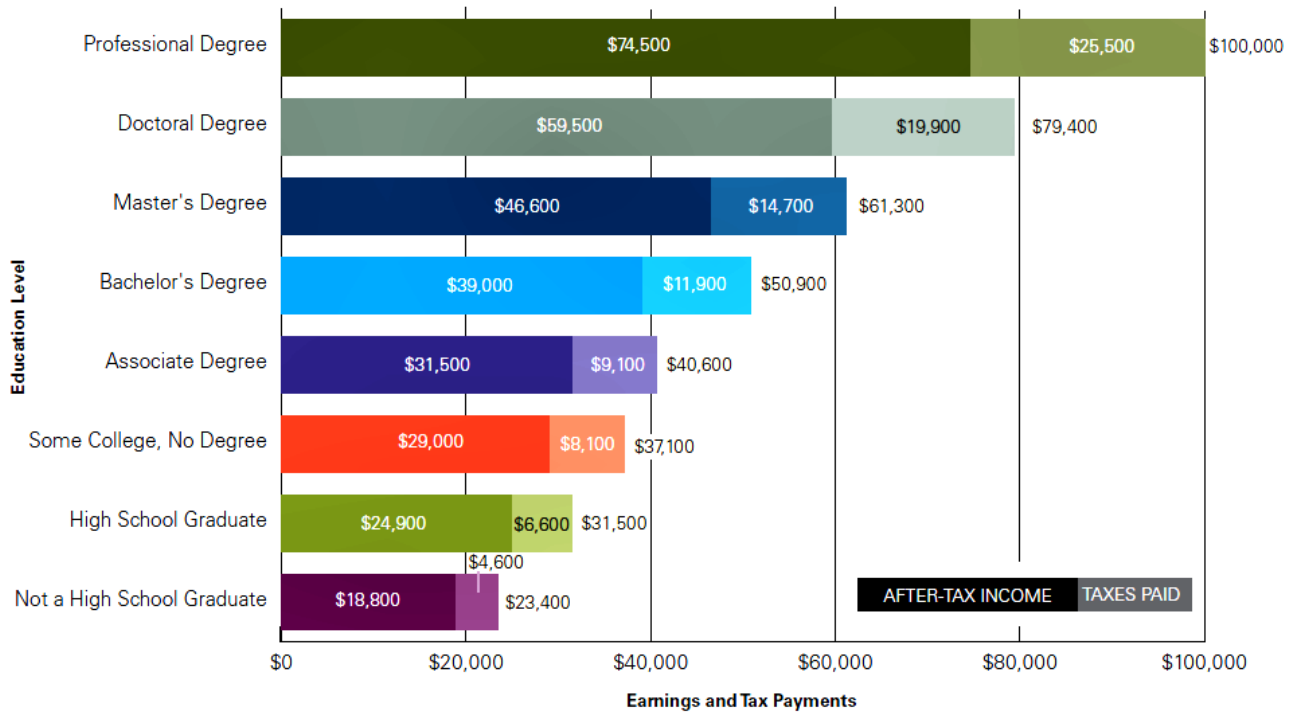
At the beginning of the school year I set out to get a baseline on what our current 9th graders are thinking about their college options and plans. I surveyed 9th graders in homeroom with a total response of 339 students. Of the 9th graders surveyed:

- 82% indicated interest in attending a 4-year college or university
- 9% indicated interest in attending a 2 year community, vocational, or technical college
- 4% indicated interest in working full time
- 3% indicated interest in joining the military
- and 2% indicated other

This means that 91% of Tech 9th graders would like to attend some type of post-secondary educational institution. I was also interested in why these students think a college education is important. Among those students who are interested in attending college:

- 68% want to attend college because they will need a college degree for the career they are interested in
- 61% want to attend college to increase their future earning potential
- 39% want to attend college because their parents would like them to
- 25% want to attend college to spend more time exploring career options
- and 17% want to attend college because they enjoy learning

Figure 1.1: Median Earnings and Tax Payments of Full-Time Year-Round Workers Ages 25 and Older, by Education Level, 2005



It appears that many of our 9th graders already know some of the benefits of a college education! According to a College Board Study, *Education Pays*, “people with a bachelor’s degree earn over 60 percent more than those with only a high school diploma. Over a lifetime, the gap in earning potential between a high school diploma and a bachelor’s degree is more than \$800,000”. Students and parents should check out the College Board study, *Education Pays 2007*, for more information on how college benefits individuals and society as a whole (www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/about/news_info/trends/ed_pays_2007.pdf).

Of course there are many *potential* barriers to getting a college education, even when students know the benefits of going to college. Among 9th graders surveyed:

- 33% are concerned about finances / not having enough money to pay for college
- 24% are concerned that their grades might not be good enough to get into college
- 14% are concerned that college might be too hard for them
- 12% said their lack of knowledge about college options might discourage them from going to college
- and 3% said they lack the family support they need to attend college

High School is the time when all of these potential barriers should be addressed so that students have a plan making their college dreams a reality. We no longer live in times where only certain students are considered “college material”. Everybody has potential and strengths and all of us can continue to learn and grow. With all of the different options available these days, every student can find something that works for him or her. Whatever the path, we know in the long run that the more students learn, the more they will earn. And they will also reap many other personal lifelong benefits by experiencing the many new opportunities that college offers.

If you or your son/daughter wants to go to college, but don’t know where to start - talking to your school counselor is a great place to get the ball rolling. This year 9th graders will also have a chance to attend the 9th grade Career Fair in April, which will address career planning as well as post-secondary options. Stay tuned to hear more about Scholarship & Financial Aid nights for families that will be coming up in the spring!

Rebecca Pfeifer
9th grade transition counselor

**Staff, Faculty and Administration
wishes all of our Tech Families a
safe and happy holiday season!**