



## SchoolCenter & GradeSpeed Tips and Tricks

### Hiding Inactive Students in GradeSpeed

Do you have inactive students on your GradeSpeed student roster? If you would like to "hide" those students so they are no longer visible, follow these steps:

- 1) Login to GradeSpeed.
- 2) Click on your name on the left hand side of the page. The "Teacher Preferences" window will open.
- 3) At the top of the page, you will see a box called "View." Click on the small blue arrow at the end of the box to view the drop-down choices. Choose "Display Student Fields."
- 4) Put a checkmark in the box in front of "Hide Inactive Students."
- 5) Click "Apply."
- 6) Click "OK."

When you view your student rosters, the inactive students will no longer be displayed.

Special thanks to Eldon Ewing from Hillcrest Middle for this tip.



### Grouping Courses in GradeSpeed

Here's a timesaver if you have two or more courses that will be receiving the same assignments. You can group these courses together so that when you add assignments to one of them, the assignments will automatically be added to all of the grouped classes.

For our example, let's assume you have three 8<sup>th</sup> grade math classes. Those classes are your periods 1, 3, and 5. Follow these steps to group the three Math 8 courses:

- 1) Login to GradeSpeed.
- 2) In the "Class" dropdown box under the dark blue GradeSpeed toolbar, choose one of the 3 periods you want to group. Click "Update."
- 3) On the blue section at the left of the screen, click on the name of the course. For our example, the class name is "Math 8."
- 4) A window will open and you will be able to see all of your classes on the left. You will also see a light blue section where you will be able to edit your group numbers. All of the classes that will have the same assignments should receive the same group number. In this example, we will assign our three Math 8 classes to group number "1."
- 5) Click on the "Edit" button in the blue section.
- 6) Change the group number to "1."
- 7) Click "OK."
- 8) Click on one of the other Math 8 courses listed in the class list at the left of the screen and click "Edit."
- 9) Change the group number of this class to "1." Click "OK."
- 10) Continue this process until all of your Math 8 classes have been named "Group 1."
- 11) Click "Finish."

You have successfully grouped your courses. Now, when you add a new assignment in any of the classes in that group, the assignment will automatically be added to the other courses, as well.

## Creating Learning Centers For SchoolCenter Webpages

A learning center is a great way to help students master content material. Learning centers can be created to meet a variety of student needs and allow for easy differentiation. Then the center can be placed on your webpage for 24/7 student access.

While there are many resources to help create learning centers, one favorite is TrackStar. TrackStar is a free program available at <http://trackstar.4teachers.org>. The learning centers are called "tracks" and consist of a collection of website activities that support the learning concept. Using this program, you may use tracks that have previously been developed by other teachers or create tracks of your own. Most of the tracks are self-directed and provide instant feedback and corrective steps to students.

The TrackStar website requires registration. It has lots of information to help you get started and on the road to developing your own online learning centers. They provide tutorials and helpful tips which take you step-by-step through the process of creating your own track. The system is very easy and comfortable even for those just beginning to integrate technology.



Once you choose or create a track, you will be provided a track number. Then you can place a link on your SchoolCenter website to the TrackStar website. The students then click on the link and enter the track number assigned to them under the "Find a Track" section and they are on their way to improving their academic skills.

Individual students in one classroom can work on tracks designed for their individual needs. Because they are self-directed, they may all be working on a different skill while the teacher facilitates the process. Or, if desired, the teacher can display one track on a projection device while the whole class follows along.

## Podcasting Resources

Have you considered adding your own educational podcasts to your webpage? Podcasts are a great way to learn tips and tricks for improving education for students. Here are a few great sites that offer information and podcasts on educational topics.

**Instructional Technology Podcast Central** – Jamey Osborne provides excellent tips and tricks in his podcasts, "Bits, Bytes, Tips, and Tricks." He covers a variety of topics and invites listeners to contact him to suggest topics for future podcasts.  
(<http://ysleta.tx.schoolwebpages.com/education/components/docmgr/default.php?sectiondetailid=53513&catfilter=932&timestamp=1161832301#showDoc>)

**Apple Podcasting In Education** – This site provides a great overview of podcasting. Also included are sample podcasts.  
(<http://www.apple.com/education/solutions/podcasting/>)

**Gary Stager's Podcasting Resources for Educators and Students** – The resources at this site will benefit everyone interested in educational podcasting, whether they are beginning or advanced podcasters.  
(<http://www.stager.org/podcasting.html>)

## Important Dates

**November 11, 2006** – [TNT Conference](#) – EHS – 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.



## Share your tips and tricks

If you have website tips and tricks that you would like to share, please email Carol Mortensen at [cmortensen@yisd.net](mailto:cmortensen@yisd.net).