

**From:** "District Information Technology Coordinator" <ditc@sd79.bc.ca>  
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4 Attachments, 2.5 MB

Hello on this wet Saturday afternoon! I hope this week's update finds you warm and well, and ready for a bit of a read. I'm including a few additions to this issue, which includes my entire blog post. The photos are not included in the blog post, which is pasted in it's entirety below, or can be found here: [CLICK](#)

This issue highlights some of the simple ways you can manipulate Webmail to make more interesting and visually appealing (I hope) messages.

First though, I wanted to share this article and cartoon with you that popped up on Commander Hadfield's feed:

**Halloween costume contest! Show us your best astronaut, we'll send signed books as prizes!**

email them to us at [info@chrishadfield.ca](mailto:info@chrishadfield.ca).



And now the whole story!

This entry is a little longer, as I haven't made one for a few days, and I also decided that I would dual-purpose this entry as my weekly update, so you may be reading this in an email, or on the blog site. Thank you for reading, no matter how you got here :)

This week was another that was full-on, despite the bonus of Pro-D day on Friday. I have always had great affection for Professional Development days, and it is one of the best parts of my new position that I get to work with teachers, doing a little mini-pro-d every day. In the "Be careful what you wish for" category, I then got to do a full-day workshop on Friday. Fortunately, I had a lot of help (more on that in a minute).

One of my main objectives this year is to empower teachers to share their expertise. There are precious few opportunities to do that, and sometimes it seems easier to just do it myself than coordinate with others. Ah... coordinate... that is actually in my job title... and so, Coordinate I Will.

My week consisted of: answering emails (keep those coming in. I will always reply as quickly as I can), answering text messages (my favourite one was a request to come out to a school and set up the speaker system for the Dalai Lama. No way I was going to say no to that request! :)), the occasional phone call, and more school visits. I can't say which was my favourite. I love the immediacy of troubleshooting at a distance, but when I go into a school, I am reminded of all the layers of my job- I introduced a group of grade 9's to "Book Creator" on the iPad,



Thanks for inviting me into your class, Alana!

I helped a kindergarten teacher set up her SMARTBoard, I did some pro-d planning with a colleague at Adult Ed, I helped two grade 6/7 teachers with some new equipment, I picked up a set of iPads to update for a learning assistance program, a visit to help another coordinator in the board office fix her email settings, and then I spent all day Friday doing a workshop with teachers from all those areas, plus French Immersion, plus Administration, plus TOCs... Holy Mixed Bag, Batman!



I saw these sweet little friends in the Board Office-- it turns out that they are handmade, exclusively for our district, to give to kids in need of them.

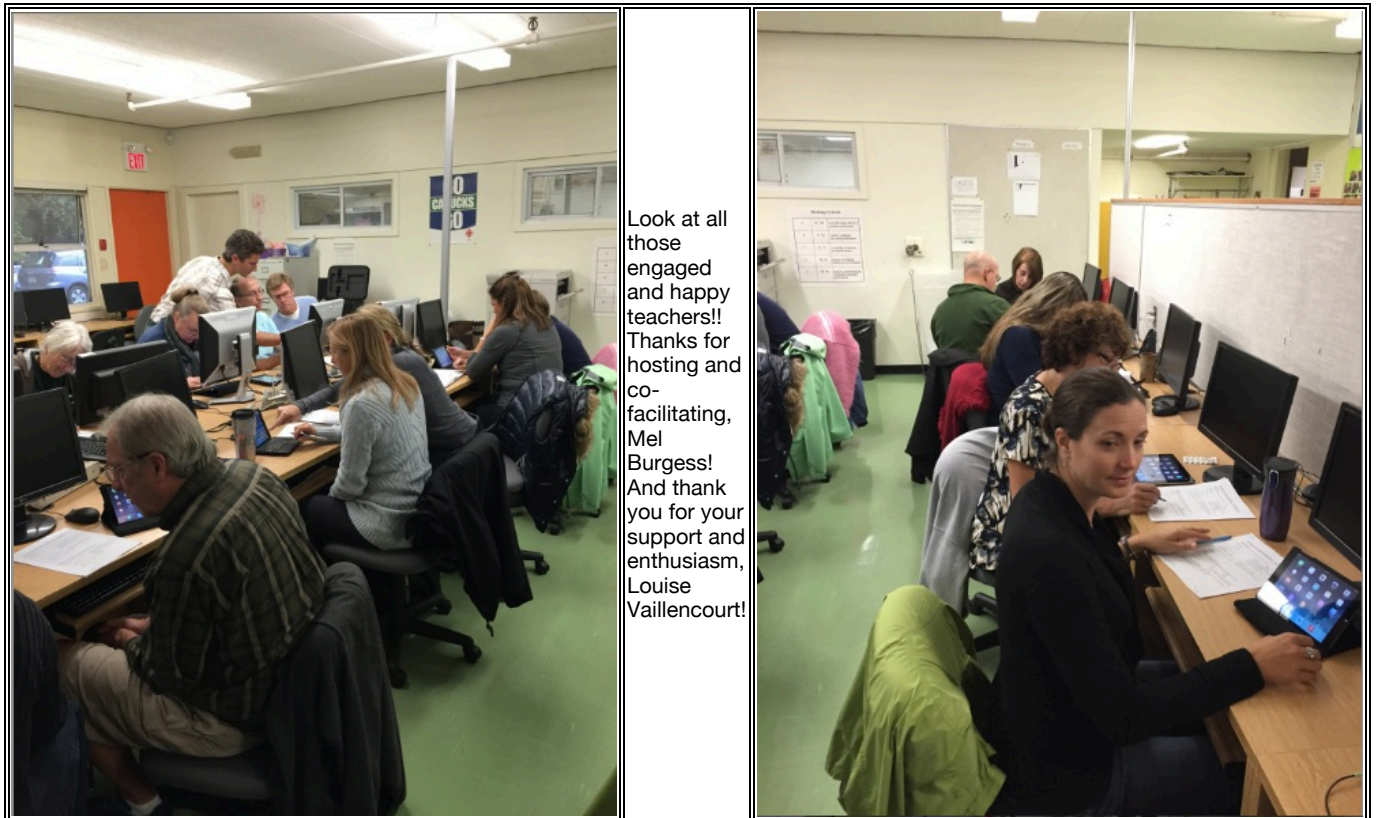
The day was planned, but of course the schedule quickly found its way to the shredder as I dealt with my first 2 set backs. And this is the crux of today's post: Finding the Work-Arounds. Part of my "Show us what you know" strategy is also to give teachers the opportunity to visit other buildings and classrooms. The downfall of that strategy is that I, too, find myself in unfamiliar settings. However, I fearlessly strutted into M's classroom with all my gear, and set about connecting my iPad to his display (in this case, an LCD projector and SMARTboard). Whipping out my dongle (no way to not make that sound rude) I encountered Issue #1. Wrong Dongle. Or Wrangle, if you care to abbreviate. Hmmmm... how to wrangle the wrangle.... well, my first work-around was to open my MacBook and use AirServer as a method to mirror my device to the projector. Well, I forgot that I don't have the license for that yet....I was supposed to organise that last week. OK... next, phone G: "Hey, can you bring me a VGA to Thunderbolt dongle?". The really, really stupid part of this is that normally when I do presentations, I bring my own iPad, and in it's case is the exact attachment I needed right then. Both sitting at home. This would present another problem for me in just a few minutes... but back to the set-up. G. is going to bring me a dongle or an Apple TV as soon as he can. By now the participants are starting to file in, and one of them overhears my conversation and pulls.... an AppleTV out of her bag! I mean really, who does that!? And in minutes we were connected. The irony was that later on this same teacher who came to my rescue would ask me to demo the set up for her again, as she had never done it before.

The participants settle and I decide to open with a quick, funny video. The video was queued up, the iPad plugged into the speakers and..... no sound..... "M? What's up with your speakers?" "I don't know....they worked yesterday.....". A couple of more attempts. No Sound. Scrap that. Carry on (here is the video, in case you need a chuckle right now: [Strongbad](#)) Now... why do I mention all of this? Because one of the really common remarks I hear from teachers is that they want to use technology, and they TRY, but "every time" they do, something goes wrong. Well. I can certainly agree that often, something does go awry. I think it's because there are so many layers, so many possible elements. But here is the thing. A PE teacher might plan to teach a soccer lesson, only to go out into the field and see it is flooded. A Drama teacher might be planning to do a lesson on blocking, only to discover the stage is booked for something else that class. What do we do as teachers? We find a work-around. Yet somehow when technology is involved, the frustration and maybe even fear levels make that untenable for so many. And so, despite my successful work-arounds, I still had a few stumbles along the way. And (here is why I am the Uncoordinated Coordinator) I admit my mistakes and share my lessons.

Remember I said I didn't have my personal iPad with me that day? About an hour after my audio-fail, I was going over the terrific checklist M had created for the workshop. And I got to the part on the slide-switch. You know the one... the one that either locks auto-rotation, or (depending on how you have selected it in Preferences) MUTES THE DEVICE. "Oh...." I blurt, un-coordinately, "I think I know why I

couldn't get any sound on that video".

It just makes up for all the times I do the exact thing you want to happen on your computer that you have been trying to do a dozen times unsuccessfully. "How come it works when YOU do it?". Kick me if I ever smile smugly. And remind me to check the mute switch.



Look at all those engaged and happy teachers!! Thanks for hosting and co-facilitating, Mel Burgess! And thank you for your support and enthusiasm, Louise Vaillencourt!

This full version of this day includes pictures and some names, not included in my blog as part of my ongoing concerns around FIPPA.

Thank you for reading!

Virtually yours,

Lisa

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***Lisa Read***

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