

Attendance policies ready students

■ ADAM HOLMES

Staff Reporter

We have all been in this situation: you find yourself sprinting to your next class because you were chatting with a friend too long, in the bathroom, or grabbing something out of your locker. You arrive to class a minute or two after the bell rings, and your teacher marks you tardy.

The whole incident seems forgotten. However, some teachers count attendance as part of their grading system. This means that if you are one of those people that arrives late to class frequently, your grade could be affected. This may seem unfair at first, but if you look at it in a broader perspective, these policies may prepare you for your future.

Some students think that it is okay to arrive late to class, or to simply not show up at all. As long as they do the work, these people think that it is okay to skip classes. Guess what? It's not. It is rude and disrespectful to the teacher—the same person who is attempting to teach curriculum that might aid you in life.

This doesn't mean that every student that is late to class falls into this category. Some students have legitimate excuses for not arriving on time. However, we need to realize that attendance and punctuality are necessary in order to succeed. When someone arrives late to their job, they may only get one warning, which is much less than what high school allows.

If an employee simply does not show up at all, they will most likely get demoted or fired. By counting attendance as part of a grade, a clear message is sent that it is important for life. It's also an easy way to maintain a good grade in a class.

For the students who skip out on class periods on purpose, most of them seem to think that they will not fall behind their studies as long as they find out what work they need to get done. However, attendance is a part of participation in many classes.

By arriving on time to class, a student is more likely to succeed in class, as shown in a recent study conducted by the San Diego Unified School District. It determined that 57.9% of the student population had perfect attendance in the language arts classes. The study showed that the students who had perfect attendance were three and a half times more likely to be proficient in language arts.

Now, the students who skip class often say that, "As long as I get the work

from class, I'll do fine."

I'm not arguing with this. Yes, completing work is an important part of succeeding academically, but it will not be enough to get you by. There is something about the classroom environment that helps a student concentrate and focus more. By not coming to class, you are missing out on excellent opportunities to learn specific things only found through classroom instruction. By missing class, you will miss work that can only be completed in class, and I can guarantee that is already a

factor in your grade.

By taking initiative and coming to class and being there on time, you will find that it will help your grades. It is an excellent time to ask the teacher questions and discuss things that you wouldn't understand otherwise. By taking attendance and punctuality seriously, you will find that in the long run, you are preparing yourself for a successful future. If you try to skip out on your future, the consequences will be more disastrous than a 15 minute lunch detention.

Hammond leads way in new technical advances

■ CHELSEA GALLAS

Staff Reporter

I think it's safe to say there are many staff members at our school who go unappreciated and Angie Hammond, Technology Dept. Chair, IT Specialist, Webmaster, is one of them. The



Angie Hammond contributions Hammond makes are bountiful, including overseeing an expansive, informative website, supporting environmental conservation, an insightful alumni program, staff and student technology lessons and much more.

Hammond was a staff member here even before Kim Noah, principal, who commented, "All technology ideas and innovations have started with Angie."

The tech guru has initiated teaching teachers how to use the technology that students see and use in the classroom. The no-print days were her idea, as well as i-SAFE and an orientation to teach freshman about available technology. Noah concluded that Hammond is a "doer!" "When she has an idea, she is going to make it happen," Noah said.

That very ability to make things happen was evident in the corporation where Hammond spent her early years as a technical expert. After showing interest and talent for technology in high school, she won a full ride scholarship based on her typing skills to Farris State College in Michigan.

The college was secretarial and after feeling like she didn't fit in with the future secretaries who had "little aspiration." She quit and landed a job at a big corporation in computer programming.

After climbing her way to the top, she decided 60-70 hours of work a week at a

high-powered job wasn't what was making her happy. She became a recess assistant at Cedar Oak Primary, where her children were attending school.

"The relationship with the kids is what keeps my balance," Hammond said referring to students.

Hammond's talent for technology couldn't be hidden, even as a recess duty. After helping a secretary in the office with a little computer problem, she was offered the technical specialist position at WLHS.

Her passion for her job, and for kids as well, is what makes her such an important part of this school. Even the smallest parts of her job seem to excite her. "I love the feel of the keyboard beneath my fingers. It's like a little quirk with me," she said.

The alumni program located on the school web site is something Hammond is most proud of. The alumni page gives accessibility to graduates as far back as 1939. With 2,040 alumni registered into the system, it is easy to look up someone, acquire their contact information and see their senior picture.

Hammond is passionate about students and anyone else, who wants to see and learn about the history at our school. "It's so important to be in contact with our alumni because there's so much history at this school," she said.

It's important to understand the credit Hammond deserves. Taking care of our technically advanced school isn't an easy task, but even you can help her out in little ways. When you have a technical or computer problem, try to figure it out or play with it a little bit before going to her. She is happy to help, but she has a lot on her plate. If you do need her help, you can stop in for a small visit and I'm sure she will be excited to see you, and ready to help.



"I don't want to let them see what I am talking about [on Myspace] or who I'm talking to. They should trust us."

—Brett Wilkerson, freshman

"No, I don't believe so. Kids should not have to tell their parents their password. Kids should be making smart choices."

—Garrett Grimm, junior



STUDENTS SPEAK OUT

Do you think parents have the right to know their child's password?



"It is an invasion of privacy. If the kid wants to give the password to them then that is their decision. However, they should not be required."

—Katherine Longtain, sophomore

"Spying is not an effective way of teaching your children to be safe on the internet."

—Margaret Hayertz, senior



All photos by Malia Chong