

Forum

Facebook: use as social networking site, not teaching forum

ETA SANTORO

Staff Reporter

People often relish their time on the computer, and a majority of that time is spent on the web. The internet has become a tool for blogging or joining chat sites. Certain sites such as Facebook allow users to create profiles and enter personal information such as the name of their hometown and their interests. Pop-up windows share the latest news update or display messages from friends online. Is it convenient, then, to start teaching over the web?

Recently, the Lake Oswego School District decided to allow Facebook access on its high school computers. Facebook is a social networking site that first made its appearance on the web in 2004. Individuals create an account using their e-mail and then can start uploading pictures, filling in information, and connecting with other users. Facebook also has a feature which searches the contacts in your e-mail and finds them on Facebook if they have an account.

Already Lake Oswego and West Linn have permitted Youtube, a video website, for teachers to link to videos relating to the topics in class. LO permitted Facebook primarily to pass on news and post update messages from staff. Teachers can use Facebook to continue lessons outside the classroom and online. It allows users to set up clubs with its own page for others to post and to discuss. Teachers hope that by creating a discussion on Facebook, they can broaden students' understanding and interest in a topic.

On Facebook, teachers can create groups and have their students join. They can post ideas and send mass messages to all members of the group. The group feature also eliminates the ability to view

some students may not be responsible while on the internet. Safety on the web is very important and students that are careless may accept random friend requests from users they don't know

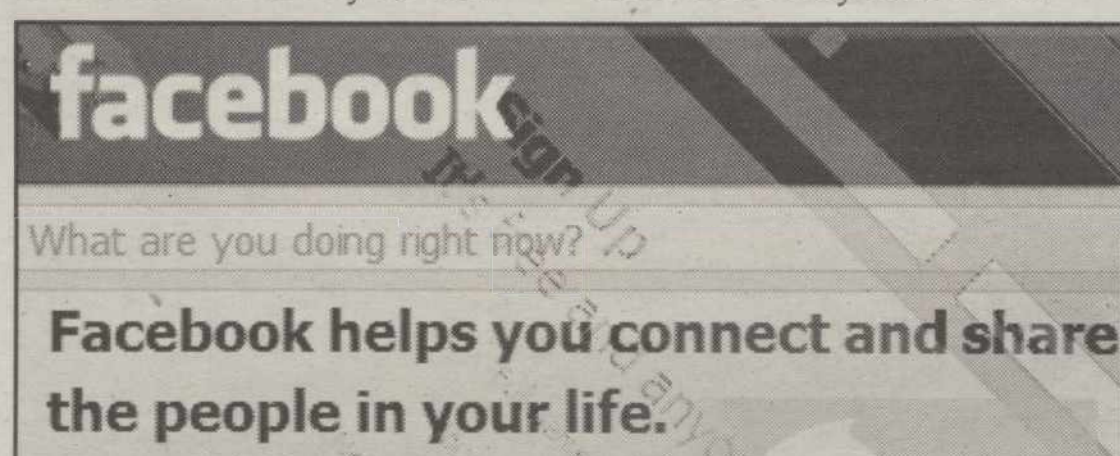
tool, but students often end up using them for entertainment instead, according to Hammond.

Although Facebook is a respected site other similar sites such as MySpace, Twitter, Xanga, and MSN groups aren't accepted in schools. It isn't fair to permit just one site and not permit other sites with the same purpose. It cannot be trusted completely, because there is still the ability for individuals to post something inappropriate, whether it is a photo or a line of text.

If schools want a place for students to chat and learn they need to set up an authorized website or chat section. WLHS is currently experimenting with a software program called Blackboard. It provides areas to discuss and chat, post works, and communication with students and teachers.

The main focus for this program would be to facilitate communication between individuals in the school.

Though it is convenient to use a website already created, such as Facebook, the site was created for its own purpose. It is for everyone to simply communicate and share information, not for teachers to teach students over the web. There is too much entertainment on the site that would divert students from learning. The same goes for Youtube. Students are on Youtube most of the time not watching a documentary their teacher recommended, but watching the hottest music video. Facebook therefore, should not be permitted in schools. It's a great way to connect online, but its amusing features make it an overall distraction.



group members' profiles unless accepted as a friend. This is considered an easier way to teach visual learners and also adds internet safety topics to the curriculum. The amount of time spent on a computer by students can make teaching online more effective according to educators. "Anything in the real world can be used for education," Glenn Krake, English teacher and yearbook adviser, said.

Facebook was chosen in Lake Oswego instead of other social network sites because of its privacy strictness. Users profiles cannot be viewed unless they have accepted the person viewing their page as a friend. This earned Facebook much respect and trust from both parents and students.

Though it is true that students are online much of the time and can be reached through websites, such as Facebook and Twitter, these are social networking sites, not educational ones. Encouraging students to use these sites gives them the freedom to check their messages instead of following the links to their teacher's page.

Angie Hammond, Network Administrator, worries that

personally. The school then has the responsibility to monitor students while online. Although there are students that may know how to use Facebook properly and only for communication, there are others that will use it unwisely. The school provides computers as an instructional

Rooter bus absence causes frustration

JENNIFER SITTON

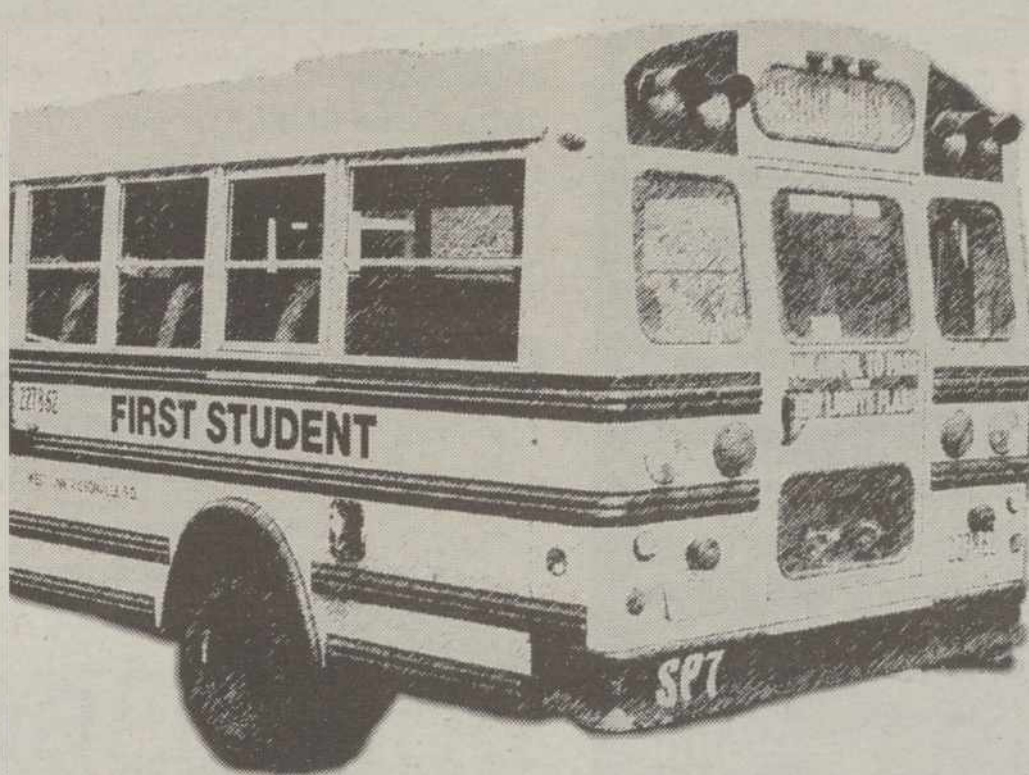
Staff Reporter

Have you ever noticed how there is so much hype and excitement surrounding football and boys' basketball games? Have you ever compared that to the amount

of hype for girls' basketball? A few weeks ago, both the boys' and girls' basketball teams participated in their respective playoff games. The home games, as far as I could tell, were fairly similar in atmosphere

except the boys had many more student fans. However, the true difference was in the atmosphere at the away games.

The girls team beat Grant at home and won the opportunity to travel to South Eugene to take on the number one ranked Axemen. The boys beat Sunset at home in an extremely exciting game and traveled down to South Medford. Both games were second round playoff games. Both games involved highly ranked opponents. What I want to know is why was there a rooter bus offered for the boys' game, but not the girls' game?



Rooter bus

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Amplifier

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The *Amplifier* is published approximately every four weeks by the West Linn High School Advanced Journalism class. Opinions expressed in commentaries and editorials represent only those of the writer, and are not necessarily the opinions of West Linn High School, its administration, faculty, staff, or student body.

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To the editor:

New perspective on Obama's policies

I read in the article "Obama's first hundred days: following through on promises" a passage that was especially misinformed. I say "especially" because there were plenty of other examples, but I'll only address one with my limited word count. The passage was as follows: "Already Obama is making important changes that will affect nearly everyone with his stimulus plan, proving he will follow through with his policies to better the country." While I will agree that the stimulus plan will affect everyone, it is not a policy that is bettering this country. So far, every time Obama has done as little as given a speech about the stimulus plan, the DOW dropped triple-digit figures. In

this year alone, the DOW has dropped 25%. I don't know if anyone noticed, but we aren't even of the way through the year.

Also, where is Obama getting the money from for this stimulus package? He is borrowing some of it from other countries, thus increasing our debt, which is quite contrary to his plan of decreasing our debt. The rest of the money that he can't get from other countries, he is taking from US, the future taxpayers in this generation. The vast majority of this generation is not old enough to vote, making what Obama is doing taxation without representation. For those who aren't history buffs, that is one of the main reasons the

Colonies decided to split from the British Empire. Move over, King George III. Say hello to King Barack.

Hans Farnbach
senior

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