

Local News

New programs, technology kick GCT into high-tech gear

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PARAGOULD - Greene County Tech High School Principal Gene Weeks has high hopes for some new programs and technology the school is implementing this year. The additions are intended to help students more individually and to help them be better prepared for college.

The Teacher Ease online grade book can keep up with each individual test grade, and once parents provide an e-mail address, they can keep up with every grade their child makes. This program was tested last year at the junior high school, and worked wonderfully, Weeks said. This year, the program will be used on grades eight through 12.

"We've added some new technology to some of our classrooms," Weeks said. "We have added smart boards in some rooms. They are touch screen, projected onto the wall, and have Internet access. We also have added top-of-the-line calculators to all math classrooms. Each calculator has a value over \$100, and they are accessible to all students.

"The first distance learning course started this fall and is a free course that gives college credit. This program is possible because of grants. The instructor is viewed by the students via a camera. The instructor is also able to see his class the same way. This allows us to offer a more diverse range of classes," Weeks said.

Other additions to the school include a computer lab and remediation class for math. Another lab was added with the addition of the distance learning class, and, a new science lab was added. Weeks said computers had been ordered and should arrive soon.

The high school is also starting a new positive action program for students who are living in homes where there are drugs. This program is enrolling students now, and is strictly on a volunteer basis. "It is more like a support group for these kids," Weeks said.

Target testing for algebra and geometry will simply allow teachers to see if any changes need to be made to what they teach or how. This testing will be done twice each semester.

The ROTC program will start a new marksmanship program this year. It is focusing on wellness education and the Presidential Fitness test.

The school is also using two new Web sites to help students in any way they need. Kindergarten through 12th grade will use www.tasseltime.com. On this site, parents and students can get help with things like finding scholarships, tutoring, college/career choices and much more. The Web site www.hotmath.com is also available to students. It provides examples of work and tutoring. Passwords for these sites can be obtained through the school.

Weeks also said the school is trying to help with the major traffic problems at the both the main campus and the primary campus. The school is hoping the addition of a right turn lane at the intersection of North Rockingchair Road and Highway 412 will greatly help with this problem.