

Convergence Media: News & Sports Broadcasting / Photo Journalism & On-line Production

Dear Students & Parents,

I wanted to explain a little more about the program this year and students' required participation. Last year was the first year for most students to participate in an active media production program. We faced many obstacles, including the lack of equipment. We opened our morning News Show in the Learning Commons because the studio equipment, especially the lights were not in. We did not get the studio until mid-October and although we wanted to broadcast the first football game, we did not receive equipment until the last one. Semester one was a major learning experience as students struggled at times to learn and produce at the same time. The important aspect was that we kept on and by March had begun to understand and produce. I could not be prouder of what we achieved. This year our goal is going to be very different. We now know HOW and we are moving on to produce high quality media products – video and photographs that can win awards. Our standards will be higher and our deadlines will be tighter. We received the remainder of our equipment this summer, so we have more equipment for student use. We have an assignment board that will help with advanced planning and a checkout system that will keep a check on each piece of equipment. We have a large student editorial staff to help guide the program and give those editors experience in leadership.

I could not be more excited about where we are going this year. The MNS – the *Red Hot Report* is going to be broadcast 4 days a week on the school's blog – *Redhawk Review* and archived on our tv channel – redhawktv.org. This is going to be a challenge, but I know we are ready. I spent the end of the year and summer getting over seventy large photo frames in the halls of Westwood to highlight all the great things that go on at the school and the work done by the student photographers last year. We will continue to add more frames and change photographs as the year progresses. This year, I plan to add the student's name to each photograph, so I am asking them to follow our policy of entering photographs on the Convergence Media server correctly, so they will get credit.

I also wanted to explain a little about grading. Please take time to look over the syllabus for either News & Sports Broadcasting or Photo Journalism and On-line Production, especially related to the grading requirements. Many times a parent will question WHY a student does not have a grade in a particular column. The answer is unlike other classes, not all students do the same assignments or they might do them at different times during the nine weeks. I have developed a notebook for students to chart everything they do during the nine weeks so they can receive credit. Sometimes a teacher might call and a photographer will be asked to take a quick shot of something going on in a class and it is in addition to their weekly shoot. A broadcast student might be asked to go to the same class and shoot 30 sec of clips and we use a 10 sec one on the MNS. It is their responsibility to keep their sheets up-to-date weekly. Also this year, we will be taking advantage of an organization that I belong to called Lynda.com, which had numerous tutorials on software and media techniques. Students will be asked to view these and

write short review of what they have learned (also recorded in the notebook). The material is excellent and the videos are short 3 – 8 minutes. I call this professional development for students.

This year, we will celebrate the outstanding work done by the students in the spring at an Awards Night. I hope you will be able to attend. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at lwashing@richland2.org.

Sincerely,

Lynn Washington
Broadcast and Photo Journalism Teacher

Convergence Media Program Westwood High School

August 21, 2013

Dear Convergence Media parents,

We have received a great deal of state-of-the-art equipment as a result of the opening of Westwood High School. Due to the nature of the Convergence Media program, students must check out equipment on a regular basis to use during the school day and occasionally to leave campus or use after school or at home to take photos, shoot video or complete interviews. In the past, each year we experienced the loss of a small but significant number of items such as batteries and tripod screws. Students have also lost cameras and have had to pay for those. We have a very specific system for the management of our equipment so that we know which student has what equipment at all times. It is very important for the management of this equipment that students sign out each piece of equipment that they take and be sure to check in each piece when they return.

In order to avoid the problems and manage the equipment correctly, you must give permission for your son/daughter to checkout the equipment to use on or off campus. There will be a checkout card for your son / daughter to complete before using equipment; and a check-in procedure to follow when the equipment is returned. Equipment is kept in locked cabinets at all times. The procedure is that the student request what equipment he/she will need and that equipment is listed on the card and signed out by me. I will initial when equipment is returned. In this way, we will know if any equipment is missing or broken. Students need to be very careful with the equipment since if it is lost or damaged as a result of their negligence, they and ultimately you are responsible.

Some of the information we will feature in our publications will require off-campus work. We will try to avoid having students miss classes. Sometimes, however, this is unavoidable. Absences that are related to Convergence Media are treated as a field trip and are excused. Students, however, must check with their

teachers at least two days in advance so they do not miss class work. Failure to do this can result in discipline problems for the student.

This year students will have stickers for their IDs. The administration has agreed that the CM students can use their sticker on the ID instead of a pass when they are doing something related to the program on campus. This allows them to come to the CM rooms during lunch. The administration has cautioned, however, that if a student misuses this privilege will be taken away and a discipline notice will be written. This will, of course, affect their ability to complete their assignments. We want all the CM students to understand that this is a privilege and treat it as such.

To make this process easier, I am asking if you would give your son / daughter year long permission to check out equipment for class use or after school, evening, weekend or off campus assignments. In addition, broadcast students need permission to allow me to sign them out for an off-campus assignment during school time. Enclosed is the form to do both. If you are uncomfortable with the request, I understand. For each assignment, you will then need to give written permission when the student uses equipment or leaves campus. If you have any questions, please feel free to call or email me. (lwashing@richland2.org or WHS 691-4049).

Sincerely,

Lynn Washington
Convergence Media Teacher

**Convergence Media Program
WESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL
2013 - 2014 School Year**

Student's name _____

Parent's name _____

Address (include zip) _____

Telephone (home and/or _____

Date _____

I, _____, give permission to my son / daughter to check out the convergence media equipment during the 2013 - 2014 school year to use on or off campus. I understand that if any equipment is lost or broken due to negligence, I will be responsible. I also understand that all equipment must be returned to Convergence Media Program by 8:30am when it is taken for overnight use.

Parent's signature _____

Student's signature _____

Date _____

I also give the Convergence Media teachers permission during the 2013 - 2014 school year to check out my son / daughter, _____ to complete work for the Convergence Media Broadcast Program. I understand it is the responsibility of my son / daughter to notify me and the teacher(s) of the days he/she is off-campus for a broadcast related activity.

Parent's signature _____

Student's signature _____

Date _____