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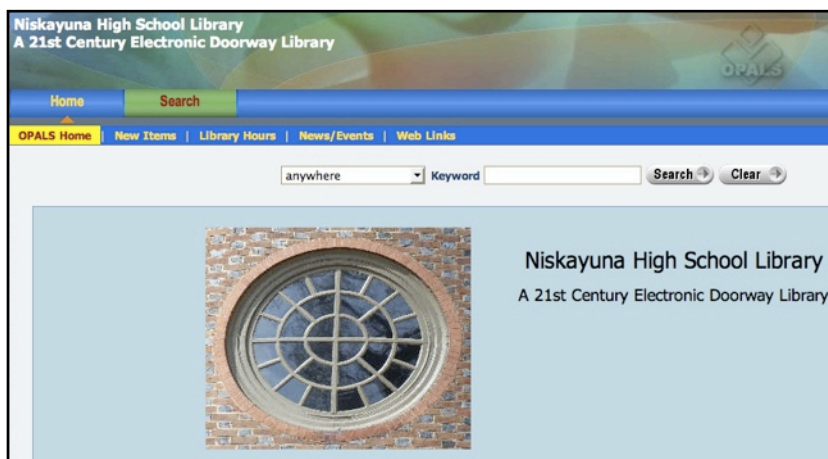


Volume 8 Number 1



**With Help From
Our Friends At
Glenclyff**

24/7 Information Access With OPALS



After a year of research and careful consideration, the Library Media Department chose a new catalog service for patrons to access district materials. OPALS is now available for everyone's use! Being web-based, it is accessible 24/7 and has many of the same features as Internet searching. OPALS Home is the starting point for material searches, and a link to it can be found on the websites of the district's media centers. One can start a search with a keyword, author, title, subject, etc. depending upon what information is known about the materials or what the patron specifically needs. Once the hits from a search are displayed, the useful ones can be selected and a bibliography created along with citations. Hits can be sorted like a database according to publication date, title, call number, or author all to make the list more useful. OPALS can also be used for "federated" searching, which means that it will not only locate library materials, but also websites and eventually online database results as well. Once you have search results, click the "CERF" tab and you will be offered links to related and appropriate websites. This is an especially nice feature for younger students, allowing them to search within a kid-friendly and safe web environment. Again, potentially useful sites can be selected and a bibliography formed, including proper citations. Even more options will become available as the OPALS implementation continues.

New Classrooms and New Technology!

Glenclyff 5th grades are now using their new technology teaching stations. These stations include document cameras, DVD/VHS players, and ceiling-mounted LCD projectors. Teachers report that it's great having all of this powerful technology so readily accessible! The other intermediate-level classrooms will be receiving their new capabilities as capital project work progresses.

Mounted projector
in Glenclyff classroom.





WEBMAX

Once again this year the Niskayuna School District has subscribed to the WEBMAX service which offers video streaming and a variety of other media through the BO-CES School Library System. Many popular educational videos and audio books can be downloaded. Teachers can also borrow literature kits, jackdaws, DVDs, and VHS tapes. These types of materials are delivered directly to the schools. This is a rich, user-friendly resource that can be found at:

<http://media.capregboces.org/webmax/wmlaunch.html>

See your building media specialist for account user name and password information.

Glenclyff Classroom Projects

Third grade students were busy early in the school year word processing some special writing to share with their parents at the building "Open House". Using "home row" keyboarding (of course!) they learned how to format a document to make it look its very best for display.

Fourth graders created a database of New York State animals. They first learned the vocabulary associated with this software, and then created the necessary "fields", researched the information, filled in the records, and finally sorted the data. Students also reviewed the basic steps of the research process to assist with more substantial projects coming up later in the school year.



Fifth graders are working on developing their own websites! Each student has chosen a topic of personal interest and will not only share what they already know, but will participate in research to learn more. Developing their sites will allow them to publish for a global audience. It's a thrill to see their sites posted knowing that family, friends, and visitors from around the world will learn about their special interest.

Fifth grade students are also keeping up-to-date on the upcoming elections and legislation in Congress by checking the following links:

www.congress.org

<http://www.weeklyreader.com/election/>

<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/kids/news/story/0,28277,1848413,00.html>

It is a great way to have students experience the voting process and much more. Students will even be given the chance to experience voting firsthand when the League of Women Voters delivers an actual voting machine for them to try out!

Interesting Web Sites and Tools To Try

BrainPOP (www.brainpop.com/) is primarily a subscription website, but it also has some great free resources. Teachers can search for a variety of videos on curriculum-related topics. Free videos are marked as such and can be viewed directly from the website. One excellent free area deals with the presidential election. Click on the "VOTE Spotlight: Election" link on the home page!



Would you like to create a class survey? Try PollDaddy (www.polldaddy.com)! It's a snap to set up surveys and offers options to control available answers, to display the results in different ways, and has code that is easy to insert into a web page.