

This is the Taconic Hills website home page. The lists of links on the right and the left open up a wealth of information about the district.

# USER FRIENDLY: TACONIC HILLS WEBSITE IS REDESIGNED

It's one thing to have a school campus that is wired with a state of the art technology grid. It's another thing to know what to do it with it—and how to do it well. At Taconic Hills, IBM's 2002 computers and technology performance review made many recommendations, including hiring a full-time instructional technology staffperson and redesigning the district website. After a year-long district study of these recommendations, technology curriculum coordinator Bram Moreinis was hired and hit the ground running. Eight months later, with the help of the entire school community, one of the most critical recommended changes was achieved: a new, totally redesigned and constantly updated website that is fast, appealing, informative and up-to-date.

Found at [taconichills.k12.ny.us](http://taconichills.k12.ny.us), the new website opens the flow of communication between the school and the community. It has information for students and parents,

for families considering a move to the area, for teachers seeking employment and for anyone who wants to study the district's curriculum, budget, administration or standardized test scores in relation to other districts across the state. The website has updated sports scores, information about school closings, an interactive map of the building and perhaps most importantly, individual teacher web pages that students and parents can click on from home.

"The site is designed with portals: doors designed to help people find what they are most interested in instantly," said Mr. Moreinis. "Teachers can check the district curriculum, parents can find out who the board of education members are and when the next meeting is scheduled, students can search for scholarships and careers, and community members can check the hours of the fitness center and upcoming performing arts center events. You



Teachers are creating their own pages on the site. At left is the home page of high school math teacher Angela Webster. At right, science teacher Stacey Sabini introduces herself and her class.



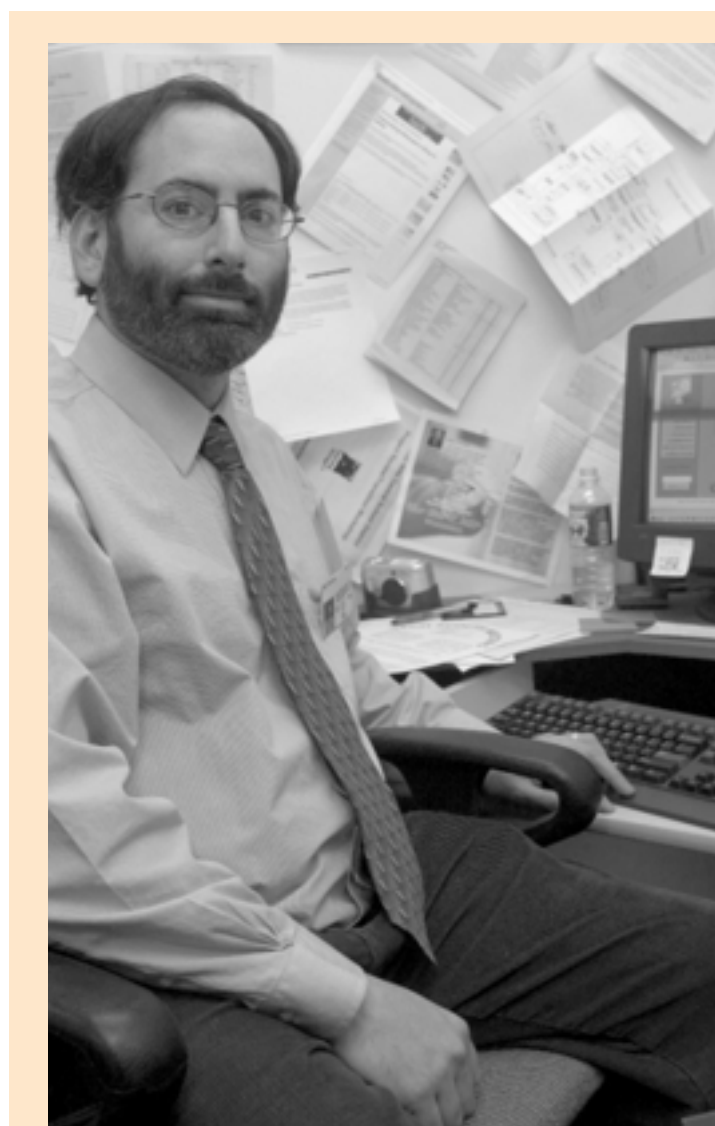
can literally find out almost everything there is to know about Taconic Hills by following the links on the site or by using our search button.”

Mr. Moreinis did not redesign the site on his own. Parents, teachers and administrators formed a task force in August and set a schedule for getting the job done. Mr. Moreinis singled out superintendent David Paciencia, IBM parent Gary Steenburn, board member Bruce Meyers and library media specialist Sharon Davis as providing particularly strong guidance for the site during its development. The website also credits parent Robert Weingaertner for providing a communication program used by the work group, teachers Neal Westendorf and Fred Jaeger as information architects and Nancy Andell and Barbara Jean Briskey as graphic designers.

Mr. Moreinis also relied on the diligent and expert help of “tech scouts,” several students who work with him regularly on computer-related tasks, building websites, reconditioning machines and dealing with other technical support issues as they arise.

“Ben Kudria was a dedicated student webmaster,” said Mr. Moreinis. “We both spent a large part of our winter vacations getting the site ready for our January 5 deadline.” Mr. Moreinis also credits students Bill Garrison and Mike Wolfersteig. “Bill designed the curriculum menu system and Mike created the clickable school tour,” he said.

“My job is to help technology help students learn,” Mr. Moreinis said. “Whether it’s parents using our web site to connect with teachers, teachers finding new ways to teach with computers and the Internet, or students sharing their work online, the challenges and possibilities are enormous. This website is just a start.” ▲



**WEBMASTER** Technology curriculum coordinator Bram Moreinis is in charge of helping Taconic Hills get the most out of its technological infrastructure.