

Students Access to Technology: A Tool to Enhance Learning



Robert S. Mayfield, Ed.D.,
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Kimberly Area School District

One-to-One Pilot

In the 2012-13 school year, the Kimberly Area School District's sixth graders piloted one-to-one access to a Chromebook throughout their entire school day. It was the first ever one-to-one technology accessed by an entire grade in the district. During the pilot, educators and students found that they could perform research much quicker, use images in creative and interactive ways, and type their reports more efficiently than handwriting them. By having access to a device, the students moved from being a consumer of digital knowledge to also being producers of it. Educators began to use the devices to enhance their curriculum and increase efficiencies in classroom management.

The feedback during the pilot was overwhelmingly positive, according to Brittany Janssen. "When we started the pilot year with sixth grade, I think some parents were sitting back and waiting to see what would happen and how it would work," said Janssen. "About halfway through the year, around parent conference time, we had the students do projects to demonstrate how they were using the Chromebooks." The parents were shocked by what their child

was able to accomplish with the technology. "I had multiple parents say things to me about how computers and technology are the future and how they felt it was a better experience for their child to learn to use those tools at 10 and 11 years old."

Based on the pilot's success, the Board of Education approved providing both the fifth and sixth grade students at the intermediate schools one-to-one access to Chromebooks for the 2013-14 school year. As those students progressed to J.R. Gerritts Middle School (JRG), they were able to continue using the Chromebooks while new ones were added for incoming intermediate students. This school year, students from 5th through 8th grade now have one-to-one access to Chromebooks for their entire school day. "I think the biggest difference is that we are able to differentiate

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The Other Side of the World: PHS-ZZHZ

Ms. Ku Xia, Pewaukee High School

This is the third year that our Chinese program in Pewaukee High School works with Zheng Zhou Huimin Zhongxue (Zhengzhou Huimin Middle School) in Zhengzhou, Henan Province in China. This year, the 20 students participated in this project in PHS are from Chinese III, IV and AP Chinese. The students from ZZHZ involved in this project are some of the best students in their tenth grade which is their freshman year in high school (since there are only three years in high school in China). In the first four months of this school year, we have written one round of pen pal letters in Chinese, exchanged some videos and set up QQ chat for our students so that they can communicate with each other. Our sister school relationship has been strengthened through the various activities we have been doing. The students have been really enjoying the interactions with each other. They become friends instead of just language partners.

Pen Pal Letters

This year, each student from PHS is paired up with two or three pen pals from ZZHZ. In late October, we sent them our first letter in Chinese. They responded to us in about two weeks. It took our students a while to read their pen pals' replies in Chinese because most of the letters were handwritten. For a lot of our students, especially the students are new to this project, it was their first time reading a real letter, not mentioning it was handwritten in Chinese. It was a little challenging but also very exciting. In their letters, they shared their interests and hobbies with each other and introduced their own hometowns in Chinese. Some of the Chinese students even asked our students to help them pick an English name. We



wrote back to them in Chinese early December. Now we are waiting for their replies in English.

Video Exchange-Cultural Video

At the end of last school year, we sent a video about how Chinese culture is represented in US to ZZHZ. At the beginning of this school year, we got their response video on how American culture is presented in China. In the video, the students from ZZHZ talked about the music, celebrities, places they know about US. Some of their students also took their camera and went on the streets to tape some American stores in China. Our students were really surprised how much exposure of American culture they have in China compared to the Chinese culture exposure

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From the Teaching Today WI™ Educational Blog

Winter Driving Safety Tips from Meemic

It's been a fairly mild winter for many of us so far, but that next big snowstorm could hit at any time. We may think we're all winter driving pros at this point, but it doesn't hurt to remind ourselves of some basic precautions.

Educator: How to teach trans-disciplinary skills

Students need transdisciplinary skills -- using their expertise to collaborate with professionals in other disciplines to create unique solutions -- to become 21st-century workers, educator Matt Levinson writes in this blog post. He offers steps for teaching these skills, from creating cross-curricular lessons with colleagues to organizing problem-solving projects across subject areas.

Instructional methods to develop mathematical reasoning

Two math teachers profiled in this article are trying new instructional methods to help students develop mathematical reasoning. One educator uses an approach aimed at helping eighth-grade students look for patterns and develop conjecture about functions.

Brainstorm with students on a "web wall"

Any device with a browser can be used to create "web walls," which are effective in getting students to collaborate and brainstorm, suggests Gene Tognetti, of Presentation High School in San Jose, Calif. In this blog post, he describes how he used the Padlet application to create a web wall used in his middle-school social studies classroom.

teachingtodaywi.wordpress.com

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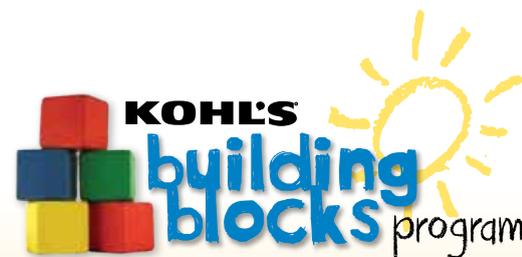
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so much better for the students than when we didn't have as much technology available," noted Janssen. "We're better able to identify and meet the unique needs of each student because they each learn differently."

Expansion to JRG Middle School

Last school year was the first year of implementing one-to-one technology at J.R. Gerritts Middle School for 7th graders.

While the incoming students had been using Chromebooks for two years at the intermediate schools, it was the first year for JRG teachers to be able to fully utilize one-to-one technology in their curriculum. And this school year marks the first year

that both 7th and 8th Grade students have one-to-one access to technology for the entire school day. Chad Verboomen, who teaches 7th grade math and ACE Science, is also a technology coach at JRG. He believes the first year

of having one-to-one access to technology largely increased productivity and efficiencies to the classroom. "What I've seen is that there's a progression when using a new technology," said Verboomen. "At first, it's a productivity piece. Teachers get through content quicker and what the students can accomplish gets faster." He described it as a system of progress that is part of learning how to use a new technology. "The more familiar teachers and students get with the technology, the more

we can move into content creation and using advanced tools in lessons."

One area that Verboomen found a dramatic increase in productivity was assessments of knowledge at the beginning of a class period. Students' understanding of

math concepts can be instantly evaluated using a short quiz created using Google Forms. He uses conditional formatting that instantly color codes correct and incorrect responses to gauge the students' level of understanding. If most

students seem to grasp the math concept, Verboomen knows he can do a quick lesson with the students who need help and then move on to the next component that builds on their knowledge. Conversely, if a large number of students seem to be missing a specific concept, he knows they need to work on that concept during class that day. This type of knowledge assessment in a class of 20 to 30 students used to take the teacher quite a bit of time to evaluate each student's quiz sheet. Now, with the use of Google Forms and the conditional formatting, it is an instantaneous assessment of knowledge.

The Plan for Student Access to Technology

In July of 2014, the Board of Education approved a three-year technology plan for student access. "Our vision in this plan is that the use of technology will become as seamless in learning as the use of paper and pencil," said Mike McDermot, Director of Information Technology for the District. We all experience the impact of technology on a daily basis at work and in our homes. "Technology will continue to grow and saturate all aspects of our lives, it is important that our children learn

to take advantage of these tools in order to develop into self-directed learners that are effective, efficient and more likely to succeed in a career," said McDermot.

The Future

As the District increases students' access and use of technology, staff training is coordinated to integrate the use of these tools throughout their lessons. The staff, like our students, are expected to become fluent in the use of digital tools and to achieve the vision described in the District's technology plan.

The vision is that staff and students will leverage technology in purposeful and meaningful ways to increase efficiency and improve our effectiveness as continuous, self-directed problem solvers. Using technology isn't the sole focus of student learning; technology is a tool that District educators use to enhance student learning.

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we have here.

We also share school events with each other to show our school cultures. This fall, PHS made a video on our homecoming pep rally to show ZZHZ students our high school tradition.

They shared with us some pictures and video clips of their sports meeting this fall. The sports meeting in China is very different from how sports events run in US. In China, every school year, the school hosts an event like this to have students from all classes and grades within the school to come together and compete against each other on various events.

Late November, the two classes we work with in ZZHZ took a trip to Sias International University in Zhengzhou to experience college life. Sias is the the first solely American-owned post-secondary school in Central China. The students from ZZHZ sent us a video about this trip. In the video, they talked about what they did and learned in this trip. The background music was a little bit too loud at times but our students were really interested in watching the video. Besides getting to know what they experience in the university, our students also mentioned that they found most of their students' speech were really natural. They also noticed that some of the students in the video wore clothes with some interesting English words or phrases.

Video Exchange-Q&A video

We also continued with our Q&A video series this year. We just did questions video and

sent it to ZZHZ early December and just got their response video back. In the previous two videos, our students used Chinese when asking or responding to questions for ZZHZ students but mostly used English when they talked to each other. In this most recent one, they started to make small conversations in Chinese between the questions. Our students also became more comfortable and natural in front of the camera.

Students really enjoyed making this video. They themselves felt accomplished when we finished the recording.

QQ Chat

With the help of our wonderful IT department, we installed QQ on students' laptop. QQ is a communication tool Chinese students usually use in China. Each PHS student now has a QQ account. They added their pen pals individually as contacts. At the meantime, they are in two group chats. One group chat includes both students from PHS and ZZHZ, while the other one only has students from PHS. Most of our students have been able to connect with their pen pals individually or in group chat. Usually students initiated the conversations in group chat themselves. We also arranged a scheduled group chat on 7:30 pm Saturday November 21, 2015. That week, the teachers from both school told the students about this time, and students who were available that night went online at the same time on Saturday and talked to each other online. Saturday night in US is Sunday morning in China. Some Chinese

students were posting pictures of their teachers and classrooms between classes. It was to a lot of our students' surprise that a lot of their pen pals were having extra academic lessons on weekends.

The students talked about various topics on QQ. They talked about their daily life and sometimes also discuss the different cultures and school norms they have. Using Chinese is encouraged but not required in their QQ chats. But our students have been very motivated to use Chinese in their conversations. They tried to use what they have learned. In their conversations, there are a lot of mixed-language chats. To support their conversations on QQ with their pen pals, we also started to learn slangs and internet slangs in Chinese in class. On QQ, the students don't feel pressured as if it was in a test but rather to use the language for a real purpose - to communicate. They are not afraid of making mistakes. They help each other out. Our students also see that in interpersonal mode of communication (one of the five standards they are assessed in class), the most important thing is if they are able to communicate their message. This gives them the confidence to speak up and try.

In addition to the text chats, students also post pictures occasionally on QQ. The Chinese students sent pictures of their homework and their school in group chat. During the Thanksgiving break, some of our students posted their Thanksgiving dinner pictures to show the Chinese students what a traditional American Thanksgiving dinner looked like. Some traveled to another state and shared the pictures they took on the

plane of the landscape. The students learn from each other just by sharing what they do and see in daily life. They can see what the culture is like on the other side of the world with their own eyes.

What is it like on the other side?

To our students, China is really a country on the other side of the world. They learn about its culture and language in class but it is still very far away from us. With the letters, videos and QQ chats, the distance seems to be shortened. These activities provide our students an authentic learning environment as they make friends. They learn about what is going on and how students of their same age live on the other side of the world. It snowed in Pewaukee one day, and it snowed in Zhengzhou two days later. LOL is not only a popular video game in US but also in China. *Hobbit*, *Guardians of the Galaxy*, and *Now You See Me*, which are some of the movies American students really like, are also among some of the Chinese students' favorites. Their school schedule is a lot different from ours but they have classes they like and don't like just as us. The interactions really trigger their thinking: despite the distance between us, how different and similar are we?

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Chi-Hi Students Lend High-Tech Helping Hands at Public Library



Technology students set up shop at library to help community, fix Chromebooks for classmates.

By Chris Vetter

Senior citizens and others not comfortable with technology can now receive help completing their tech tasks, thanks to Chippewa Falls High School students.

For part of each Tuesday afternoon, students enrolled in the school's "Student Technology Innovation & Integration," or "STII," class staff a help desk at the Chippewa Falls Public Library, where they offer visitors seeking technical assistance with everything from sending and deleting email messages to installing apps.

One of those students, Jason Codega, a junior, said he enjoys meeting with the the public to show them how to make their gadgets work.

"I like being able to help others," Codega said. "They might have a problem you can't fix, but at least you tried."

The nine students in the class are learning all about technology in a hands-on way. The fact that they are helping people who need it makes the class even more valuable, said Amy Ambelang, the high school library media specialist and one of three staff members who work with the class.

Students staffing the library help desk assist community members seeking their assistance in any way they can, learning more about technology in the process.

"And we help with pictures," Ambelang said. "They say, 'I took them, and where are they?'"

On Tuesday, nobody showed up at the library for students to help, a fact attributable to chilling temperatures that struggled to stay above zero. So students there worked on ways to help people who may need their help in the future.

Library officials advertise the help desk on social media and on signs at the library. The students will continue to meet at the library, 105 W. Central St., from 1:15 to 1:45 p.m. each Tuesday through Feb. 23.

It's not just at the library where the tech-savvy students are lending a helping hand. They fix between five and 20 Chromebooks each school day, often getting them back to students on the same day they are handed in for repairs.

Previously, when Chromebooks used by Chi-Hi students broke down, district officials sent them away for repairs and waited for as long as a month to get them back for student use. The tech students' help is especially useful after the Chippewa Falls school board approved buying Chromebooks for all the high school's 1,400 student last year.

"We've fixed 412 Chromebooks this year," said Jon Beighley, a high school senior who is part of the "STII" class.

Codega said he has replaced the entire bottom portion of a Chromebook.

"(A teacher) told me that if you like working on Chromebooks, you might like this," Codega said. "Every day, we'll get information on how many Chromebooks are broken, and we spend the hour fixing them."

Dakota Schemenauer, a junior, said he enjoys figuring out how to get the machines

working again.

"If you can't figure out a problem, it can be frustrating at times," Schemenauer said.

Ambelang said the district gets its parts at a wholesale price from the company that fixed the machines last year. She said the class teaches important skills to participating students, most of whom she anticipated will go on to work in the technology field.

"This is life skills and customer service. You can't be any more hands-on than this," she said.

School board President Jerry Smith said he is amazed by the work the students perform.

"The turnaround time is a fraction of what it used to be, and that's fantastic," Smith said. "It's an awesome opportunity for them, and it's great for the school."

Smith said the district is certainly saving money by having students repair Chromebooks, although that figure wasn't available Tuesday. But those savings aren't the most important part of the class, he said.

"What's important is the problem-solving skills," Smith said. "They look at it, diagnose the problem, take it apart and fix it."

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3. Biotechnology
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5. Storage Structures

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Overall Focus: Engineering applications within the broad fields of medicine and the life sciences.

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2. Biomechanics
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Overall Focus: Chemical-based manufacturing — applying chemistry for commercial-quantity production of a wide variety of products.

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Overall Focus: "Public works"/infrastructure and buildings/structures.

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Thinkers, Do'ers and Problem Solvers



Freshman engineering class construct and test bridges made of balsa wood.

*Russ A. Hermann,
Technology and Engineering Department;
STEM Academy Instructor; School to
Work/Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator,
Slinger High School*

That is what many Slinger High School students are becoming in the Technology and Engineering department. There

are many reasons for Slinger's success in the area of CTE. Over the last several years Slinger's Technology and Engineering department has transformed into a model department for others to follow. The staff is incredible, our advisory board has helped tremendously and changes in curriculum have all contributed directly to

Slinger's success.

As many schools and departments face turnover, Slinger's TE department is no different. We have always had a dedicated and passionate staff, but some have retired or moved on to a different school. We have been very fortunate in that every new hire has been nothing short of spectacular. Our program is growing to a point that we hired an additional teacher in our department. What makes Slinger TE teachers so good? No lesson is safe forever. Every teacher is looking to improve and infuse STEM concepts into each lesson. This increases the rigor and relevancy in every class.

Over eight years ago we formed an advisory board. The purpose was to find out what local business are looking for in potential employees. It was important to find out what skills are needed, what equipment is being used and what direction the TE program needed to go. It took less than a year and generous donations that allowed us to begin purchasing needed equipment updates or new equipment. New welders were purchased for the machine shop. A laser engraver is used in many classes as another tool to assist students through the design process. CNC

equipment (mills, lathe, router, plasma cutter) have been purchased. 3D printers are now part of the curriculum. All the equipment purchased has helped students prepare for work, technical colleges and four year universities.

One of the biggest STEM moves the district made was purchasing The STEM Academy curriculum five years ago. The STEM Academy is a national pre-engineering program that further prepares students for STEM careers. After years of researching other similar programs, The STEM Academy surfaced and emerged as our top choice. After researching this program it was obvious Slinger students would benefit from it. And they are! Enrollment has increased in our area, creating the need to hire another instructor. The curriculum is designed and developed to serve nearly all students, not just the top ten percent. It has proven to keep the high achieving, high gpa student engaged along with traditional TE students finding success. All students are taking what they are learning in their science and math classes and applying it to hands on, team based projects. Whether it is building a bridge and breaking it, trying to suspend an egg as far out from

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Unlimited Potential

The Three Lakes Fab Lab is empowering students, developing critical thinkers and has the potential to boost the local economy



Shelby Anderson

Steve Yahr, director of the Three Lakes Fab Lab, remembers his first job in high school working at a television repair shop. He spent his time fixing the big, heavy television sets that would sometimes burn out and need to be fixed. Yahr shakes his head when he thinks about how times have changed. He takes his cell phone out of his pocket and says, “Now we can’t live without these.”

Technology has progressed tremendously since Yahr’s first job and it will continue to evolve. Yahr and the rest of the school leaders at the Three Lakes School District know they have to prepare students for careers that don’t even exist yet.

In September 2014, the school district opened a Fab Lab, which the district hopes will help prepare students for the future while also giving them a glimpse of it.

It’s the second Fab Lab to open in a Wisconsin K-12 school. In 2013, Stoughton High School opened a Fab Lab with help from community and business partners.

A Fab Lab is a place where users are welcome to develop and build whatever they want. The sky is the limit. The Three Lakes lab, like most other Fab Labs, has tools such as 3D printers, a mini-mill, router, plasma cutter, and a laser engraver. With these tools, you can make any number of items. In fact, one of the classes offered by most Fab Labs is called “How to Make (Almost) Anything.”

The machines in a Fab Lab are operated via computer numerical commands (CNC). You design your product on a computer using a computer-aided design program. Then you take that design and send the data to one of the tools, like a 3D printer, and it begins making the product according to the exact specifications directed by the computer software.

However, a Fab Lab is more than a collection of machines. It’s a global network

of more than 500 labs. One of the major tenets of a Fab Lab is the sharing of ideas and knowledge. Every lab is outfitted with a web camera that allows people in different labs around the world to connect with each other and share their work or ask for help. A large monitor in the Three Lakes Fab Lab shows simultaneous live feeds from labs in places like Rotterdam, Chicago, Taiwan, and others.

“Here we are in northern Wisconsin and we can connect with anywhere in the world,” said Three Lakes school board member Terry McCloskey. “Our students have access to some of the same opportunities that students have anywhere else.”

A K–12 Fab Lab

The Three Lakes Fab Lab is located in the district’s K-12 school building housing an elementary, middle and high school. It’s an appropriate location given that all grades in the district and a wide assortment of classes use the lab.

Since most of the students are in one building, it makes it easier to get students from kindergarten to grade 12 in the lab. The district also has a small elementary/middle school in a nearby town. Those students are occasionally bused in to experience the Fab Lab.

Yahr said it’s important to get students acquainted with the technology in the Fab Lab early so they become comfortable with it.

One recent project paired third graders with high school students. The teams of students were challenged to see who could build the strongest bridge. A civil engineer visited the classroom and discussed engineering concepts and then the students began designing and building. The bridge models, which were constructed with cardboard, were produced using the Fab Lab’s laser cutter. One cardboard bridge held 45 pounds before it failed.

The project is also a good example of how the Fab Lab encourages cross-curricular collaboration. The bridge project began as an idea by a third-grade teacher who was teaching a unit on geometric shapes. The teacher approached Yahr about the idea of building bridges using the Fab Lab and the idea took off. Other classes, such as art, regularly use the lab as well.

“The teaching staff here has really bought into it,” McCloskey said. “Steve and our administration have done a great job interacting with teachers.”

Teacher training also plays an important role in the Fab Lab. Yahr and two other teachers attended a two-week training camp at Mahtomedi High School in Mahtomedi, Minnesota. In January, Yahr and another teacher will be participating in Fab Academy, a 19-week program where participants plan and execute a new project each week.

Empowered Learning

The Fab Lab concept is built upon five key principles: empowerment, education, problem solving, job creation, and one that is harder to put into words. Yahr describes it as helping students realize that they have the opportunity and the power to imagine what

might be and make it a reality.

“This process not only develops and reinforces critical-thinking skills, but also enables the students to have a hands-on experience while visualizing the process from imagination to product completion,” said Superintendent George Karling.

The Three Lakes Fab Lab opened in September 2014 and already students and community members have utilized it to make unique and innovative products.

The Three Lakes Library challenged high school students in the Fab Lab to design a better magazine display. The library buys plastic magazine holders for \$40 each. Students are in the process of designing a version that is stronger and will cost less. The students have produced a couple of prototypes and are close to a finished product. The local library is interested in purchasing the magazine holders produced by the students and Yahr said other libraries have also expressed interest.

Another challenge came from a local dentist office that asked students to design a better bitewing for x-rays that would be more comfortable for patients. This project is still in the early stages.

Continued on Page 9

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The Three Lakes Fab Lab Continued from Page 8



The Engineering Design Process

The Three Lakes Fab Lab sharpens creativity and problem-solving skills through the engineering design process, which is on prominent display on a large sign posted on the wall of the lab. The process begins with identifying the problem, then researching and brainstorming, and ends with building and testing. If the product doesn't work as designed, you start the process over.

"Our take on it is that the Fab Lab is as much a mindset as anything else," Yahr said.

One of the most important lessons that students learn in the Fab Lab is that it's okay to fail.

"Along the way, they learn that it's okay to make mistakes," said Yahr. "It's part of the learning process."

"We're teaching our students how to think for themselves," Karling said. "We're challenging them to be critical thinkers. We want them to

know it's okay to fail. We want to teach them to pick themselves back up and try again."

Community Sustainability

Looking ahead, Yahr said the next step is developing a curriculum for the Fab Lab for all grade levels that can be shared with other districts. The Three Lakes Fab Lab hopes to serve as a model lab that school districts from across northern Wisconsin and the rest of the state can visit to gain an understanding of the Fab Lab concept.

In the meantime, the district is looking for funding to help support the lab. The start-up cost for a Fab Lab can be a challenge for some districts. Three Lakes secured a grant from the Department of Workforce Development for \$132,000. However, the initial cost of modifying a classroom, buying equipment, and covering training expenses and salaries cost about \$325,000. McCloskey said the district is busy grant writing and looking for additional business partnerships.

School and community leaders have high hopes for the Three Lakes Fab Lab. They believe it can help play a role in educating a highly skilled workforce that, in turn, can boost the local economy and build a strong, sustainable community.

As part of their work in the Fab Lab, Three Lakes students have been meeting with local business leaders and potential employers. Yahr said students are making connections and building relationships. Although no Three Lakes students have yet received job offers as a result of their work in the Fab Lab, Yahr said he can see that it is already making a difference in the students.

"Students are growing confidence in themselves as a result of their making experience."

When planning for and developing the

Fab Lab, the school district met with business leaders in the area. District leaders were surprised to hear many businesses say they could expand their operations if they had more skilled workers. The challenge is finding employees with the right skill set.

Businesses in the Three Lakes area said these skills or traits include: not intimidated by technology, able to identify a problem and build structure around it, work the problem to completion, and work in a collaborative team environment. Karling said these are the same skills that are emphasized and developed in the Fab Lab.

"We believe the Fab Lab concept is critical in the future in K-12 education," Karling said. "It's something that's absolutely important in the economy and the sustainability of small communities."

Shelby Anderson is editor of Wisconsin School News. Reprinted with permission

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Thinkers, Do'ers and Problem Solvers

Continued from Page 6

a wall as possible, calculating projectile motion while working with trebuchets, or building an emergency shelter out of cardboard and calculating the amount of material needed and ventilation required to survive, they follow an engineering design process to solve problems, complete projects and successfully apply academic knowledge through this process.

It is truly amazing to see and be part of the success students are having. They are leaving high school with the skills they need to enter the workforce, be successful in a technical college or complete a degree at a four year university. Many students have returned to share their successes and thank a teacher for the experience they were given in high school, which has helped shape their future. Students at Slinger truly are turning into thinkers, do'ers and problem solvers-- exactly what all employers, two year and

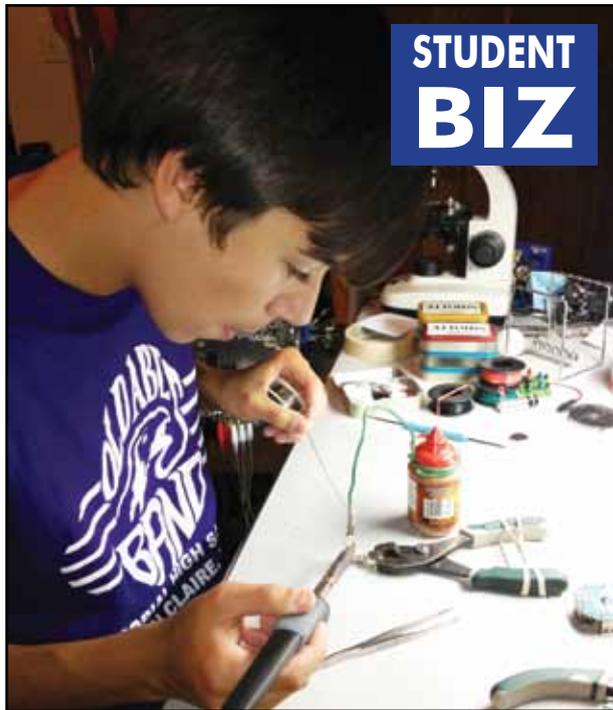


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Eau Claire School District Celebrates Two Student-run Businesses



2-USB charger. This charger was the most complex of all. He had to squeeze 2, 9-volt batteries into the tin along with a switch and 2 USB ports. He quickly became a pro at soldering, and using the drill press.

James loved his business that he had created. It was a good way to spend time, and kept him out of trouble. James has always enjoyed exploring new ideas and technology. He has his amateur radio operator's license, is a student pilot, and enjoys backpacking in the Rocky Mountains and SCUBA diving in the Florida Keys. He also enjoys rebuilding old cars. Someday James wants to be either an electrical or mechanical engineer, and earn his master's in business administration.

Altoids Tin Chargers

Eau Claire
Memorial High School

Ever since James was young he has always loved electronics; whether it was making little electro magnets with his dad or building a flashlight. When he was young he took apart a few computers his dad had laying around, just to see what was in them. He didn't know what any of the parts were called or what they did, but thought that the insides looked like little cities and were kind of cool.

A few years passed and he came back to the computers and finally researched the components. Once he found out what the parts were and what they did, James became even more interested in electronics. He heard about these portable chargers on the Internet and fell in love with the idea.

He soon made up a simple schematic of what the chargers would consist of. After he had used all the parts he could from the computers he tore apart, he went to RadioShack to purchase missing parts. Using a drill press and a few Altoids tins, he soon had many USB portable chargers lying around. All they needed was a 9-volt battery to power the charger. Some of James' friends heard about the chargers and asked if he could build them one.

He thought he could make some of his money back by selling the chargers to them; so he did. He sold about 20 chargers to his friends and classmates. The first couple of chargers had troubles, and their design quickly changed. When James wasn't swimming or doing homework he sat in his room making the Altoids tin chargers. James made a simple 1-USB charger and a dual battery,

www.ecasd.us/memorial-high-school/home
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Up North Syrup

Up North Syrup CEO: Mackenzie Vance
Eau Claire North High School

Every year, Eau Claire North DECA runs a student operated business to compete in the "Learn and Earn" category at the state DECA competition in March. This project includes three Marketing 1 classes and two Marketing 2 classes. For this 2015-2016 school year, North Marketing & DECA founded "The Up North Syrup Company"; our very own line of fruit flavored syrups! We have created Pumpkin Spice, Crisp Apple Cinnamon and Holiday Cranberry flavored fruit syrups. As a company, we had three main goals in mind:

- To create quality fruit syrups packed with tons of flavor!
- To source local, fresh ingredients from the Western Wisconsin area (Apples, Pumpkins & Cranberries).
- To run a professional and ethical student operated business.

This company produced over five hundred bottles of syrup and sold the product both to local businesses, at North high school events, and to interested individuals.

This past autumn we had over one hundred of our Marketing students help source ingredients from local orchards, produce, and package the products at the Elk's Lodge in Eau Claire. Many of our



students also helped merchandise and sell our flavored syrups at North High concerts, basketball and hockey games. In class, we had our Marketing 2 students go out and sell cases of our syrups to local businesses. By doing this we could learn what it really means to be a sales representative. Along with production, selling, and merchandising students learned pricing, promotion, customer relations, contracts, and various other marketing practices. By getting our students

involved in this project, we can really get a taste of what running an actual business entails in the "real world".

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In this issue we are featuring two more entries from our “Dream Careers” contest. These entries are two of six honorable mentions which we will be publishing in this and the next two issues of Teaching Today WI. Contest winners were featured in the December issue of Teaching Today WI™ (Winter 2015–16, Volume 1). You can access previous issues on our website at www.teachingtodaywi.com.

Firefighter



*Kevin W.
River Ridge School District*

I plan to show people the reasons and why I want to become a firefighter. When I was younger, I liked going to Monroe for fire school with my mom and dad because they let me go around, and get pictures on the big red shiny fire trucks. My dad was the one that inspired me to be a firefighter.

I would prepare myself for this career by taking the required classes for this career, and going to the gym to work out to get me more prepared for heavy objects like people, and walls that will possibly fall on me. I have had 8 years of experience. For 5 years I have been on the fire department as a junior firefighter then I have 3 years of experience on the regular fire department.

This career can be very emotional when someone in that department passes away possibly in your arms when you are doing CPR or at their home and their family members calls you to come and try to save them.

I will be taking two courses to get certified for firefighter 1 and 2. I have talked to a handful of people about this job and they tell me that I would be a good person for this career and that it is very emotional at times. I could give all of my might and strength to get into this career going into the academy and preparing my life more for this job the

effort that I am willing to put into the career is outstanding. I don't want to be the person who people think I'm the person who will do nothing for the community, I want them to think that “man we should try to get more kids to help in the community”.

The positives of this career can be that you get to work with different people in this society, and you inspire younger generations to possibly do this career. The negatives of this career can be that you don't always get time with your family, you might not get your days off you would have on your schedule you would possibly have to stay for a longer time and that you might not see your family anymore.

I hope to accomplish the hard task of going through the academy part for a month and learning more studious tactics and doing really good in the classes: firefighter entry level A and B for six months. The class has a waiting list and I am very lucky to get into the class at this time of the year because we don't have as much calls then during the summer.

The two sayings that I have are “Family comes first,” and “Everyone gets back to the station and goes home safe”. I will be sure to succeed by getting help from others and trying my hardest in this career. I also hope to get the younger generations to join and help the community out.

Scientist



*Lucas M.
School District of Mishicot*

When I think of what my dream career might be, I think of doing something fascinating; I would want a career that contributes to something that will help people and one that inspires others. I would want a career that makes me excited to wake up early in the morning because I am going to do something I love. This career, for me, would be on the ever-expanding frontier of science, pushing the boundaries of what we know about our reality.

My career would begin during my time at the university. I would be working on different research projects developing, testing, and presenting our results and findings. These projects would go hand in hand with course I'm enrolled in as they would expand on the topics covered and further my understanding through hands on application. As a researcher in school I would be able to forge networks and relationships with other students and scientists that I may run into later down the road. This involvement in research would continue through my graduate study and would eventually lead me into my future of researching. It is then at this stage that I am presented with two equally enticing paths. At this fork in the proverbial road of my dream career I can either choose to go left, which leads to researching the science of the very small, or right, which leads to researching the very large.

If I choose to go left, I would find myself with a degree in elementary particle physics discerning what happens on the smallest of scales. Dealing in the quantum world would be a fascinating way to spend many years of my life. My dream job at this point, to truly be on the forefront of this field, would be

at cutting-edge laboratories and particle accelerators like the Large Hadron Collider located at CERN in Geneva, Switzerland. Working at a place like this would truly be a dream come true because many of the most interesting questions are being worked on there. The LHC at CERN played a crucial role in finding the Higgs Boson, a particle theorized to exist, and whose confirmation changed the Standard Model. Another place that would be interesting to work at would be at neutrino detectors hunting for the most elusive particles. There is one such detector in Minnesota called MINOS and another in Antarctica called IceCube.

If I were to choose to venture right at the fork, I would find myself with a degree in astrophysics. The idea of looking into the terrifying beauty of space and learning from it seems just as euphoric as working at CERN. This scenario would include working again in a laboratory with an observatory, or even for NASA. Using equipment like the Hubble Space Telescope to gather information about the vastness around us would be a humbling experience. In this field, I would want to help search for answers about our mysterious universe and about things like black holes, unique stars and planets, dark matter, and many other topics. Many of the answers we find out there can help us down here. But no matter the path I take, my dream career will always, after many years of research, converge to one conclusion. I would want to end my career as a mentor, educator, and lecturer inspiring and nurturing the minds of the next generation to improve and promote scientific literacy.

**Dream Career
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next two issues!

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4. Four out of five secondary CTE graduates who pursued postsecondary education had earned a credential or were still enrolled two years later.
5. CTE prepares students for the work world, but it also benefits students who plan to go on

to either a 2-year or a 4-year college.

6. Students experience college-level work before college, so they are challenged but also know what to expect.

7. Students in CTE courses have a wider variety of experiences and are more likely to remain engaged through their education.

8. The more college credits a student takes in high school, the more money they may save on college tuition.

9. The more students participate in career and technical student organizations, the higher their academic motivation, academic engagement, grades, career self-efficacy, college aspirations and employability skills.

(CTE works, Alfeld et al., Looking Inside the Black Box: The Value Added by Career and Technical Student Organizations to Students' High School Experience, National Research Center for CTE, 2007).



Why Is Baseball Safety Important?



Baseball is by no means a dangerous sport. But it can present a very real risk of injuries from things like wild pitches, batted balls, and collisions in the field.

At the high-school level, some pitchers can throw fastballs that reach 80-plus miles per hour, speedy enough to cause painful welts, broken bones, even concussions. Excessive pitching and improper throwing mechanics can lead to major league arm problems, and base runners and fielders can collide while running at top speed.

Gear Guidelines

As with all sports, wearing and using the right gear can go a long way toward preventing injuries. The amount of equipment required for baseball isn't on a par with football or hockey, but it is every bit as important. Players need to be sure they always have all the gear required by their league.

- Batting helmets must be worn whenever a player is at bat, waiting to bat, or running the bases. Some leagues may even require pitchers to wear them. Helmets should always fit properly and be worn correctly. If the helmet has a chin strap, make sure it is fastened, and if the helmet has an eye shield or other faceguard, this should be in good condition, securely attached to the helmet.
- A catcher should always be wearing a helmet, facemask, throat guard, full-length chest protector, athletic supporter with a cup, shin guards, and a catcher's mitt whenever they are catching pitches, whether it's in the game, in the bullpen, or during warm-ups.
- Baseball spikes should have molded plastic cleats rather than metal ones. Most youth leagues don't allow spikes with metal cleats.
- It's possible that your league could have

guidelines dictating what kind of bat you can use. Some bats may be banned for hitting batted balls too hard. Be sure to check your league's policy before choosing a bat.

- All players should wear athletic supporters. Most players, particularly catchers, pitchers, and infielders, should wear protective cups. Rules regarding which players must wear cups vary from league to league.

Additional gear that some players like includes sliding pants, which are meant to go under your baseball pants to protect against scrapes and cuts; batting gloves, which can keep your hands from getting sore while hitting; shin and foot guards, which are designed to protect against balls fouled straight down; and mouthguards.

Breakaway Bases

Base paths are one of the most common places injuries happen. This is especially true when you slide into a traditional stationary base, which puts a rigid obstacle in your path as you slide. Sliding into a fixed base can result in foot, ankle, and lower-leg injuries.

As a result, doctors have started recommending that leagues install breakaway bases in all of their playing fields. These bases, which snap onto grommets on an anchored rubber mat, can be dislodged when a runner slides into one, lessening the chances that a base runner will get injured. During the course of normal base-running, the base is stable and does not detach.

Excessive Pitching

Pitching, particularly for adolescent arms that are still growing, puts an enormous amount of strain on joints and tendons. Doing a lot of pitching can cause injuries to elbows and shoulders. These can often be avoided

if players and coaches follow a few simple guidelines:

- Make sure you stick to your league's rules regarding the maximum number of innings a pitcher is allowed to throw. This will generally range from four to 10 innings per week. If you play for more than one team, include all innings pitched each week, not just the ones for each team.
- Most leagues follow rules regarding the number of pitches you can throw in a game. Keep in mind that even major league pitchers have strict pitch counts to keep their arms healthy. Here are the pitch count limits for teens recommended by U.S.A. Little League and the American Sports Medicine Institute:
 - 13–16 years old: 95 pitches a day
 - 17–18 years old: 105 pitches a day
- Follow guidelines on required rest periods based on the number of innings pitched or pitches thrown.
- Pitchers 14 and under should limit total pitches to less than 1,000 per season and 3,000 per year.
- Pitchers who have pain that doesn't go away in their throwing arm should see a doctor and hold off on pitching until the pain goes away.

- All players should take at least 2 to 3 months off per year from sports that have a lot of overhead action. Athletes who play multiple sports that use a lot of overhead arm movements like baseball, swimming, or volleyball, are at increased risk of overuse injuries.

A Few Other Reminders

- Make sure a responsible adult is on hand any time you play a baseball game, whether it's a parent, coach, or umpire. In the event someone gets seriously hurt, you'll want an adult around to contact emergency services or take an injured player to the emergency room.
- Make sure first aid is readily available at the fields where you play.
- Steroids or human growth hormones aren't just illegal — they're harmful to your health.

These tips should help you have a great time playing America's pastime. Picture yourself under the lights at Yankee stadium, hitting a home run to win game 7 of the World Series.

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Delevan Students Reach Out and Step Up



Delavan-Darien student hosts bone marrow registry drive

Delavan-Darien School District

Here's an easy New Year's resolution: Give the gift of life. All it takes is a quick swipe of the cotton swab.

From 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 16, Delavan-Darien High School senior David Vegter, 18, hosted a bone marrow registry drive.

For Vegter, the event was personal.

His mother, Lisa Vegter, was diagnosed with leukemia in 2006. Rounds of chemotherapy followed the diagnosis, and a rare platelet disorder complicated transfusions. Then came remission but with a caveat: To increase her chance of survival, she needed a bone marrow transplant.

None of her nine siblings were matches. Instead, the stem cells—which the bone marrow develops into red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets—had to come from a donor.

A bone marrow registry found a woman in Germany who was a match, and for the past eight years, Lisa Vegter has been cancer free.

The idea for the bone marrow drive came as Vegter was brainstorming community service projects to put on his applications for scholarships. "When I heard about the bone marrow registry drive, I was thrilled," he said. He could raise awareness of the bone marrow registry and perhaps help save someone else's life—just as his mother's was saved.

His father, Eugene Vegter, and mother traveled to Germany to meet her donor. "They said it felt like she was family," David Vegter said.

Vegter is working with Bethematch.com, a part of the National Marrow Donor Program. Anyone ages 18 to 44 can donate for free. Donors fill out registration cards, and cotton swabs are used to collect the cells from the inside of their cheeks. Each swab is sealed and sent to the donor program.

Senior steps up to help family in crisis

An early January car accident has left one Delavan-Darien High School alumna in critical condition and a community looking for ways to help.

Current DDHS senior Jaily Schroeder took it upon herself to organize a lunchtime bake sale at the school and pass-the-hat fundraiser at a recent DDHS basketball game.

In just three days, her work, and that of the dozens of students and families that helped, raised more than \$2,000 to support Kaitlyn Vegter and her family. Kaitlyn remains in intensive care for multiple head injuries.

"It didn't feel right just sitting around while this amazing family was going through the worst possible time," said Schroeder, who knew Kaitlyn from choir and musicals.

Kaitlyn's younger brother David is also in Schroeder's class.

Despite the tragedy, David and his family still put on a bone marrow registry drive at DDHS on Jan. 16. They had been planning it for months after a bone marrow donor from Germany helped save the life of Lisa Vegter, Kaitlyn and David's mom.

"I'm so very thankful for everyone who participated by donating and baking items, and for showing support in general," Schroeder said. "None of this could have been possible if I didn't have so much help from the community. It was amazing to see so many people come together in a family's time of need and show all the support they did."

Bethematch.com requests donors between 18 and 44 because doctors request that age range more than 90 percent of the time. The range is based on the rate of transplant success.

Here are a few facts about bone marrow donation:

- Donors are placed on the National Marrow Donation Program Registry. Every day, more than 6,000 people search the registry for a matching donor.
- If a donor is selected as a suitable match, he or she is asked to donate either bone marrow or blood cells. The chance of being an actual donor is about 1 in 540.

- A consenting donor must get a physical exam to determine if the donation process would pose a risk to his or her health or the recipient's health.

For more information about bone marrow donation, visit the National Marrow Donor Program's website, marrow.org.

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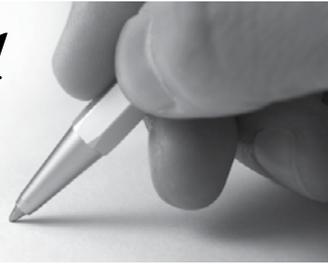
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*Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Employment Statistics, [August, 2015] [www.bls.gov/oes/].

Bellin College

Apply for a Grant



Meemic Foundation Grants

The Meemic Foundation is offering grants up to \$500 for field trips, books, classroom projects, equipment, educator professional development, etc. Applications are accepted all year but are reviewed quarterly. The online fill-in-the-blank form takes about 25 minutes to complete. The process is simple and convenient; you don't have to be a grant writer to navigate the application. To enhance the grant process, the Meemic Foundation Club has been created. Joining the Club entails providing some basic profile information, which gets populated into all of your grant applications, thus saving time. The application can now be saved and club members are always the first to know about additional grant opportunities available year round.

Deadline: Current round of applications accepted through March 31, 2016

Website: MeemicFoundation.org

Roads to Reading Initiative Grants

The Roads to Reading Initiative (RTRI) provides grants of new children's books as educational resources to schools, child-care centers, and nonprofit organizations serving children in need from birth to age 16. Donated books must be used for on-site literacy programs that target underserved communities and are administered by the applicant organization.

Deadline: Applications are accepted from April 1 through September 25, annually.

Website: pwirtr.org/register/

Snapdragon Book Foundation Books to School Libraries for Disadvantaged Children Grant

The Snapdragon Book Foundation was started in December, 2008 to provide funds to improve school libraries for disadvantaged children. Founded by a former school librarian, this foundation exists to put books in the hands of kids.

Grant Amount: \$800 – \$20,000

Deadline: Deadline: April 15, 2016

Website: www.snapdragonbookfoundation.org/index.html

Academic Enrichment Grants

The McCarthy Dressman Education Foundation offers Academic Enrichment Grants designed to develop classroom and extracurricular programs that improve student learning. The foundation considers proposals that foster understanding, deepen students'

knowledge, and provide opportunities to expand awareness of the world around them.

Grants up to \$10,000 are awarded.

Deadline: Online applications are accepted January 15 through April 15, annually.

Website: mccartheydressman.org/academic-enrichment-grants/

EcoTech Grants

The Captain Planet Foundation, Inc. (CPF) is offering grants through a competitive program for schools and nonprofit organizations. Seventeen grants will be awarded to support inquiry-based projects in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields that engage students in using innovation, biomimicry and nature-based design, or new applications of technology to address environmental problems in their communities.

Seventeen grants of \$2,500 each are awarded.

Deadline: Applications are due March 15, 2016.

Website: captainplanetfoundation.org/ecotech-grants/

Gerald C. Corcoran Education Grant

The North American Native Fishes Association (NANFA) supports projects to educate the general public about native North American fishes and their environment. Project categories include: producing and distributing educational materials such as books, brochures, posters, displays, video, and internet resources; stream surveys with public education as a primary goal; public lectures; nature center displays; school materials and displays; field and laboratory supplies; and teacher training workshops.

Grants up to \$1,000 are awarded.

Deadline: Applications are due March 31, annually.

Website: nanfa.org/corcoran.shtml

GRO1000 Grassroots Grants

ScottsMiracle-Gro provides GRO1000 Grassroots Grants to help foster community spirit and public service. Grassroots Grants are awarded to local communities to help bring edible gardens, flower gardens, and public green spaces to neighborhoods across the United States.

Grants up to \$1,500 are awarded.

Deadline: Applications are accepted February 1 through February 19, 2016.

Website: scottsmiraclegro.com/corporate-responsibility/gro1000

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Instrumental Music Grants

The Fender Music Foundation awards instruments and equipment to eligible music instruction programs that are part of US public schools or qualified nonprofit organizations. The instruments and equipment are lightly used, blemished, or otherwise imperfect and

have been collected from manufacturers and retailers. The foundation provides information on specific imperfections to programs that are selected to receive instruments.

Deadline: Applications accepted year-round.

Website: www.fendermusicfoundation.org/grants/grants-info

Technology for the Sake of Technology: Consider the Why and the How



By Matt Renwick

For many reasons, technology is very tempting to embed into classrooms without a lot of thought behind our intentions. Its newness piques students' interests, it connects learners with the wider world, and it can provide a seemingly limitless number of resources for communication, information and entertainment.

But does it lead to learning? It depends

not on what a teacher is using, but how it is used and why it might be needed. In my recently published book, I highlighted the conditions John Hattie found in his research about effective use of technology in schools, from his seminal resource *Visible Learning: Maximizing Impact on Learning* (Routledge, 2009, p. 221–227):

- When there is a diversity of teaching strategies

- When there is teacher training in the use of computers as a teaching and learning tool
- When there are multiple opportunities for learning (e.g. deliberative practice, increasing time on task)
- When the student, not the teacher, is in “control” of learning
- When peer learning is optimized
- When feedback is optimized

Beyond these situations, I also suggest that teachers make the purpose for implementing new technology into classrooms to revolve around some type of real world project or to address a community problem. For example, one of our teachers wants to replace her desktop computers with Chromebooks.

Here were two ideas we discussed for this integration:

Create an official Howe Elementary School welcoming website via Google Sites for new students and their families, where maps of the school, informational videos, and important information would be posted and kept current.

Train the students to teach residents at an assisted living center how to use Google Apps for a variety of reasons, such as communicating via Gmail and Hangouts with family members who don't visit them often enough.

As I think about these possibilities, I feel a sense of enthusiasm for what could happen in this classroom with access to mobile technology. But just bringing in Chromebooks: Not the same. It is so easy to state “I need technology in the classroom” without thinking about the why and how. The shiny new pencil tends to lose its luster when its potential is not realized. We can do better.

Matt Renwick is a 16-year public educator who began as a 5th and 6th grade teacher in a rural school outside of Wisconsin Rapids, WI. After seven years of teaching, he served as a junior high dean of students, assistant principal and athletic director before becoming an elementary school leader in Wisconsin Rapids. Matt blogs at *Reading by Example*, tweets @ReadByExample and writes for *EdTech* magazine and other publications. His new book, *5 Myths about Classroom Technology*, is available from ASCD.

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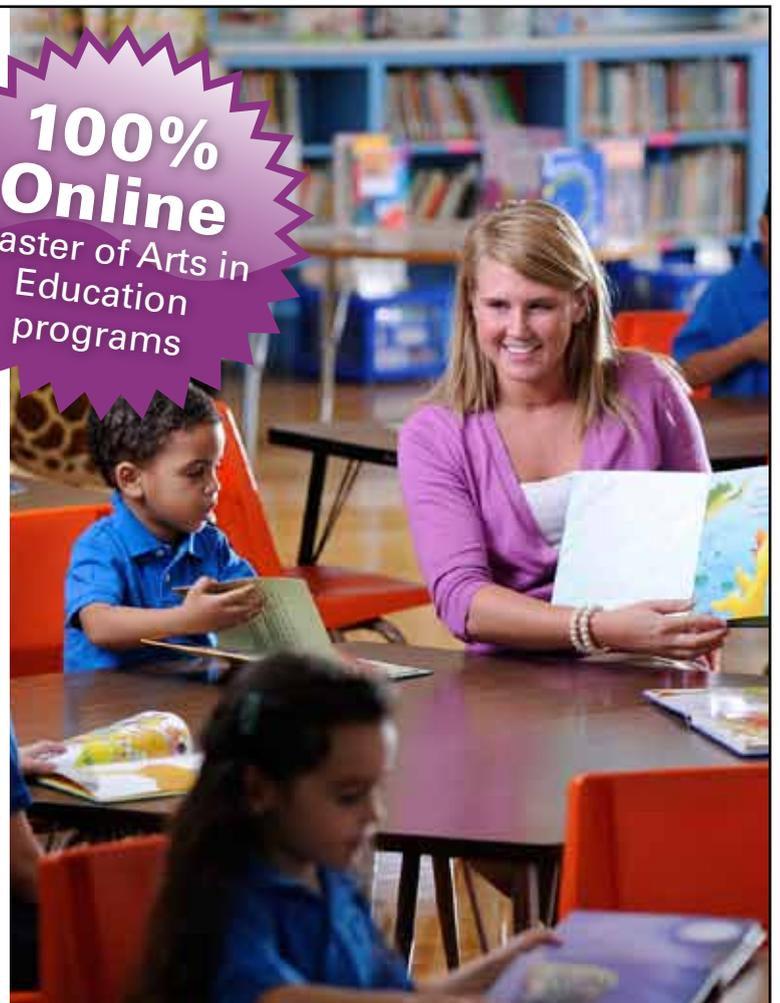
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Third Grade Students Immerse Themselves in “Cutthroat Zoos”



By Teresa Pickarts, Third Grade Teacher,
Clinton Elementary School

“Cutthroat Zoo” is a new project developed by Clinton Elementary School third grade teachers Teresa Pickarts and Ross Niquet. The program connects reading, writing, math, science, and social studies in a STEM focused project this fall. Teaching topics that carry across the curriculum is a priority for both Niquet and Pickarts. Pickarts explained, “I think kids learn best when they immerse themselves in a topic across all the subjects we teach in third grade. This was an opportunity

to be creative and find authentic ways for this to happen and get students excited about learning.”

Pickarts continued, “‘Cutthroat Zoo—Where Animals Adapt to Survive’ is a new program that we based on our first unit in life science in which we studied animal life cycles, adaptations, and ecosystems. I knew I wanted my students to learn science as it connects to the other areas I teach—reading, writing, English language arts (ELA), math, social studies, and science. ‘Cutthroat Zoos’ is based on the popular series ‘Cutthroat Kitchen.’ We designed the program so each science lesson

about animal adaptations included a STEM challenge with a ‘sabotage.’ Student groups would have to adapt to the sabotage to survive, just like animals adapt. As an environmental education major, Mr. Niquet was the perfect working partner for the project. We implemented projects that he has used in the past, and took them to the next level so students could really understand what adaptations are. We also created new experiences for the class that we have never done before.”

Students in both classrooms worked together on these challenges as they studied the adaptations of camouflage, hibernation, migration, movement, traveling in packs or living in groups, and differentiating between inherited and acquired traits. Both teachers shared in the creation of work and responsibilities, with Pickarts adding day-long experiences in specialty areas like hibernation and camouflage. From that starting point, cross-curriculum connections were easy to find. The first was with social studies and the third grade’s unit in economics. Budgeting, work, income, and building businesses was the perfect opportunity to connect the two curriculums. Pickarts and Niquet designed the program to include real world budgeting experiences. During each science challenge, students had the opportunity to earn income by winning the challenges. The twist was that they could use their money

to purchase sabotages too, which could negatively affect their budgets as the classroom learned first-hand about “opportunity costs” in the budget process. Grace Wilson, third grade student, said, “I loved sabotaging another group and buying bright paint so their animal wouldn’t be camouflaged on the trail. Their group was smart though. They adapted and found a way to hide the color better than I thought they would. It cost our group money, but we won money in the science challenge to earn it back.” At the end of the adaptation activities and challenges, the students used their dollars to “purchase” materials for building their zoos.

Integrating math into the unit was also essential for Niquet, a Professional Learning Community (PLC) leader in the area of math. Niquet commented, “Integrating math was an easy connection, too. In every science challenge, we added a mathematical component. In the paper wasp challenge, students had to build a structure to a specific height. In their ‘colorful coloration’ animal build, they had to create an animal to camouflage on the trail to specific dimensions. One week we calculated the perimeter and area of our zoos to apply to the unit in multiplication.”

“In the end, the goal is for learning to be

Continued on Page 21





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Leadership Program Kicks-Off for AASD Sophomores



Article and photos by Kylie McGowan
Communications Coordinator
Appleton Area School District

The Student Leadership Program (SLP) Kick-Off event started off with students being assigned to find those in the room who had the same birthday month. Chaos ensued with some students running around, others shouting their month and others standing tall with their hands up, showing the number of their corresponding month.

When time was up, it became apparent that April babies were scattered across the room, October babies were loosely along the left side and December birthdays were in haphazard huddles. This exercise was the perfect introduction to the SLP. People lead differently -- some stand and try to quietly organize themselves and some take charge and loudly rally those around them.

The SLP advocates for these sophomore students to use their own specific, individual strengths because there is room for all types of

leaders in their chosen careers.

This first, trailblazing class of students from Appleton East, North and West, along with Valley New School Charter students. The two-year program sets students up for success by connecting them with the area's best employers and community partners. The skills learned in the program will impact the rest of the student's lives.

Lee Allinger, AASD Superintendent, said that classrooms can only do so much. They can't show the world of work the way that business partners can. He commended the participating students for deciding to apply. He said he appreciated the mention of different types of leaders, and that the AASD values them all. He added that this program has room for all to be successful.

The benefit of linking together public education and local businesses is two-fold. The number one reason is the benefit of the experiences to the students and the second reason is the huge benefit to local businesses. Businesses must respond to the ongoing talent shortage by recruiting local students to their future workforce and to help students become good citizens.

The guest speaker was Mallory Weggemann, a Paralympic swimmer. She became paraplegic after an epidural injection to treat post-shingles back pain in 2008. She was named the World Disabled Swimmer of the Year in 2009 and 2010; the USA Swimming Disabled Swimmer of the Year in 2009, 2010, and 2011, along with the Best Female Athlete with a Disability ESPY Award in 2011. She is currently training for the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Throughout her speech she outlined the struggles thrust upon her and her efforts to live her life and pursue her goals in spite of her circumstances. She focused on the choice that everyone has when tragedy and difficulties happen, you choose your response to it.

"There are times when you change your life, and there are times when your life changes you"

Mallory Weggemann.

Weggemann spoke for 40 minutes to an apt group of students, followed by eager questions, including requests to give her a hug.

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Student Contests and Awards

World of 7 Billion Student Video Contest

Population Education is sponsoring a video contest open to all middle and high school students in grades 6 through 12. Contest entrants create a short video of 60 seconds or less that illustrates the connection between population growth and one of the three following global challenges. All videos must include how population growth impacts the issue and provide at least one idea for a sustainable solution.

Deadline: Entries are due February 25, 2016, at 5:00 p.m. (EST).

Website: www.worldof7billion.org/student-video-contest

American Association of Physics Teachers High School Physics Photo Contest

Photos may be entered in one of two categories: (1) natural photos are those that involve everyday situations that may demonstrate a variety of physics concepts; and (2) contrived photos are those that are set up to show a particular physics concept or related

set of concepts. Photos with multiple images or other computer manipulation will be placed in a separate category. They may be displayed at the national meeting and judged for special recognition ribbons, but not for prizes.

Deadline: Entries are accepted annually from March 1 to May 15.

Website: aapt.org/Programs/contests/photo-contest.cfm

InvenTeams

InvenTeams is a national grants initiative of the Lemelson-MIT program that is designed to excite high school students to cultivate their creativity and experience invention. InvenTeam students rely on inquiry hands-on problem solving as they integrate lessons from science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) to develop invention prototypes. InvenTeams are composed of high school students, teachers, and industry mentors. Working collaboratively, InvenTeams identify a problem to be solved, conduct research on the problem, and develop a prototype invention.

Deadline: Initial applications are due March 7, 2016. If selected to continue to the next step, final applications are due September 6, 2016.

Website: lemelson.mit.edu/inventteams

The DuPont Challenge Science Writing Competition: Elementary Division

The DuPont Challenge Elementary Division is designed to help teachers motivate students to become tomorrow's science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) innovators. This Science Writing Competition provides classrooms with challenges specifically geared toward students at each level kindergarten through grade 5.

Deadline: Entries are accepted November 1, 2015, through March 1, 2016.

Website: thechallenge.dupont.com/elementary

Young Scientist Challenge

Discovery Education and 3M invite students in grades 5 through 8 to participate in the Young Scientist Challenge. Entrants must

create a one- to two-minute video describing a new, innovative solution that solves an everyday problem.

Ten finalists will each receive \$1,000. The grand-prize winner will receive \$25,000.

Deadline: Entries are due on April 20, 2016.

Website: www.youngscientistchallenge.com/about

Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes

The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes celebrates inspiring, public-spirited young people from diverse backgrounds all across North America. Each year, the Barron Prize honors 25 outstanding young leaders ages 8 to 18 who have made a significant positive difference to people and the environment.

Deadline: Applications must be completed and submitted online by 5:00 p.m. MST on April 15.

Website: barronprize.org/apply/

"Cutthroat Zoos"

Continued from Page 18

embedded across the curriculum so we can deeply engage in critical thinking and experience things again and again, so that our classes really learn the essential understandings and common core standards of our grade level," according to Pickarts.

Making connections that enable students to critically think is a priority. According to Niquet, "We worked to connect our science to our writing and reading, too, asking students to select an animal to research and then write a research report that connects to our science work. In addition to the challenges, we wanted the unit to require each student to really think about the adaptations by applying what they were doing in their experiments: reading in the science texts, hearing us read during read alouds, and writing about it. Pickarts is our PLC's ELA leader so this was a natural connection."

Pickarts agrees, "The kids were so excited to start building their zoos and businesses and to apply what they learned after all the reading and writing they did. The energy in our room was exactly what we were looking for as they took what we were teaching and applied it."

Each team created a zoo exhibit using the money they earned during the science challenges. They also built businesses to add value to their exhibit and attract visitors. They created a poster for their zoo and business,

as well as advertising to promote sales. The project culminated with a Cutthroat Zoos open house for students, teachers, and parents.

Third grade student, Reagan Flickinger commented, "It is cool to use the money we earned in our animal adaptation challenges and buy the materials we needed for building our zoos. We didn't have a lot of money, but we were able to buy eucalyptus leaves so our Koala Bear would have a food source. I was very excited for people to come see my zoo."

The open house was held on Friday, December 11, 2015, and was a huge success. Students enjoyed showcasing their work and explaining all that they had learned. Staff and parents/guardians were amazed at all that students had accomplished. Pickarts and Niquet are both very proud of their students, and want to thank the staff, administration, and parents for their support of this project.

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The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)

(PAEMST) are the nation's highest honors for teachers of mathematics and science (including computer science). Awardees serve as models for their colleagues, inspiration to their communities, and leaders in the improvement of mathematics and science education.

Since 1983, more than 4,400 teachers have been recognized for their contributions in the classroom and to their profession. If you know great teachers, nominate them to join this prestigious network of professionals.

Deadline: Nominations close on April 1, 2016.

Website: www.paemst.org/controllers/home.cfc?method=view

Roots in Science and Engineering Awards

Google Roots in Science and Engineering (RISE) Awards support organizations that promote access to computer science education.

These efforts should reach grades kindergarten through 12, with an emphasis on girls, low-income students, and minorities who have historically been underrepresented in the field. Awards range from \$10,000 to \$25,000.

Deadline: Applications are due February 19, 2016.

Website: www.google.com/edu/resources/programs/google-rise-awards/

Sara Jaffarian School Library Program Award

The Sara Jaffarian School Library Program Award is an annual award given to a school library that has conducted an exemplary program or program series in the humanities during the prior school year. Any elementary or middle school library or any school library program in the United States that serves children in any combination of kindergarten through grade 8 and is staffed by a state-certified librarian are eligible for the award.

Awards include a \$5,000 cash award, a plaque, and the promotion of the winner as a model program for other school libraries.

Deadline: Applications are accepted from March 1 through May 6, 2016.

Website: www.ala.org/programming/jaffarianaward

Technology – Enhancing Student Learning



*Tony Duffek, Principal
St. Germain Elementary School & Northland
Pines Montessori Learning Center*

At St. Germain Elementary School and Northland Pines Montessori Learning Center we are always looking for the next best way to engage students and prepare them for the future. One reality of the 21st century is that technology is a huge aspect of our world and it will only play a larger role in the future. Therefore, to prepare students for their future we must teach students how to use technology and more importantly use technology to enhance their learning experience. We are fortunate to have a technology rich environment that engages and prepares students.

We expanded our 1:1 initiative this year in St. Germain Elementary by having an iPad for every student in 1st and 2nd grade and a Chromebook for every student 3rd-5th grade.

NPMLC also has a technology rich environment in which students have access to iPads, Chromebooks and other forms of technology that they use for various purposes.

With the expansion of technology in the classroom it has opened up greater opportunities for our students and innovative teaching practices. Our St. Germain 3rd-5th grade students recently took a virtual field trip to China to learn about their culture and resources. Instead of always using math fact flashcards students can play interactive math games through First in Math and SumDog. NPMLC students know how to create videos of what they do on a weekly basis to summarize and share what they learned and did in class with parents. Students can share and collaborate on documents and PowerPoints through Google. Teachers can provide more immediate feedback on student work. Instead of relying on memorizing spelling words students can play interactive spelling games such as Spelling City to learn spelling patterns. Many students have learned basic coding practices through online programs. This is a list of just a few of the items and activities students take part in every day to engage them in their learning. There are numerous apps and websites that students and teachers continue to explore and use to maximize their learning experience.



Even though technology now plays a vital role in teaching students 21st century skills other key 21st century skills include critical thinking, collaboration and communication. That is why we find a balance with the use of technology and we still place a large emphasis on problem solving, collaboration and communication throughout lessons. I encourage the same at home. Technology can be an amazing resource and a great educational tool in your home but it can't replace the importance of com-

munication and collaboration that students get through playing board games, reading, playing outside and playing with others, it is all about finding a balance.

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“Being Schooled”



students went beyond the brick and mortar of school as she welcomed student families to visit her home, gardens and barnyard animals well after the school bell

had rung where more lessons could be gathered.

This book may have readers looking in the mirror saying to themselves; how do I value a teacher, children, parenting, and marriage? Get ready for a wave of emotions when you read about her teaching experience! Mrs. Leet did more for the hundreds of students she taught than merely giving them grades on a report card. She nurtured them and gave them love!

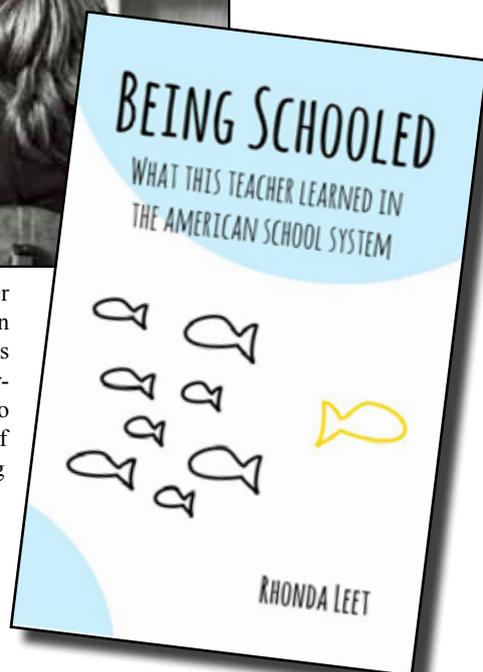
Parents write . . . “Your students are a part of your family”

“Mrs. Leet you are a rare jewel in education today”

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Being Schooled evolved from a letter Rhonda Leet wrote to the school board in regard to growing concern about her school's climate. Her twelve years of teaching journals will give you a real honest glimpse into the daily challenges that take away the joy of teaching. She had valid concerns including teachers leaving in droves and escalating behavior problems.

Upon leaving her school, Leet's passion for educational reform has not waned since removing her nameplate from the classroom door. Educating

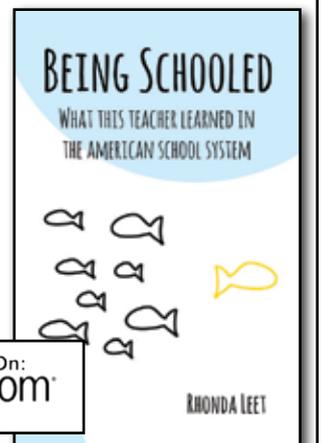


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Photo by Lonnie Duberstein

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