

Talking About Technology

By Pam Imholz, Director of Technology

Winter 2013

Greetings Parents! The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you informed about the technology that is in use in our schools here in District 70. Technology has become such a part of our students' lives that they don't often talk about it. I hope you find these occasional newsletters insightful. I hope your winter break was a time for rejuvenation and renewal!



First, a little history. As the District 70 Director of Technology, I am aware that technology has been a part of instruction for nearly two decades. Back then, the district owned about 160 computers, a handful of printers, no network, and two Applied Technology teachers at Highland Middle School. The computers were located in computer labs at each school. Since that time we have continued to add technology throughout the District. The guiding question we always ask is, "How will this impact student learning?"

The district currently has approximately 1400 computers used by students and staff. All teachers have a district-issued laptop. We have 800 mobile devices (iPads or iPods), 380 Chromebooks, 120 document cameras (which have replaced overhead projectors) and about 150 interactive white boards and projectors, which round out the classroom based technology. The Technology Department maintains and supports over 50 servers and close to 120 networked printers. A very robust network and infrastructure, including building-wide wireless access, supports our teaching and learning needs. District technology staff has also grown over the



TECHSTAFF years and now includes three Technical Support persons and two Technology Literacy Coaches. Technology Literacy Coaches help teachers with the integration of various technologies into the curriculum. Highland also has two Applied Technology teachers who provide instruction on a wide variety of topics and skills to students in grades 6-8.

In order to help keep staff in the technology loop, the Tech Department offers frequent and varied methods of staff development. This year, as part of the District's five year strategic plan, we have rolled out our K-5 Technology Framework which includes technology lessons and a scope and sequence of skills. Lessons were reviewed with teachers at grade level meetings. The 6-8 Framework is under way as well. Finally, an investigation regarding keyboarding is currently being addressed to determine when and how to meet the needs of our students. Skills will undoubtedly require support and assistance in providing practice time at home.



With that little bit of historical background, accompanying this newsletter are a few photos of students using District 70 mobile devices. A podcast to enhance this newsletter including video clips of technology in the classroom will be posted soon. Look for it on the District 70 website in the near future. www.d70schools.org

Students use technology on a regular basis. These photos are showcasing some use of mobile devices in the classroom.

In Music Class



In Math Class



In Language Arts Class at Highland



Teachers also learn about teaching with mobile devices.

