



Classrooms for the Future at Windber Area SD

WINDBER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

JUNE, 2008

Classrooms for the Future: What difference does it make?

During the 2007-2008 school year, the Classrooms for the Future (CFF) initiative brought both technology and training to the members of the Science and Math Departments at the high school. Some significant changes in classroom practices were supported by those efforts as teachers integrated technology into their lessons and projects.

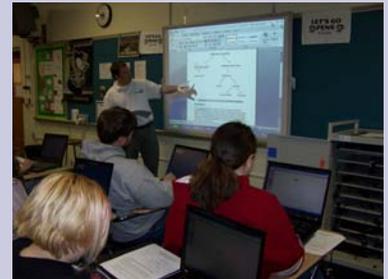
Students were able to access the internet through the use of mobile laptop labs and incorporated science and math concepts into a variety of formats using CFF software. Students incorporated images, spoken word and music to create dynamic multi-media presentations using Photostory 3. Students used Inspiration 8 to organize content in a

digital concept map where they could include sound bites, video clips, web links and images.

Students used laptops to search for real-world data that supported math concepts they were studying. They created projects that demonstrated the relationship between equations and patterns in the real world.

Teachers have used the Promethean and SMART boards to add visual impact to their lessons throughout the school year. These interactive, digital whiteboards allow teachers to create dynamic classroom presentations that link directly to the internet, include video and audio clips, and allow them to create colorful and interactive presentations in real time.

WHAT DOES CFF LOOK LIKE?



CFF What's Next?

The second year of CFF at Windber Area School District will expand the equipment and training to target two additional content areas. Teachers in the Communications/Language Arts (English) and Social Studies departments are slated to receive a similar package of equipment and training. Therefore, high school students will see more technology in their math and science classrooms next year along with additional technology experiences with a new group of teachers.

The new teachers selected to participate in the Classrooms for the Future are:

- Bob Berkey, Social Studies
- Jamie Crum, Communications
- Paul Danel, Communications
- Chris Hudak, Communications
- Lillian Kochinski, Communications
- Phil Marcinek, Social Studies
- Dina McClain, Communications
- Kristen Blackburn, Social Studies



**ALWAYS REMEMBER
THAT YOU HAVE WITHIN
YOU THE STRENGTH, THE
PATIENCE, AND THE
PASSION TO REACH FOR
THE STARS AND CHANGE
THE WORLD.**

-DENIS WAITLEY

Technology: The Challenge Behind the Scenes

As the Windber Area and Westmont Hilltop School Districts have moved toward creating a 21st Century learning experience for their students, there is an important component of a functional technology program that deserves some attention. The Technology Directors at both districts, which include Frank Tallyen for Windber (pictured left), and Joe Molnar and Roger Cowder for Westmont.

Although they work for school districts with very opposite demographics, they related the same types of challenges facing them as they facilitate the incorporation of more technology at their districts. The nearly exponential growth of technology in the classroom has created a huge need for skill and patience in the technology departments of school districts. The CFF program has accelerated this process, and has created a demand on each school's computer network and greatly increased the number of instances when teachers require help with technology.

The diverse 'to-do' list for technology directors includes the creation of the infrastructure to support technology (like wiring, running cable, etc.), purchasing computers, printers, scanners, and peripheral items (like digital cameras, digital video cameras, memory cards, etc.), reviewing and choosing appropriate software programs, maintaining the district's website, and assisting teachers and administrators as they use these tools. Technology directors are also tasked with monitoring the use of the internet which might include a filtering system and/or a monitoring program.

When asked about the challenges of their jobs, the technology directors said that the toughest part of their job is the unrealistic expectations that many teachers have about technology. When something goes wrong, it's important to fix it quickly, but many teachers don't realize that there are five people ahead of them. When asked about what might make things go more smoothly, they responded that having all teachers trained to a certain minimum skill level would remove some of the simpler questions from their responsibility. That would allow them more time to focus on more complex technology issues that only they can handle. Even with many challenges, all of the technology people at both districts really enjoy helping people and are glad that they get to help teachers do their work every day.



Are you interested in helping improve teaching and learning by advancing the effective use of technology in education? You can join the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). They support their members with information, networking opportunities, and guidance as they face the challenge of transforming education. Get more information at www.iste.org.

For more information on any of the articles included, please contact the CFF coaches for WASD and WHSD:

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Find the Rambler-Hilltop Wiki at the following location:
www.ramblerhilltopcfffiki.wikispaces.com

What's is Web 2.0?

Web 2.0 is a term coined by Tim O'Reilly, book publisher and host of conferences on computer technology topics. It refers to the changing structure and usage of the World Wide Web. Web 2.0 sites allow users to do more than just retrieve information. The web is no longer a static, proprietary, individual intelligence of sites. Instead, it is a dy-

namic, open-source, read, write, sharing of collaborative communities. Wikipedia explains further that, "Web 2.0 is a term describing the trend in the use of the World Wide Web technology and web design that aims to enhance creativity, information sharing, and... most notable, collaboration among users." A video describing Web 2.0 is available on the CFF Wiki.

Web 1.0 vs. Web 2.0

Reading	Writing
Companies	Communities
Netscape	Google
Hardware	Bandwidth
Wires	Wireless
Home Page	Blog
Dial-up	Broadband