

January 2008 Superintendent's Report

21st Century Skills

The following quote, while lengthy, is from the Community College Journal. I think it captures the educational revolution we are finding ourselves in the midst of.

Developing 21st century talent requires us not only to teach technology but also to transform the way we teach – to add advanced skills such as collaboration and problem solving to existing curricula. When I completed my studies in the 1970's, education was defined as a scarcity of knowledge – limited to that known by the teacher or read in a textbook. Our system was based on providing our students with as much of that knowledge as we could during the course of their formal educations. Classes were based on learning and memorizing and tests were structured to assess how much was remembered. These skills, combined with real-world experiences, were seen as the gateway to a successful future.

Today our students live in a dramatically different world. Knowledge is plentiful, easily accessible, and increasing at tremendous speed. Networking has changed our relationship with knowledge, making it accessible anytime, any place, on any device. Too little knowledge is no longer the challenge; sifting through the vast pool of knowledge, analyzing it, and collaborating to solve problems is the new dilemma.

Figuring out how to make the transition from teaching for knowledge acquisition to acquiring and using information needed to approach and solve problems provides a real challenge. Certainly, there are some basic facts in every discipline that students should know - how else do we establish a context? Certainly there are skills that are needed to approach and solve problems such as a basic reading and computational level. Some might argue that it is the function of K-12 to identify and teach those basics. But it becomes more obvious every year that those students who are adept at technology are busy identifying for themselves the knowledge and skills they are interested and need. They may be training themselves to collaborate and problem solve as they network with students in other districts with similar interests. Certainly we are encountering challenges that we need to find answers to. Teaching ethics about appropriate use, plagiarism, cyber-bullying are issues we must deal with for the first time or at much earlier ages than before. It sounds rather glorious to jump on the bandwagon of 21st Century Skills, but quite frankly, I feel like I am back learning to play the clarinet for the first time, and what I am making could not really be called music. It feels awkward, people much younger than I seem to be much more understanding and accomplished. If those with many years of experience in education are not willing to take a hard look at the changes that are needed, our schools will not be able to adapt quickly enough to make this transition.

I leave you with another quote from another Community College article,

The world in which today's students will make choices and compose lives is one of disruption rather than certainty, and of interdependence rather than insularity.....The issue is that we are under-motivated, lack the will to make the sacrifices necessary to learn what must be learned, or not believe that this depiction of our future is accurate."

Long Range Planning

There are a few resources in your packet that I have been pulling together to look at the history of our land purchases and facilities. There are often inconsistencies or gaps in the records I have been looking at. Some are as simple as dates being off by a year depending on whether or not the year ground was broken or the year the building was occupied is used. If you have any additional knowledge or resources that would help us create as accurate a record as possible, I would appreciate your input. If you think another format or way to present the information would be clearer, let me know. Eventually these documents need

to be in a format that will be of use to our ad hoc planning committee. I think it will be hard to picture where we need to go, if we don't have a fairly accurate picture of how we got where we are.

Summer School

McFarland hosted a meeting to compare notes across district about our summer school programs. One of the ideas that seemed to fit our district was to provide more options for teachers and students for the type of courses we offer. I think by giving teachers more options about the length of class they want to offer, more will want to teach. With options to take courses of a few days as opposed to a few weeks, more students, especially middle school students, may be interested in shorter offerings. This idea received positive feedback from the Curricular Coordinating Council on Tuesday. We will shortly send out a survey to staff about their interest in teaching summer school with this flexibility. Our hope would be to have the Summer School Brochure ready to go before Spring Break. I will let you know how this goes.

Kindergarten Registration

The following dates have been set up for kindergarten registration, testing and summer school.

Registration: February 26 at 6 p.m.

Screening: March 17, 18, and 19

Summer Pre-Kindergarten: Session I: June 9-27, Session II: July 7-25,

Welcome to Kindergarten: July 28-August 8 or August 4-15 to be determined.

Parents will be offered the choice of half day kindergarten when they register and we will plan from there.

Levi Leonard Elementary School **School Board Report - January 14, 2008**

BOARD THEME/CURRICULUM TOPIC: Information, Media, and Technology Skills

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills identifies specific skills as Information, Media, and Technology Skills. They are:

- ❖ Accessing information efficiently and effectively, evaluating information critically and competently and using information accurately and creatively for the issue or problem at hand
- ❖ Possessing a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information
- ❖ Understanding how media messages are constructed, for what purposes and using which tools, characteristics and conventions.
- ❖ Examining how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors.
- ❖ Using digital technology, communication tools and/or networks appropriately to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information in order to function in a knowledge economy
- ❖ Using technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate and communicate information, and the possession of a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information

At the elementary level, these skills are integrated into content areas such that children use technology skills to produce stories, poetry, reports and other written work. They also use technology to locate information, to find specific topics, or to practice other content skills. We use technology when students take the Measures of Academic Progress assessment and teachers demonstrate the use of technology in various aspects of their teaching.

While most of our students are at a basic level of understanding technology, teachers are open to using it in a variety of ways and are interested in learning more that can be done with younger students.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT:

Rod Marty will attend a workshop on RtI and its effectiveness as a tool for identifying special needs at CESA 2 on January 9. We are in the process of planning for the January 21 professional development day.

CELEBRATE!

It is good to have everyone back at school and gearing up for a very productive semester. Our students seem happy to be back and teachers have many plans for what will be accomplished in the next few months. This is always a time of great academic growth for our students!

ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPCOMING EVENTS:

January 9	K-12 Curriculum Meetings, Program Based Budget Meeting
January 10	6:00 – 7:30 PM Kindergarten Pajama Night
January 16	SIT Meeting, Program Based Budget Meeting
January 18	2 nd Quarter grading day
January 21	AM Professional Development, PM Learning Teams
January 22	Class pictures
January 23	Staff Meeting

Please join us for any of the above events or drop in to visit and talk with students and staff. You are always welcome!

Respectfully submitted; Lou Havlik, Principal

Theodore Robinson Intermediate School

School Board Report

Vicki Lecy-Luebke, Principal

January 14, 2008

Curriculum Focus: 21st Century Theme

“ICT literacy” is the fourth section of the 21st Century Learning Framework. ICT (information and communications technology literacy) is the “ability to use technology to develop 21st century content knowledge and skills.” Specific skills include information, media, and technology skills.

Throughout the intermediate grades, students are taught how to access information and then given many opportunities to use those skills, particularly in social studies, language arts, and science. Students in third grade learn how to research a particular state and then present their information via the “state float project.” Fourth graders in Keith Miller’s class participate in the “Where in Wisconsin is Jessica Doyle?” research. Logical reasoning is taught through teacher direction and computer programs. Emailing is also an important skill taught at this level. Beginning at grade 4, students are given email accounts. This comes in very handy in some classrooms where teachers email assignments to students and they must respond. (A couple of third grade classrooms have access to email also.) Honing research and presentation skills continues into grade 5. Our computer labs are very busy. Fifth graders research and create i movies as a culmination of their learning after the study of buoyancy. We have some very talented teachers who are providing students with 21st century knowledge and skills.

Professional Development

Our district mentoring program is structured around monthly meetings. During these meetings, mentors and their protégés meet either together or separately, depending on the topic addressed. Last month, classroom management

was the topic of a panel discussion which was led by various teachers from all four schools. Mentors, on the other hand, participated in a video and discussion about peer coaching in order to improve their coaching skills.

Gradebook training for staff will be occurring during our record keeping day on the 18th, as well as during our professional development day on the 21st.

Celebration

A big **thank you** to Tammy Pomplun who took our outdoor American flag home and repaired it so it looks brand new!!

Stephanie Johnson and Kim Wollinger's fifth grade classrooms sent a "snowstorm" to Wisconsin troops serving in Afghanistan. Hundreds of "true crystal snowflakes" were cut out by students and sent, along with chapstick, granola bars, packets of Kleenex, holiday haiku poems, and letters based on "abstract nouns related to patriotism."

Announcements

Students in grades 4/5 will be participating in events leading up to the National Geographic Bee this month. This is our first endeavor into this bee and we are hoping to open up another avenue of exploration for our students. Teresa Doyle and Stephanie Johnson have stepped up to coordinate the program.

Sally Feeney leaves for her leadership trip to India on January 8. We wish her a safe journey!!!

J.C. McKenna Middle School

307 S. First Street

Robert A. Flaherty, Principal
Email: flahertyr@evansville.k12.wi.us

Staff Development

On January 21, 2008 the staff will work on understanding and using data to improve student achievement. Ruth Robinson, a former employee of the Evansville School District and current Assistant Director of Curriculum in Janesville will hold an in-service for our staff. In addition we will also look at some additional in-service material regarding restorative practices with Krista Jones and Mr. Flaherty.

21st Century Skills:

J.C. McKenna Middle School has a number of projects that facilitate technology, the use of technology and thinking using technology. During the 07-08 school year we shifted the focus of our Tech Ed. classes to teaching students how to use computer aided design software (CAD). All students will have a basic understanding of the principals of computer aided design before they enter high school. In general technology in the classroom is becoming more integrated into everyday assessments. Students are doing work from creating pod casts to presentations using PowerPoint.

One of the largest changes we have seen is how many parents are accessing grades via the web. Based on principal's visits to team meetings it is evident that staff members have had more parent contacts because parents are concerned about the academic progress of their students. This has improved the partnership teachers have with parents in making sure students are completing assessments on time.

One of the major issues we will have to face as a staff is dealing with plagiarism. Middle school students have always struggled with differentiating between using sources to support arguments and plagiarism. Technology has made it easier for students to violate ethical standards concerning their own work.

Students also have to work on discerning what is a quality source on the web versus poor quality resources. The increase in the volume of material on the web makes this a continuing challenge. Our business education teacher is spending less time on teaching typing as students come to our school with better fundamental technology skills. This gives her more opportunities to work on more advanced technology skills such as discerning a good source from a lower quality source.

The building principal recently had an opportunity to work with 8th graders who were developing class presentations. He was happy to see that students were required to cite their sources and were encouraged to evaluate the quality of resources they were using.

Celebration:

The PTSO helped fund our trip to the Art Institute and Wicked.

The staff members and 8th Grade boys competed in a faculty basketball game the last hour before the holiday break. Even the building principal trotted slowly up and down the court. It is clear that we have a number of wonderful athletes on staff that know how to have fun with the students.

This was the first time in 30 years Mr. Beedle allowed common sense to dictate he let his body rest and he did not play in the game. Instead he became the coach of the students and did a wonderful job. Unfortunately his record is now 29-01 as the faculty was victorious....again!

Donations: See Celebration Section.

*Evansville High School - Report to the Board of Education
January 2008
Submitted by Jamie Gillespie, Principal*

Information, Media, and Technology Skills

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills identifies specific skills as Information, Media, and Technology Skills. They are:

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Similarly, the Standards for Success project (Association of American Universities and The Pew Charitable Trust), which published *Understanding University Success* in 2003, identifies skills and behaviors that incoming freshmen should be able to demonstrate regarding gathering information,

research, problem-solving, technology, communication, reading and analysis. Students are expected to take useful notes, create a research plan, ask questions about given information, explain answers and defend results, communicate clearly, find useful information, and know whether they comprehend something.

At EHS, teachers help students develop these skills in a variety of ways. Skills in accessing and evaluating information, using technology to access information, and using information for problem solving are developed in social studies classes and in writing courses, when students complete research projects. Skills in understanding how media messages are construed and in understanding the ethical issues of information are developed in the elective course, Mass Communications, and in social studies and English courses. The Introduction to Communication course helps students develop skills in examining how individuals interpret messages differently and strengthen their own communication skills. Students learn how to use technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate and communicate information in many courses, whenever they are required to do research, prepare multimedia presentations, or analyze given information.

An area in which we need to improve is in helping students understand the ethical and legal issues surrounding the access and use of information. While teachers work on this with students when problems arise, we do not have organized instruction designed to teach this to all of our students. This would be covered as part of an advisory program, should that be instituted at any point.

Professional Development

Throughout the school year, three teachers are attending training in teaching content-area reading skills. They meet once each quarter to learn new techniques and to discuss their successes or failures with previously learned techniques. These teachers will then be available as resources to the entire staff on reading instruction. The teachers are Dee Jay Redders, Kim Katzenmeyer, and Jolene Lenth.

Evansville Community School District Student Services School Board Report January 14, 2008

Krista R. Jones, Director of Student Services

21st Century Skills: ICT Skills Literacy

Information and communications technology literacy is critical for students with disabilities in that ICT literacy opens doors to the accomplishment of writing (motor aspects), computer access, written composition, reading, learning/studying, math, activities of daily living, mobility, vision, and hearing. For students with disabilities, ICT literacy is typically fostered through the use of assistive technology equipment or products which are designed to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities.

When working with students with disabilities, the emphasis is on how to best access, store, and retrieve information – commonly called “executive” functioning of the brain. For some students with significant disabilities, the use of technology (i.e. a “talk” switch) is the primary mode of communication. For students with learning disabilities who are preparing for a post-secondary career at the college level, ICT literacy is the key to accessing information and producing a product (specialized software such as “Dragon Naturally Speaking”) that accurately reflects their skills and knowledge.

In helping student to achieve literacy, we ask 4 questions:

1. What task is it that we want this student to do, that he/she is unable to do at a level that reflects his/her skills or abilities?
2. Is the student currently able to complete tasks with special strategies or accommodations?
3. Is there currently assistive technology used to address this task?

4. Would the use of assistive technology help the student perform this skill more easily or efficiently with less personal assistance?

Assistive technology ensures that every student has equal access to literacy – both content driven literacy and ICT specific literacy.

Professional Development

On January 14th, 15 staff from across our district participated with 15 staff from the Edgerton School District in a full-day training in *Non-Violent Crisis Intervention*. The training was conducted by two licensed trainers from CESA 2.

Upcoming Events

January 7	K-12 Pupil Services Staff meeting
January 9	K-12 Special Education Staff meeting
January 15	6:30 – 8:00 Parent Educator Network meeting: <i>Being an Effective Advocate</i>
January 31	Rock County Transition Advisory Council @ BTC
February 19	Evansville Community School District hosts Rock County Transition Fair – EHS LMC 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY SCHOOL BOARD REPORT JANUARY 2008

21ST CENTURY SKILLS: Information, Media and Technology Skills

“Just 20 years ago, cell phones, laptops, pagers, and fax machines were in the realm of scientists and science fiction. Today, those technologies and the Internet have gained widespread public acceptance and use. It is clear that, in today's Digital Age, students must be technologically literate to live, learn, and work successfully. The No Child Left Behind Act requires participating states to strive for technological literacy by all eighth graders (enGauge, 2002).

Information Literacy: To be information literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information. Information literacy is becoming a more important part of K-12 education. It is also a vital part of university-level education. In our information-centric world, students must develop skills early on so they are prepared for post-secondary opportunities whether that be the workplace or in pursuit of education.

Students Who Are Information Literate:

Before Accessing Information

- Determine what is known and what is needed for problem solving.
- Identify different sources of information, including text, people, video, audio, and databases.
- Prioritize sources based on credibility and relevance.

When Accessing Information

- Identify and retrieve relevant information from sources; use technology to enhance searching.

- Revise information-gathering strategies that prove to be ineffective.
- Understand how information retrieved does or does not address original problem.
- Evaluate information in terms of credibility and social, economic, political, legal, and ethical issues that may impact it; use technology to facilitate evaluation.

After Information Is Extracted

- Use retrieved information to accomplish a specific purpose.
- Present information clearly and persuasively using a range of technology tools and media.
- Evaluate the processes and products of these activities, including resulting social consequences.

Information and Technology Literacy: Not too long ago, technology literacy was considered a need only for those in the programming industry. Today, the growth of information and digital communication technologies is changing the nature of social interactions and collaborative endeavors. Digital technology, in all its forms, allows information to be continuously available and adapted for different uses. Computers, handheld personal digital assistants (PDAs), on-line resources, networks and mobile telephone systems allow us to extend the reach of our cognitive capabilities and communication. Participating in this digital world is fast becoming a necessary condition for successful participation in society. It is now extremely necessary for schools to prepare their students to enter this world through the use of information and communication technologies, such as computers, networking and other digital and non-digital technologies as well as audio, video and other media tools.

Students Who Are Technologically Literate:

- Demonstrate a sound conceptual understanding of the nature of technology systems and view themselves as proficient users of these systems.
- Understand and model positive, ethical use of technology in both social and personal contexts.
- Use a variety of technology tools in effective ways to increase creative productivity.
- Use communication tools to reach out to the world beyond the classroom and communicate ideas in powerful ways.
- Use technology effectively to access, evaluate, process and synthesize information from a variety of sources.
- Use technology to identify and solve complex problems in real-world contexts.

Evansville High School
Associate Principal/Athletic Director
School Board Report
January 7, 2008

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT/PROGRESS ON LEARNING GOALS:

- December Attendance Rates
 - 93.39 % (**2006 = 93.50**)
 - 93.39 % + Excused Absences = 99.04 % (**2006 = 98.96**)
 - 00.96 % Unexcused Absent (**2006 = 01.04%**)
 - 1 Habitual Truant Referral (**2006 = 1**)
 - **Total Habitual Truant Referrals 2007-08 school year = 3 (2006-07 = 4)**

- December Discipline Summary
 - 93 (16.7%) Discipline Referrals (2006 = 126, 22.3%)
 - 4 (2006 = 8) Students Suspended Out-of-School = 8.25 Days (2006=24.25)
 - 6 (2006 = 7) Students Suspended In-School = 5.00 Days (2006 = 5.25)
 - 91 % of students receiving attendance related detentions served their assigned detention(s) in December (23 attendance related detentions/2 no shows).
 - 1 (2006 = 1) Student received a truancy citation referral in December.
 - **Total of 2 (2006 = 5) students have received a truancy citation referral in the 2007-08 school year.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPCOMING EVENTS:

- EHS will be hosting the WIAA Division 2 Wrestling Regional meet on Saturday, February 9, 2008.
- EHS will be hosting a Boys WIAA Division 3 Regional Final game on Saturday, February 23, 2008.
- EHS will be hosting the Girls WIAA Division 4 Sectional Semi-Final game on Thursday, March 7, 2008.