Passion + Standards = Improved Student Learning?

In the last edition of the NETA newsletter I wrote about passion. What is your passion? What drives your students? How can you harness things you and your students are passionate about and turn that into improved student learning?

ISTE Standards

If you haven't taken a look at the ISTE (International Society of Technology in Education) Standards, I would highly recommend you peruse those documents. There are ISTE Standards for students, teachers, coaches, and more. So, how do these standards apply to being passionate?

If you go to ISTE's website (http://www.iste.org) and peek at the standards for teachers, you will find the first standard is titled “Facilitate and inspire student learning and creativity.” Under that heading, it states, “Teachers use their knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning, and technology to facilitate experiences that advance student learning, creativity, and innovation in both face-to-face and virtual environments.” Wow! That is a pretty lofty standard when you start to unpack it.

Do you mix your face-to-face environment with virtual environments? One way to do this is to create a “Blended Learning” experience. By definition, blended learning is “a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path or pace.”

Dig Deeper

A deeper look into the first standard reveals four “strands” that would support the overall concept of “Facilitating and inspiring student learning and creativity.” Under this heading, you will see that they use verbs like promote, support, engage, explore, and model. It supports this whole idea of passion, creativity, and improved student learning. And, that is just the first standard!
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If you can share a success story related to technology in the classroom, or a software solution review, we’d love to print it in a future newsletter. For making the contribution, you will receive a 2015 Spring Conference T-shirt.

Contact Julie Moore, phone (402) 540-1904 or e-mail executivedirector@netasite.org with a short summary to see if your story can be included in a future issue!

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NETA is an affiliate of ISTE—The International Society for Technology in Education.
Message from the President Elect

#socialmedia #ftw

Who is your audience?
Secondly, social media allows us as educators to tell the real story that is happening in our schools with very little effort. First start with who your audience is. If you teach in a K-6 classroom, students are most likely not the people you are trying to communicate with online. So what social media platforms are their parents on? Statistics would tell you most likely Facebook. A teacher in my school district mentioned during a meeting that she doesn’t check her daughter’s school website, but she sees what’s going on by what shows up in her Facebook feed. Then she may click on a link back to the school’s website that she might not have seen otherwise.

If you teach high school, statistics would tell you that students are most likely on Twitter or Instagram. A family and consumer science teacher told me this week that she knows her kids check Instagram throughout the day, so she started her own class account so that kids would be “looking at her class” throughout the day. Schools are also using hashtags across social media platforms to build a sense of community among students, staff and the general public. Go to http://search.twitter.com and type in #yorkdukes for a great example. Many of these things can be done from the smartphone in your pocket or purse.

Help the fading memory
If you don’t think you have the time, make it a “job” in your classroom so that all you have to do is proofread what a student typed. We all know that a student’s memory of their school day fades as they walk from the building to the car. With social media, parents of your students can have a visual prompt through their feed to help their child’s memory!

Tips to get started
Eric Sheninger (Twitter: @e_sheninger), former high school principal and current Senior Fellow at the International Center for Leadership in Education, wrote a blog post titled “Become the Storyteller-in-Chief,” a great article with simple tips to get started sharing things that happen daily in schools (http://bit.ly/1v3NXBr). As he says, “The mainstream media rarely shares the impactful work in schools that is actually making a difference in the lives of schools.” That’s where social media comes in! Whatever platform you think will best engage your audience, be there. Digital citizenship and teaching students how to interact in these spaces should not be overlooked, because if you do not teach proper etiquette, who will? You can find excellent, already made K–12 lessons from Common Sense Media (http://commonsensemedia.org. Click on Education and Digital Citizenship).

If we would only share
Social media is too easy not to use as either a way to improve your teaching or share your day with parents or the rest of the world. We can all learn so much from each other, if we would only share. As Angela Maiers said back in April at the NETA 2014 Conference: “You are a genius and the world needs your contribution.” That’s where social media comes in, for the win. ❖
NETA Board Openings
Do you know someone who would like to be more involved with NETA? Would you like to be more involved with NETA?

Board of Directors
NETA has four vacancies on the Board of Directors. If you feel you have the skills and knowledge that will help the NETA organization, please consider submitting your name as a candidate for the NETA Board of Directors. Or maybe you know a member that you feel would be an excellent candidate. Encourage them to submit their name for the ballot. Board members serve a three-year term. Candidates need to obtain permission from their administrators before submitting their name for the ballot. NETA reimburses expenses and substitute pay for board meeting/conference attendance. Candidates will be asked to provide a digital photo and a short narrative for the ballot and web site.

Responsibilities:
• Attend at least three day-long meetings each year.
• Assist with setup and attend meeting the day & evening prior to the spring conference.
• Attend and have significant duties during both days of the spring conference.
• Attend a multi-day strategic planning retreat in the summer each year (Dates: July 13–15, 2015).
• Provide at least one newsletter contribution during their term.
• Currently all Board members are members of the Outreach and Conference Committees. Board members self-select and will serve on other committees as well. Committees may do considerable discussion electronically between meetings when necessary.

Candidates must be members of NETA.

Two officer positions are also available, Treasurer and President Elect. The duties for the two officer positions are as follows:

President Elect
• Have been a NETA member at least one year prior to being nominated for the position.
• Serve for the President when the President is unable to serve. Shall automatically assume the office of President upon resignation of the President. Shall complete the term of office of the resigned President and shall then serve the full year to which elected.
• Be responsible for aiding in the development of NETA.
• Be responsible for developing and implementing the annual conference.
• Serve one year as President Elect, then one year as President and one year as Past President.

Treasurer
• Establish the account(s) of NETA, as approved by the Board of Directors.
• Establish procedures based on the NETA Board guidelines for the depositing of funds and the maintenance of Association properties.
• Receive and disburse all funds of NETA as authorized by the Board of Directors.
• Be re-elected on the odd numbered years.
• Be prepared to submit records for an annual internal and/or external review to a committee composed of the Executive Director, the President, the President Elect and one board member.
• Be bondable.

Deadline to submit information for ballot: December 5, 2014

Please go to the following online form and submit your nomination information.
http://netasite.org/netaboardopenings. A digital picture for the ballot needs to be sent via email to Jason Everett. The picture should be a headshot about 1.25” X 2” at 300 dpi, or if it is lower resolution needs to be larger so our staff can reduce the size and increase the resolution.

Any questions can be directed to the NETA Past President: Jason Everett
ESU 10
PO Box 850
76 Plaza Blvd.
Kearney, NE 68845
email: jason.everett@netasite.org
This past summer our district was fortunate to send 17 educators to the ISTE Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Our district’s goal was to inspire and transform the mindset of our staff through the sessions, keynotes, and networking opportunities. We expected they would bring back ideas and resources to share with other staff members in our district. Our guidance counselor, Dustin Favinger (@CHS_M-F), was “wowed” by the remarkable Adam Bellow (@adambellow) and his session where the attendees were asked to take a selfie and post to Instagram with the hashtag #TYIW (This Year I Will...).

Post for accountability
Mr. Favinger pointed out that it is easy to set goals once and never have to revisit them and reflect on your progress. The power in this activity is he created his goals, posted and shared with staff, students, parents, and administration. He feels highly accountable.

He can see it every day when he opens his office door and it is not something he can “put off.” Posting the goals keeps them real and something he must pursue. At the end of the year he believes part of his evaluation discussion could be based on what goals he has accomplished. His vision is to bring staff together at the end of the year and talk about what we accomplished, what we did not (and why?), and how we will move forward.

Compelling idea
This movement compelled me to reflect on my own professional objectives and set my own goals.

#TYIW (Patty Wolfe)
- Begin blogging to share and reflect.
- Develop and work on personalized Professional Development for our staff.
- Build stronger relationships with staff and students.
- Bring coding to our elementary students.
- Make more connections in my Professional Learning Network.
- Be an active Technology coach.

Classroom Technology Showcase
The annual Classroom Technology Showcase will be held on Friday, November 21, 2014, during the NASB State Conference in Omaha.

Would you like to bring students to showcase technology uses in the classroom?

Please contact Gregg Robke (grobke@esu4.net) for more information!

http://netasite.org
NETA SPONSORS a variety of contests for teachers and students. This year we were pleased to again receive funds from the CenturyLink Foundation to give out five classroom grants to PreK–12 teachers who demonstrated an innovative use of technology with students.

The purpose of the grant is to:

• Recognize Nebraska PreK–12 teachers who are using technology in innovative ways with students

• Increase an awareness of how technology can enhance classroom learning

• Provide an avenue for classroom teachers to fund innovative technology projects

• Model best practices of technology integration that improve student achievement.

Grants are to be utilized by teachers to benefit the students in their classrooms. CenturyLink service was neither required nor considered in review of applications.

We are pleased to announce the winners of the 2014 CenturyLink Teachers and Technology Grants:

- Steve McCarville, Holy Name School—Cultural Awareness through Technology ($2999.80)
- Katie Morrow, O’Neill Public Schools—Publishing on the EDGE ($3,000)

They were recognized on April 24, 2014 at the 2014 NETA Spring Conference.

The following reports will provide a glimpse into how these projects have progressed since districts received their checks in April.

Paul Clark—Whitetail Creek Elementary, Gretna PS

Design It, Build It, Make it Happen: $3000

The primary goal of this project is to provide 3rd–5th grade students with hands-on, computer-based STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) activities. The grant has provided various computer-interfacing circuit boards for classes of students to design and develop projects. As a result of this project, both teachers and students have been able to learn about and use equipment such as Makey Makey and Pico boards to create various animatronic projects.

These projects use the Scratch programming language, and sensors to allow students to dream up, design and build projects out of items such as old plastic bottles, clay, cardboard or other things that may have been tossed out. Students at Whitetail Creek have already begun learning about Scratch, a free programming language developed at M.I.T for young students. Third graders are busy designing their first project, a puppet-like character that will use a tilt-sensor to help them control actions on a computer screen. Over the course of this school year other grades will use various interface boards to develop their own projects using various sensors: light, sound and temperature.

More information about the project, uses for the boards, or ideas can be found at: https://sites.google.com/site/k12boards/.

Deb Habe—Loup City Middle School

iPads in the Gym: $3000

My grant project involves sixth graders recording their heart rate before and after exercise in P.E. class using an app on one of five iPads purchased with the grant money. We have been collecting data now for four weeks. The data that is being collected using Google Forms will be used in Math class to create graphs and evaluate results. We have discussed the Scientific Method which the students were talking about in Science class and have come up with a problem and a hypothesis and now we are in the data collection stage.

Students are complaining much less about their jogging time in P.E. now that they get to record their heart rate when they are finished. Students have noticed the difference in their heart rate depending on the amount of effort that they exert during the opening warm up session.

(Reports continued on the next page)
(Grant reports, continued)

**Mike Mansour—Jesuit Academy**

**Ultimate Maker Space: $3000**

The Jesuit Academy Maker Space is starting to bloom. We purchased several items last May that arrived in time for some end of the year experimentation. In the final weeks of school, students in Advanced Algebra worked on a variety of sample projects with Makey Makey’s, Arduinos, and Raspberry Pis. The highlight was a set of musical stairs in our elementary stairwell (similar to the movie Big), operated remotely by a Raspberry Pi.

Over the summer, we purchased a new round of Chromebooks that helped move our middle school to a 1:1 device ratio. This has already opened up new opportunities for teachers and students throughout the school. It’s been exciting to show teachers Google Classroom and other tools that are much easier to implement with 1:1.

In early October, we began a unit on electricity, which integrates many of the previously purchased tools and more. Additionally, we’ve completed, or will complete a number of low-tech *make* projects. For our introductory unit on the scientific method and measurement, we built go-karts from recycled desk parts. Going forward, we have many more *makes* planned and will soon have a website documenting our projects.

**Steve McCarville—Holy Name**

**Cultural Awareness through Technology: $2,999.80**

The cultural awareness project will allow our Jr. High students the opportunity to interview speakers from other cultures to learn more about the cultures and how, upon moving to the United States, they adapted to the American culture. The tablets purchased with grant funding will allow the students to research cultures, video tape the interviews, capture pictures and work on a video to present to adults and community members.

The grant funds were used to purchase 20 ASUS Memo Pad HD 7 tablets. Over the summer, time was spent reviewing apps, setting up tablets and making sure each student had a Google education account. Once school started, the students began using the tablets for class work to familiarize themselves with the keyboard and apps. They also practiced audio recording and video recording. The teachers met to discuss which community members they would like to contact and ask to come to the classrooms for interviews. The students practiced interviewing skills and developed a set of questions for the visitors. Class time was also spent on researching the cultures to provide the students with a rudimentary background of the cultures of the speakers. Future plans include at least one interview with each community member. Students will be divided into groups allowing each group to focus on one speaker and culture. November 20th is the scheduled date for the evening presentation. During the presentation, a video will be shown highlighting the interviews and cultural artifacts shared by the speakers. In December we will work on uploading the video to share with the community.

**Katie Morrow—O’Neill Public School**

**Publishing on the EDGe: $3000**

*Publishing on the EDGe* (Educating the Digital Generation) is facilitating the formation of *The Digital Publishing Corps* at O’Neill High School. This agency-type authoring team equips the student team with 24/7 access to a digital publishing studio—an iPad mini. The group of student journalists is working to achieve two main goals throughout the 2014-2015 school year. First, they will be publishing a monthly digital magazine—to highlight innovative practices and transformative technologies. Distributed to the students, faculty, community patrons, and global audiences, it will challenge their writing talents and develop additional entrepreneurial and collaboration skills. Secondly, the team will serve as reverse mentors for the faculty and staff at O’Neill High School as they begin to create digital textbooks and other learning materials.

After reviewing student applications, O’Neill Public Schools provided in-kind support to expand the originally anticipated 10 member group to 14 students. Equipped with iPAd minis, each is learning to be a “mojo” (mobile journalist). Our first monthly newsletter was published at the end of September, with additional aspirations as the year continues. The students (and advisor) are learning a lot about authoring and publishing digital content!

See the next page for information on how to apply for the CenturyLink Teachers and Technology Grant for 2015.
How many are there?
Altogether, there are five over-arching standards for teachers.
• Facilitate and inspire student learning and creativity
• Design and develop digital age learning experiences and assessments
• Model digital age work and learning
• Promote and model digital citizenship and responsibility
• Engage in professional growth and leadership

I want to challenge you to take a look at these standards and ask yourself, “What am I currently doing that supports these standards?” or “What can I change in my classroom to support these standards?”

Does Nebraska Support the ISTE Standards?
While the state of Nebraska has not yet adopted the ISTE standards, they have been infused into some of the English Language Arts Standards. For example, if you go to NDE’s home page (http://www.education.ne.gov), you will find a listing of these standards. When you click on English Language Arts, you can read the standards. When you find the Multiple Literacies strand, you will see that “Students apply information fluency and digital citizenship.” And, when you dig even deeper you will notice that students will “use appropriate digital tools to communicate with others for conveying information, gathering opinions, and solving problems.”

Rubric of Essential Technology Conditions (RETC)
Furthermore, the Department of Education has also published on its website a rubric of essential technology conditions (http://www.education.ne.gov/Neat/Documents/NERETC.pdf). This is meant to be a guide to gauge where you may fall in different areas in the use of technology, professional development, leadership, and technology training. At the proficient level under Educator Competencies, it states “Teachers use technology to develop new learning environments that are collaborative, interactive, customized,” as well as “Teachers explore and evaluate new technologies and their educational impact.”

Is that it?
No, that is not necessarily it. It is my hope to inspire you to reflect on your technology practices in your classroom. There are many more standards to look at, many more articles to share, and many more examples I could provide. There is simply not enough space in this column to share them all.

I do want to encourage you to “Engage in Professional Growth” by researching some of these articles to see how they may fit within your “passion driven classroom.” It is not going to happen overnight, but with time, the goal would be to see a more student-centered, passion-inspired classroom with the outcome of increased student learning.

Please feel free to contact me at any time regarding your experience, questions, and/or comments about NETA. You can connect with me on twitter (@grobke) or email me: gregg.robke@netasite.org.
NETA…On the Move
Request for Sessions for the NETA 2015 Spring Conference

NETA is looking for members and friends who are willing to share their classroom, school or district technology experiences with others from across the region by making a presentation at the NETA spring conference, April 23–24, 2015. Presenters who can address uses of technology in any discipline and at any educational level are encouraged to submit a presentation. Sessions are lecture/demonstration, conversation style, BYOD (Bring Your Own Device), or poster/playground sessions and last for 45 minutes.

Poster/playground sessions
A poster/playground session allows many presenters to set up in one large session area with poster boards, new technology for participants to try, or other resources. It is possible to bring a computer for the session if it is stated ahead of time on the proposal. Participants stroll through the gallery in an informal manner while presenters show projects and answer questions.

 Presenter guidelines
Lead presenters pay the significantly reduced rate of $25.00 and are expected to provide ample handouts or Web/email access to their information after the conference. A co-presenter may assist in the session. A co-presenter must, however, register for the conference as a regular attendee (Early Bird Pricing: $125.00 full conference or $100.00 for one day). A limit of three presenters per session will be printed in the program. Students are allowed to assist in a presentation as guests of the conference (limit of four, and must be supervised at all times).

Questions should be directed to Josh Allen, President Elect/Conference Chair, by email at josh.allen@netasite.org

Mark Your Calendar—Submission Deadline!
Sessions may only be submitted online, and must be entered by the November 14, 2014 deadline. No emailed sessions will be accepted. Click the link at the NETA home page at http://netasite.org to submit. The online session submission site is open now!

BlendEd—A Statewide Initiative for Blended Learning

Blended learning is an educational model that combines traditional face-to-face/distance classroom methods with online delivery and participation; and an element of student control over time, place, path, and pace.

Have you heard about BlendEd?
The BlendEd project is one of three statewide initiatives lead by the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council and supported by ESU leadership across the state. BlendEd project strives to provide equitable access to educational resources for all Nebraska students in a personalized learning model, giving students some control over time, place, path and pace.

The project has these components:
Learning Object Repository (LOR) Content System
A digital content repository (Safari Montage) for existing and future collections of multimedia learning objects and course materials.

Learning Management System (LMS)
Allows teachers and students to access, create, & organize instructional content; perform testing; support collaborative learning activities; and deliver instruction to students.

Federated Directory Services System (LDAP)
A statewide directory services structure that facilitates single sign-on access to all instructional resources for every teacher and learner.

Statewide Professional Development (PD) System
A comprehensive system of professional development providing technology-assisted instructional design training, embedded PD, and PD content shared between and among the NDE, ESUCC, higher education & other educational partners.

Evaluative System
A persistent system of assessment and analytics that enables the diagnosis of specific student achievement problems and the identification of curriculum or teacher shortages.

For more information, go to http://www.esucc.org/blended or contact Beth Kabes—bkabes@esu7.org, Craig Hicks—chicks@esu13.org, or Linda Dickeson—ldickes@lps.org.
Student Contests and Teacher Opportunities

Guidelines & interactive forms for all contests and opportunities are at http://netasite.org

Deadline for all contests is January 23, 2015 EXCEPT for the Logo Contest with the deadline of December 6, 2014.

We encourage you to utilize the interactive forms from the web that allow you to legibly print your entry form. This will help contest chairs so contest winners and sponsors’ names are spelled correctly in our publications.

A mission of NETA is to provide recognition to outstanding Midwestern and Nebraska students, pre-service teachers and teachers, in part by providing contests, scholarships, and grants. The forms and guidelines for these opportunities were printed in the September newsletter, with a summary listed below. Check our website for interactive entry forms and detailed instructions for student contests and teacher opportunities.

Contest for Students Only
Student contests are open to all Midwestern PK–12 public and private school students, unless otherwise noted.

PK–12 Graphic Imagery Contest
Entries in the graphic imagery contest could include digital photographs, images that have been digitally enhanced, hand drawn images and others—be creative. All entries should be original work created by the individual submitting the entry—clip art should not be used. Contact Jackie Ediger with questions at jackie.ediger@netasite.org.

NETA Conference Logo Contest
Create a design for the NETA Spring Conference 2015—NETA... On the Move. Encourage students’ creativity by entering artwork created with computers in the NETA Conference Logo Contest. This year there will be one winner chosen from each of the following age categories: 5–8, 9–12, and Post-Secondary/College. One of the winning designs will be declared Overall Winner and will be used on the conference materials and T-shirts. All age category winners will also be published in the NETA newsletter and/or on the NETA web site. NOTE: Earlier deadline for this contest—December 6, 2014. Contact Evi Wusk with questions at evi.wusk@netasite.org.

Infographics Contest
Midwestern PK–12 Students, show us what you have learned with an Infographic. Contact Lucas Bingham with questions at lucas.bingham@netasite.org.

PK–12 Open Class Contest!
Write a great computer app? Create an awesome desktop publishing file? Digital story? Podcast? An original music composition? We want them all! Contact Evi Wusk with questions at evi.wusk@netasite.org.

Brand It Contest
Entries in the “Brand It” design contest could include any of the following: An original logo for a school-based business, a re-designed logo for your school building or district—include original design with your entry, or an original logo for a local area business. Contact Matt Lee with questions at matthew.lee@netasite.org.

Wanted!
Judges for all contests!
We are looking for people willing to assist with the NETA contest judging, scheduled on Saturday, February 7, 2015 in Waverly. If you are interested, please contact Lynne Herr at lynne.herr@netasite.org. Lunch is provided, along with a terrific learning experience and great company. Please join us for a fun day!

NOTE: If you have students entered in any of the contests, you will not be able to judge that particular contest.

(Contests for Educators on the next page)
Contests for Educators
Teacher contests are open to Midwestern public/private teachers, unless otherwise noted. Deadline for all teacher opportunities is January 23, 2015!

Opportunity to Attend NETA 2015!
Midwestern public/private teachers who are in their first three years of teaching—put your name “in the hat” to possibly win a free NETA registration. If you can answer “yes” to all of the following, please submit your name for the drawing 1) teacher with three years or less teaching experience, 2) have not attended a NETA Conference, 3) knows that the school or district does not have the means to pay registration costs, 4) has strong interest in use of technology in the classroom, and 5) has principal/ supervisor support. Contact Lynne Herr with questions at lynne.herr@netasite.org.

Opportunity to Attend ISTE 2015
Win a trip to ISTE 2015 in Philadelphia next summer! We are asking you to use your creative technology skills to submit your contest entry video explaining how you use technology to enhance student learning and how attending ISTE 2015 would strengthen what you already do. What are you hoping to learn or gain by attending sessions at ISTE 2015? Trips will be awarded with a maximum of $1800 each (A maximum of six winners will be awarded between the NETA grants and Opportunity to Attend ISTE 2015 contests combined). Contact Lynne Herr with questions at lynne.herr@netasite.org.

Excellence in Leading with Technology Award
The purpose of the Nebraska Excellence in Leading with Technology Award is to recognize and honor an individual who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in implementing technology to improve teaching, learning or administration. This contest is open to Nebraska PK–12 public and private school administrators and technology coordinators whose primary job role does not include teaching students. Contact Jason Schmidt with questions at jason.schmidt@netasite.org.

Excellence in Teaching with Technology Award
The purpose of the Nebraska Excellence in Teaching with Technology Award is to recognize and honor an individual who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in implementing technology to improve teaching and learning. This contest is open to Nebraska PK–12 public and private school teachers. Contact Jason Schmidt with questions at jason.schmidt@netasite.org.

App Smash Contest
App smashing is the process of using multiple apps in conjunction with one another to complete a final task or project. Examples can be found at http://goo.gl/glSfeP. This contest is open to Midwestern PK–12 public and private school teachers, as well as pre-service teachers. Teacher Divisions are for teachers of grades PK–4, 5–8, 9–12, and pre-service. Contact Heather Callihan with questions at heather.callihan@netasite.org.

Technology Grant Program
To further encourage the linking of technology to the curriculum, NETA is proud to continue the Technology Grant Program. Grants will be awarded with a maximum of $1500 each (A maximum of six winners will be awarded between the NETA grants and Opportunity to Attend ISTE 2015 contests combined). Contact Angie Wassenmiller with questions at angie.wassenmiller@netasite.org.

What’s Your Impact? Video Contest—New This Year!
How has technology impacted your ability to meet curricular needs? Create a video that features students, showcases their work and explains how technology is enhancing teaching and learning in your classroom. This contest is open to Midwestern PK–6 public and private school teachers. Contact Kristina Peters with questions at kristina.peters@netasite.org.

The Best Ideas Belong to Someone Else Contest
Have you taught a great lesson integrating technology into your curriculum that others should know about? Have you infused technology throughout a great unit that others could emulate? Send us your best tech infused lesson or activity. This contest is open to PK–12 public and private school teachers, as well as pre-service teachers. Contact Tina Sauser with questions at tina.sauser@netasite.org.
4 Tips for a Winning NETA Contest Entry

- How will I get support for technology at my district?
- I’m excited to integrate technology, but how do I get others to join me?
- Am I really the only one here who sees how technology integration helps students?
- I would love to go to a national technology conference, but I can’t afford it.

If you’ve ever found yourself asking one (or all) of these questions with a tone of voice similar to Eeyore, you’re reading the right article. One easy way to get some Tigger-like energy bubbling up around educational technology at your school is by winning a contest. Have you ever noticed how easy it is to get support—both time and money—for athletics after the team wins a state title? Energy follows success—especially when competition is involved. Who doesn’t like to be associated with a winning team?

One way to get the success bandwagon rolling at your school is by entering and winning a NETA technology contest. A small organizational time investment now can pay huge dividends later for you, your students, and your district.

**TIP #1:** Ask your students. Provide the students with this link to the contest entry chart: [http://netasite.org/2015contests](http://netasite.org/2015contests). They can easily find an appropriate category and click on the contest description.

**TIP #2:** Build the contest into your lesson planning. How could you design a unit that would result in a student project entry? This double-dipping will not only save you time, but will also help you jazz up your current classroom practice and an expanded audience might increase student motivation.

**TIP #3:** Think outside the box, not outside the rules. Be creative! Do something different. If NETA stands for anything, it’s innovation. Approach a contest in a new and different way. It might just make your entry stand out from the pack. That said, keep in mind the due dates and requirements to ensure your entry makes it to judging.

**TIP #4:** Start today. Like now. Go! Why are you still reading this? Don’t sit at the NETA conference this year watching other teachers and students get recognized. You could be the one Tweeting travel pictures from the ISTE Conference in Philadelphia. Take one small step to get this ball rolling. Think small wins. Tell a teacher down the hall, mention it to your study hall students, put it in your lesson plans. Find some way to hold yourself accountable for fitting this in.

Put these tips to use and you might just find yourself saying, “Look at all this technology support at my district! We are working together collaboratively and all seeing how thoughtful tech integration benefits our students. Hmmmm . . . now just what should I pack for my trip to Philadelphia?”

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**Let’s Keep Learning!**

“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.”
—Benjamin Franklin

NETA board members would like to continue to share information with the NETA membership to help continue learning. Please find information from a few of the heavily attended sessions at the NETA 2014 spring conference.

**Field Trips Gone Virtual**
Molly Aschoff
Educational Service Unit 8, Neligh, NE

**Top Ten Chrome Extensions and Favorite Apps**
Jackie Ediger
Educational Service Unit 9, Hastings, NE
[http://goo.gl/aN4tVz](http://goo.gl/aN4tVz)

**From Consumers to Creators: Tools for Students to Demonstrate Learning**
Mickie Mueller
Norfolk Public Schools
[https://sites.google.com/site/2014netamueller/create](https://sites.google.com/site/2014netamueller/create)

**Ten Free On-line Resources Every Teacher Should Know: Version 2014**
Neal Topp, Bob Goeman, and Denny Hanley
University of Nebraska at Omaha
[http://goo.gl/vx6iLI](http://goo.gl/vx6iLI)
The NETA Conference—NETA...On the Move, April 23–24, 2015, will again feature great speakers from around the country!

Adam Bellow
Adam Bellow is one of today’s leading speakers on educational technology and infusing technology to aid school reformation. He is the founder of both eduTecher (www.edutecher.net/) and eduClipper (educlipper.net/main.html). In addition to these free resources, Adam launched the popular charity Change the World student-focused charity campaign.

Bellow was honored by ISTE in 2010 as an emerging leader and then again in 2011 when he was named Outstanding Young Educator of the year. Bellow has been a sought after speaker in the education and educational technology circuit over the past few years because of his particular high-speed delivery which blends humor and rapid fire visuals in a style that re-defines slide-aided presentation. He has given memorable talks and keynotes at conferences such as ISTE, #140edu, and TEDxNYED amongst others.

Bellow is currently serving as CEO of eduClipper, the edtech startup that he founded in 2012. eduClipper is a free web tool focused on helping students and teachers find, share, and build valid learning experiences in a K–12 safe educational social platform.

George Couros
George Couros is the Division Principal of Innovative Teaching and Learning for Parkland School Division, and an Innovative Leadership Consultant. He has worked with all levels of school from K–12 as a teacher, technology facilitator, and school based administrator. He is a sought after speaker on the topic of innovative student learning and engagement and has worked with schools/organizations all over the world. George is also the creator of Connected Principals, the founder of Connected Canada, as well as the School Admin Virtual Mentor Program (#SAVMP). His focus is to help organizations create optimal learning environments for innovation within schools.

Although George is a leader in the area of innovation, his focus is always the development of leadership and people and what is best for kids. He uses humor as a way to connect with all of those that he works with. His presentations are known to be both informative and entertaining, yet creating an emotional connection that helps people move to the next level. His mix of research, personal stories, and practical ways to implement new learning helps participants feel comfortable in taking risks in their own learning. You can learn more about George at his site http://georgecouros.ca.

Leslie Fisher
Leslie Fisher’s interest in technology began while studying music at the University of Southern California. She quickly realized the value of utilizing computers for music mixing and recording. She grabbed her 300 baud modem, jumped on the Internet (before anyone really called it the Internet) and started looking for music resources. She soon realized she was spending more time discovering technology than playing music so she changed her major and tried to figure out what geeky thing she could do for the rest of her life.

After graduating, Leslie worked for an Apple subsidiary before joining the Apple team as a Senior Systems Engineer in K–12 education. When the Internet took off in 1994, Leslie was one of the first Apple employees assigned to study Internet growth and implementation.

In 1997, Leslie was roadkill on Apple’s road to recovery and part of their massive lay off. She planned to spend most of her huge severance package golfing and waiting a few months to look for a job. The day after her layoff, her phone began to ring with Apple customers requesting consulting, training and presentation services. Before she could say fore, Fisher Technologies Inc. was created to help educators with their technology implementations and decisions.

(Continued on the next page)
Fisher Technologies Inc. is now a worldwide company (meaning one employee named Leslie gets to travel the world teaching) specializing in presenting technology solutions for educators as well as digital photography, editing and workflow.

Monica Isabel Martinez
Monica Isabel Martinez is the Director of Professional Development in Latin America and Southern US for the EdTech Team. In this position, Monica develops and facilitates professional development on the most current technology trends for the purpose of improving teaching and learning through innovative processes. She has developed many technology programs some of which have been adopted by districts, universities, and others that have been rolled out state-wide.

Monica has experience teaching students and professionals at all levels including elementary, secondary, and higher education while working in the US, Mexico, Colombia, Chile, Peru, Canada and Germany. Monica has a master’s degree in Educational Technology and is also a Google Apps EDU Certified Trainer and Administrator.

The NETA App!
Remember to download and visit the NETA app for information about NETA, including conferences, newsletters, and member benefits!

NETA Fall Conference Recap

The Nebraska Council of School Administrators (NCSA) and the Nebraska Educational Technology Association (NETA) continued our partnership to provide another successful comprehensive and informative conference on technologies available and utilized in Nebraska schools. The Nebraska Fall Ed Tech Conference was held October 9–10, 2014 at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney, Nebraska. Pre-conference workshops were held on Thursday, October 9th, including GAFE Circus Coming to a School Near You!; Google Script Gallery Working For You!; Minecraft is Meaningful: A Crash Course in Gamification; Power Up Your Digital Classroom!; Smash Learning in Your Classroom; and Using Meraki to Deploy and Manage iPads. Thank you to those leading the beneficial pre-conference workshops for your hard work and preparation!

The conference kicked off Thursday evening, October 9th, with dinner and a keynote presented by Dr. Robert Dillon. Dr. Dillon serves the students and community of the Affton School District as Director of Technology and Innovation. He spoke on “Engage, Empower, Energize: Realizing The Hope of Technology.”

Over 400 people attended the Nebraska Fall Ed Tech Conference at the Younes Conference Center. Attendees were able to choose from more than 70 sessions on Friday, October 10th. Each session was 45 minutes in length. For each 45 minute session participants were able to choose from 11 different session options. There were seven sessions offered throughout the day. In addition, during lunch Dr. Dillon facilitated a reflection and planning session with attendees for them to utilize time at the conference to create a plan to take back to their schools and districts with the information they were learning at the conference. Attendees were also able to visit over 30 vendors.

Conference feedback
When participants were asked what they liked best about the conference, the responses included:

“I loved the variety of sessions and the enthusiasm of all the presenters. I loved having so many new ideas I could literally implement the next day.”

“Wide range of topics, good vendors, and an opportunity to meet with other technology people.”

“Great to see old friends and get new ideas.”

“There was a lot of good relevant information. I came away with several things that I am already using.”

“The simple ideas to take back. I thought this was more for the tech people, but a really great idea for teachers.”

“It was a great day of sharing.”

For more information regarding the Nebraska Fall Ed Tech Conference and for presenter handouts, please visit the website http://www.fall.netasite.org
**Calendar of Technology Conferences & Seminars**

*Events of every type for educators, technicians & administrators*

**January 2015**

Florida Educational Technology Conference (FETC)  
January 20–23, 2015  
Orange County Convention Ctr, Orlando, FL  
fetc.org

**February 2015**

Texas Computer Education Association (TCEA)  
February 2–6, 2015  
Austin, TX  
www.tcea.org

Midwest Educational Technology Conference (METC)  
February 9–11, 2015  
St. Charles, MO  
metcconference.org

Nebraska Association for the Gifted (NAG) Conference  
February 26–27, 2015  
Omaha, NE  
www.negifted.org

**March 2015**

Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education (SITE)  
March 2–6, 2015  
Las Vegas, NV  
site.aace.org/conf/

**April 2015**

Infotec (by the AIM Inst.)  
April 21–22, 2015  
CenturyLink Center  
Omaha, NE  
infotec.org

NETA Spring Conference  
NETA...On the Move  
April 23–24, 2015  
CenturyLink Center  
Omaha, NE  
netasite.org

**May 2015**

United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA)  
April 26–29, 2015  
St. Louis, MO  
http://www.usdla.org

**June 2015**

Nebraska Career Education Conference (NCE)  
June 2–4, 2015  
Younes Conference Center  
Kearney, NE  
nceconference.com

Innovative Education Colorado (InnEdCO)  
(Formerly Technology in Education T.I.E)  
June 23–25, 2015  
Copper Mountain, CO  
innedco.org

ISTE Conference  
Connected Learning.  
Connected World.  
June 28–July 1, 2015  
Philadelphia, PA  
www.isteconference.org/2015/
NETA Statement of Purpose: The Nebraska Educational Technology Association exists for the purpose of providing leadership and promoting the application of technology to the educational process. Its span of interest includes all levels and aspects of education.

Name ___________________________________ Position ___________________________
Preferred Address ____________________________________________________________
City _________________________________ State _______ Zip _________________________
Home Phone ___________________________ Work Phone ____________________________
School/Agency Name ___________________ Email ________________________________

If you attended the Spring Conference in April 2014, one year of membership was included with your registration. If you would like to be a member, but can not attend the Spring Conference, membership dues are $25.00 and are good through April 2015. Make checks payable to NETA. To become a member, please fill out the above form and mail with check to:

NETA Membership
PO Box 484
Gretna, NE 68028

❑ I am a new member
❑ I was recruited by this current NETA member

Address changes should be sent to the above address or emailed to: executivedirector@netasite.org