Take a Look INSIDE:

**NETA Board Openings**
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.

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**Nebraska Fall Ed Tech Conference Recap**
Over 350 attendees enjoyed the great sessions and networking opportunities at the Nebraska Fall Ed Tech Conference, held at the Younes Conference Center on Kearney.

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**Six Gmail Tips You Don’t Want to Miss**
Gmail is something we use every day, but few educators maximize the capabilities. These six tips for Gmail will help you keep your inbox clean and help you stay organized.

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**Preview of Upcoming NETA Keynote and Featured Speakers**
The NETA Conference—Embrace Your Passion, April 21–22, 2016, will again feature great speakers from around the country! This year’s keynote speakers will be participating in “Neb Ed Talks,” short talks designed to inspire you to Embrace Your Passion. Check out the line-up of great speakers and the tentative schedule.

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**Message from the President**
*
*Josh Allen, Lewis Central Community Schools*

**Embrace Your Passion**

**WHEN YOU ARE** doing something you love and are passionate about, putting effort into it takes little to no effort. You care more about the results. Work doesn't feel like a four letter word.

Last year’s keynote speaker at the Nebraska Fall Ed Tech Conference (http://fall.netasite.org) Dr. Robert Dillon (http://twitter.com/ideaguy42) talked about the passions of teachers and how we should bring those into the classrooms. When we are passionate about a subject, it rubs off on kids. You hear more and more about “genius hour” in schools, where kids get to study their passions more in depth. Engagement skyrockets when learners are passionate.

**What’s new?**
At the 2016 NETA Spring Conference, we are asking you to embrace YOUR passions. Instead of having a single keynote, you will get to hear two keynotes each day during our first ever “Neb Ed Talks.” Those educators will give short, inspirational glimpses into what their passions are before turning you loose to learn from fantastic exhibitors and educators during the breakout sessions. This is not signaling a permanent change in the conference format. We are simply trying something new. With the move to CenturyLink Center Omaha last year, we didn't want to make EVERYTHING new in the same year! You can learn more about this year's keynote and featured speakers later in the newsletter.

**Share your passions**
We are currently seeking people to present on their passions. What gets you excited about being in your classroom or school? What are you sharing with your students that get them engaged and excited to get to your class? If there is a technology component to it, please consider submitting a presentation for the spring conference. Last year over 400 proposals were submitted for 198 session slots. That means the passion you have for your topic needs to come through in your description to catch the eyes of our review panel.

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NETA Newsletter
Published four times yearly. Contributions are welcome.
PO Box 484, Gretna, NE 68028
Phone (402) 540-1904
e-mail: executivedirector@netasite.org
http://netasite.org

NETA Officers and Board of Directors

Gregg Robke .......... Past President
ESU 4
gregg.robke@netasite.org
Josh Allen .......... President
Lewis Central Community Schools
josh.allen@netasite.org
Jackie Ediger .......... President Elect
ESU 9
jackie.ediger@netasite.org
Darci Lindgren .......... Secretary
Lindsay Holy Family School
darci.lindgren@netasite.org
Rich Molettiere .......... Treasurer
Omaha Public Schools
rich.molettiere@netasite.org
Heather Callihan ........ Board 2016
Northwest Public Schools
heather.callihan@netasite.org
Tina Sauser .......... Board 2016
Boone Central Schools
tina.sauser@netasite.org
Jason Schmidt .......... Board 2016
Bennington Public Schools
jason.schmidt@netasite.org
Angie Wassenniller .......... Board 2016
Concordia University
angie.wassenniller@netasite.org
Stephanie Danneh .......... Board 2017
Bertrand Community School
stephanie.danneh@netasite.org
Matthew Lee .......... Board 2017
Westside Community Schools
matthew.lee@netasite.org
Kristina Peters .......... Board 2017
Nebraska Department of Education
kristina.peters@netasite.org
Kent Steen .......... Board 2017
Lincoln Public Schools
kent.steen@netasite.org
Craig Badura .......... Board 2018
Aurora Public Schools
craig.badura@netasite.org
Ann Feldmann .......... Board 2018
Bellevue Public Schools
ann.feldmann@netasite.org
Patty Wolfe .......... Board 2018
Cozad Community Schools
patty.wolfe@netasite.org
Nick Ziegler .......... Board 2018
ESU 5
nick.ziegler@netasite.org

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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.

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!

NETA is an affiliate of ISTE—The International Society for Technology in Education.

NETA Executive Officers and Coordinators

Julie Moore .......... Executive Director
executivedirector@netasite.org
Tom Rolfs .......... Executive Liaison
Office of the CIO-NITC
tom.rolfs@netasite.org
Eliu Paopao .......... Exhibitor Coordinator
Chadron Public Schools
eliu.paopao@netasite.org

Lynn Behounek .......... Site Coordinator
Ralston Public Schools
lynn.behounek@netasite.org
Lynne Herr .......... Contest Coordinator
ESU 6
lynn.herr@netasite.org
Lucas Bingham .......... Web Coordinator
School District 145 of Waverly
lucas.bingham@netasite.org
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 11–13, 2016).
- 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, Secretary 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.

Secretary
- Record and archive the minutes of meetings of the Board of Directors and the NETA annual meeting.
- Make available a copy of the minutes to be made public within ten (10) working days of such meetings.
- See that actions requiring communication with members, other individuals or groups are promptly carried out.
- Track attendance of board members to meetings and report excessive absences to the board.
- File and distribute changes in policy or rules of order adopted at NETA board meetings.
- Be re-elected on the even numbered years.

Deadline to submit information for ballot: December 4, 2015

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 Gregg Robke. 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: Gregg Robke, ESU 4
gregg.robke@netasite.org
Message from the President Elect

Five Great Tools I Learned This Month from Twitter

1. Google Classroom
Google classroom is part of your Google account. Each teacher can distribute assignments, discussion questions or a post to the class. It is a basic Learning Management system, which keeps getting better and better. Recently Google added a calendar to show when assignments are due; a perfect way to help students get organized in each Google classroom. For more info go to: http://goo.gl/XhV99q #edchat, #gclassroom

2. Google Voice
Google Docs new feature is Google Voice. Text to speech just got better! I turned it on when I was in a workshop and it caught most of what was being said! It does a really nice job of voice to text. I can see this tool will be useful for students who are not fast typers or have trouble spelling. To turn on Google Voice, go to Tools>Voice typing and it will appear on the left side, ready to be used! #gclassroom #edchat #spedchat

I love connecting with professionals in education, online resources, and new or old friends. Twitter is a tool I use to maximize my professional learning by connecting with other educators from around the world. I have had a Twitter account since 2008.

I take time to see what is going on in education and technology, tweeting on occasion, sometimes off a news app called Zite. I enjoy reading and sharing articles on my iPad (it is very similar to Flipboard).

Each fall I like to tweet high school football scores and see how other teams are using the hashtag #nebpreps.

In this article, I’ll share with you the five things I have learned on Twitter this month.

Follow me on Twitter at @jackieediger.

(continued on the next page)
3. **Photomath**
I have always loved math and this app has some serious potential! Photomath is like a camera calculator; you point your camera phone at the math problem and the app will help teach how to solve the problem and give you the answer! Available in iTunes, Google Play Store and Windows Store. #ipadchat

4. **Trello**
This is an app for individuals or teams to use to organize anything! Drag and drop cards, put them in different order, all projects and lists in one place. Cards can be made private or share with a team, then you can assign tasks to different team members, and see where they are on their part of the project. Team members can mark things done and make comments for everyone to see. All your communication in one place instead of on stickies, in emails, docs and phone calls. This is web-based and an app on your phone or iPad. #esu9 #nebedchat

5. **Plickers**
...or you can call them Paper Clickers! This is a great quick response tool to use in the classroom to check for understanding. The teacher puts a question into Plickers.com under their free account, and then it can be shown on the big screen. Students hold up their card to show if they picked A, B, C or D as their answer (image below). They just added folders, which was a feature that was missing and now you can pull up lists of questions and organize your questions for each lesson. The teacher uses the Plicker app on their phone or iPad to scan the classroom for answers (image below) #nebedchat #esu9

Hashtags to follow
#edchat #nebedchat #cpchat #fetc #iste2015 #google #esu9 #gclassroom

Above: Seeing answers immediately as they are scanned. Below: An example of a Plickers QR code.
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 four 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 2015 CenturyLink Teachers and Technology Grants:

• Karen Crawford & Julie Hartman, Elkhorn Middle School—Using iPads for Authentic Assessment and Differentiated Learning ($4,881.15)
• Angie Palmer, St. Vincent de Paul—Robotics Engineering ($4,827.62)
• Laura Swanson & Megan Kinen, Belleaire Elementary—littleBits of Innovation ($4,335)
• Lise Wagner, Burke High School—Digital Classroom ($4,980)

They were recognized on April 23, 2015 at the 2015 NETA Spring Conference.

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

Julie Hartman and Karen Crawford, Elkhorn Middle School
Using iPads For Authentic Assessment & Differentiated Learning: $4881.15

The purpose of our grant project is to provide middle school students the opportunity for differentiated instruction and more authentic assessment in all core subjects through the use of iPads.

We wanted to be up and running at the start of the 2015–16 school year so we purchased 12 iPad Air 1s right after NETA last year. Once the iPads arrived we set them up and loaded them with a core set of apps we thought would be best used to encourage active participation, self-paced practice and meaningful ways to demonstrate mastery by students.

Since the beginning of this school year we have been busy collaborating and in-servicing individual teachers on how the iPads could be used in their classrooms. Here are a few examples of how our iPads have already been used this year:

• A language arts teacher created spelling video lessons showing how list words are to be sorted because of syllabication or letter sounds. Using the iPads students receive their lessons individually and their practice is self-paced.
• Science students used Penultimate and the camera to create visual notebooks on the steps of the scientific method.
• Math teachers have used the iPads for quick formative assessments.
• Science students are currently using multiple iPad features and apps in their inquiry projects to collect data and communicate their results.

Angie Palmer, St. Vincent de Paul, Omaha
Robotics Engineering Course: $4,827.62

In today’s society, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) has become an important focus as we train future generations to become engineers, scientists, doctors, and to enter other math/science careers.

Our goal is to offer Robotic Engineering courses to learn teamwork, communication, problem solving, innovation, and critical thinking skills. Robotics Engineering (continued on the next page)
(Grant reports, continued)
courses will allow our school to provide students an opportunity to excel in STEM.

In order to make the opportunity a reality, a few items needed to be purchased:
13—Lego® EVO Core Sets
1—EV3 Software Site License
Shipping costs for materials

Curricular applications for these items will expand hands-on learning and individualized instruction with a STEM focus representing a valuable instructional enhancement extended to our students.

Students have already had the chance to use the materials we purchased. The excitement on the kids’ faces shows, and we hope the enthusiasm continues. They first began by building the robot, then worked their way into learning simple commands. As they continue into larger challenges as the semester progresses, students will need to program the robots to solve a problem/goal presented.

Laura Swanson, Bellevue Public Schools

littleBits of Information: $4335

Through the implementation of littleBits™ students are provided the opportunity to explore and enrich science and math concepts beyond what is currently available in classrooms. littleBits are color-coded electronic bits that build and create simple circuits instantly. These learning tools provide opportunities for open-ended, creative projects; developing skills in design, building, and technology.

To introduce students to the littleBits kits teachers provided them with an open-ended task of just exploring the various components of the kits. By just stepping back and letting the groups explore without specific directions, students were learning how to work together and communicate with each other. After the initial introduction to the littleBits, each group set out to solve a question using the electronics kits. For example: Using the littleBits, how can you create a light that only turns on at night?

The various projects and challenges fosters group problem solving and teamwork with project-based learning and engaging design challenges. Students utilize technology, science, and math skills while engineering their solutions, as well as skills from other content areas. Students look forward to adding complexity to their challenges as they learn more about electronics through the use of the littleBits kits.

Lise Wagner, Burke High School

Digital Classroom: $4,980

The Digital Classroom is underway as we speak! We are working on fostering student creativity and engagement, writing proficiency advancement, critical thinking, digital citizenship, and career/college readiness through the use of tablet technology. The tablets are being used to increase student achievement in many areas including, though not limited to, writing skills, communication, problem solving, and research fluency. The tablet technology is enabling me, as an educator, to provide higher quality differentiation, cooperative learning environments, and more effective writing workshops.

A baseline of student proficiency and stakeholder perceptions is being established through writing assessment and surveys. This will help evaluate growth throughout the school year. We are well on our way to having a significant impact on student achievement in the area of writing, as well as college and career readiness as perceived by all stakeholders (including parents and students).

❖

The annual Classroom Technology Showcase will be held on Friday, November 20, 2015, 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!
The Nebraska Council of School Administrators (NCSA) and the Nebraska Educational Technology Association (NETA) continued their 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 7–8, 2015 at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney. Pre-conference workshops were held on Wednesday, October 7th, including: Become a Graphite Certified Educator, Building Story Maps with ArcGIS, Get Organized & Explore Our World with Google, Get Your Students Creating, Not Consuming Content, Google Tools for Data Collection, Analysis, & Reporting, Teaching in a Digital World: Marzano + Technology, Technology and Adolescent Literacy, and Twitter for School Administrators. Thank you to those who lead the beneficial pre-conference workshops for your hard work and preparation!

The conference kicked off Thursday morning, October 8th, with a keynote presented by Dr. Joe Mazza. Dr. Mazza serves as the Leadership Innovation Manager at The University of Pennsylvania’s Graduate School of Education. He spoke on “I’m Just Not That Tech Savvy: ‘Our’ Critical Role in Building Capacity for Connected Teaching, Learning, and Leadership.”

Over 350 people attended the Nebraska Fall Ed Tech Conference at the Younes Conference Center. Attendees were able to choose from more than 50 sessions on Thursday, October 8th. They were able to visit over 30 vendors and explore and learn at a Maker Space sponsored by the Nebraska Public Power District (pictured bottom right). Thank you to all who helped make the conference a success!

For more information regarding the Nebraska Fall Ed Tech Conference and for presenter handouts, please visit http://www.fall.netasite.org
Passion, continued from page 1
Presenting, however, isn’t the only way to share your passions with others. For those nearly 200 presentations, we need attendees to make our spring conference as successful as past ones. While many presenters are there to share their knowledge and experiences, we hope that you in the crowd will do so as well. As David Weinberger says, “The smartest person in the room is the room itself.”

A wonderful experience
If your passions include educational technology and serving educators across the state and region, we also encourage you to run for the NETA Board. Board of Directors serve three year terms. I have been on the Board for about six years, and it has been a wonderful experience. Not only do you get to meet lots of great educators at various NETA-sponsored events, you become part of a Board that “exists for the purpose of providing leadership and promoting the application of technology to the educational process” throughout PreK–12 and Higher Education. You can find more information in this newsletter. I invite you to contact me (josh.allen@netasite.org) or NETA’s Executive Director, Julie Moore (executivedirector@netasite.org), if you have questions prior to submitting your name.

Bring your passions
Some of you are reading this because you have taken advantage of our free membership. Some of you attended a recent NETA conference. Maybe you haven’t been to the spring conference lately, but saw us post information on Facebook or Twitter, or followed a link to the NETA website.

Regardless, it’s safe to say that you have a passion for educational technology. We hope that you bring your passions to the CenturyLink Center Omaha in April and share them with over 2600 like-minded educators at the NETA conference.

Embrace Your Passion
Request for Sessions for the NETA 2016 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 21–22, 2016. 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, 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 a significantly reduced rate of $39 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: $139 full conference or $114 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 Jackie Ediger, President Elect/Conference Chair, by email at jackie.ediger@netasite.org

Mark Your Calendar—Submission Deadline!
Sessions may only be submitted online, and must be entered by the November 13, 2015 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! 
Six Gmail Tips You Don’t Want to Miss

by Jeffrey Bernadt, Jeanette Carlson, and Ann Feldmann, Bellevue Public Schools

1 Archive vs Delete

One of the easiest ways to organize your inbox is to keep it clean. However, people are generally afraid to delete a message fearing that at some point they will need it in the future. The solution to this problem is simply archiving the message instead of deleting it. Archiving keeps individual emails hidden away but accessible through the search within Gmail. Whereas, if you delete a message they will eventually be completely removed from your account after thirty days. So, next time you contemplate whether you need to keep an email or not...don’t think, just archive it!

2 Boomerang Add-on

Need to send an email but at a later time/date? Want to get rid of an email in your inbox but you know you will need it down the road? The Google Chrome Extension, Boomerang, is your solution. By installing this add-on you can compose an email and then schedule a date and time that it is sent. The best part is how easy Boomerang makes this process. Once it has been installed, you will see a Send Later button directly below the normal Send button. Simply click the Send Later button and you are given the opportunity to send the email whenever you choose. Boomerang also allows you to get rid of a received message and bring it back whenever you need it. This add-on allows you to plan ahead and stay organized with one click.
3 Filters

Filters are an efficient way to save all the great newsletters and articles you want to read for another day. Or, what about emails that you get daily from the same person or business that doesn’t fall under the urgent or read now category? What if you could have those emails bypass your inbox and instead be labeled for you to access when you are ready? Then, when you have time to stop and read a few articles, click on the label and read away.

4 Labels

Labels are a nice visual way to tag or categorize your emails. You can create labels that are unique to your needs. Once you create labels they will show up on the left side of the page. If you prefer, you can even color code your labels for quick and easy identification. Think of this as a way to sort your messages for easy retrieval later. You can also create filters to sort email into certain labels and emails can have multiple labels if needed.

5 Canned Responses

A great time saving solution for sending the same message multiple times is to leverage the canned response feature. By using the canned response, you not only save time, but you also ensure you are sending a consistent message to your recipients. Canned responses are sometimes overlooked because they are located in the lab section of settings. You must go to settings and enable the canned response feature. Once you have the canned response feature turned on, it will be found in the bottom right of every email you compose. Canned responses are simple to manage and even easier to use. Whether you are communicating a message to parents, students, or teachers, this is one feature you will want to try this year.

6 Use Read Receipts

Ever wonder if anyone opened an important email? Read receipts are a quick way to let you know your message has been viewed. Google sends you an email that even includes what time the message was opened. This is a wonderful feature to use on the occasional document of high importance. The best part of using read receipts is the ease of mind knowing the email reached the viewer.

Note:
When sending a group message using read receipts, include the names of all recipients in the bcc: section (blind copies, meaning the emails don’t show up in the header section). Read receipts are sent to everyone in the to: and cc: fields. Be kind to your recipients, and use the bcc feature.

(Gmail Tips, continued)
The NETA Conference—Embrace Your Passion, April 21–22, 2016, will again feature great speakers from around the country!

Rafranz Davis
Rafranz Davis serves the community of Lufkin ISD as the Executive Director of Professional and Digital Learning. As an advocate for passion-based learning, Rafranz uses her experience as a secondary math educator to help teachers integrate technology using innovative teaching strategies aimed at empowering students to be autonomous learners. As a writer and speaker, Davis frequently draws upon her background as a parent and woman of color to offer ideas and insight into how technology can be used in schools to not only break barriers but to provide opportunities and instruments for diverse learners’ voices. Her first book, The Missing Voices in Edtech: Bringing Diversity into Edtech (Corwin Press, January 2015), challenges schools to not only face inherent challenges of lack of diversity in decision making but also take steps aimed at changing it.

Dr. Robert Dillon
Dr. Robert Dillon serves the students and community of the Affton School District as Director of Technology and Innovation. Prior to this position, he served as a teacher and administrator in public schools throughout the Saint Louis area. Dr. Dillon has a passion to change the educational landscape by building excellent engaging schools for all students. He looks for ways to ignite positive risk taking in teachers and students and release trapped wisdom into the system by growing networks of inspired educators. Dr. Dillon serves as Secretary of Innovation for Connected Learning, a Saint Louis based organization designed to reshape professional development to meet today’s needs. Dr. Dillon has had the opportunity to speak throughout the country at local, state, and national conferences as well as share his ideas in a variety of publications. He is the author of two books on best practices in learning, Leading Connected Classrooms and Engage, Empower, Energize: Leading Tomorrow’s Schools Today.

Jennie Magiera
Jennie Magiera is the Chief Technology Officer for Des Plaines School District 62, and previously was a Chicago Public Schools math teacher. A White House Champion for Change, Apple Distinguished Educator, Google for Education Certified Innovator and TEDx Speaker, Jennie works to redefine teaching and learning through innovative new practices. Jennie is also passionate about redefining professional learning, serving on the Technical Working Group for the US Department of Education’s National Educational Technology Plan and co-founding PLAYDATE and other conference concepts. Follow Jennie on Twitter at @MsMagiera or through her blog Teaching Like It’s 2999.

Ken Shelton
Ken Shelton currently holds an M.A. in Education with a specialization in Educational Technology as well as New Media Design and Production. As a part of his active involvement within the Educational Technology community, Ken is an Apple Distinguished Educator and a Google Certified Teacher. Ken was also named to the California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Educational Technology Task Force. Ken, both nationally and internationally, regularly gives keynotes, presentations, and leads workshops, many of which are hands-on, covering a wide variety of Educational Technology, Technology Integration, Digital Age Literacies, Creative Expression, Photography, Visual Learning, Visual Storytelling, and Instructional Design topics. He formerly worked as an Educator for over 14 years, including teaching technology for ten years at the Middle School level. Ken is currently a Director of Professional Development for EdTechTeam.

Alice Steinglass
Alice Steinglass runs the product, engineering and marketing teams at Code.org. Her team works with education and software companies across the industry to run the Hour of Code—a global movement reaching tens of millions of students in over (continued on the next page)
180 countries. Beyond the Hour of Code, her team builds tools and software to support introductory computer science classes for students from kindergarten through high school. Alice is dedicated to increasing diversity in computer science by giving every student the opportunity to learn computer science in school. With a student base that is 43% female and 37% African American or Hispanic, Code.org has already enrolled over two million girls in our Computer Science Fundamentals classes. Prior to Code.org, Alice managed the PM team for the UX Platform on HoloLens, designed APIs and developer client libraries for Xbox 360, ran an ecosystem outreach and UX team for Windows and built project management tools.

**Tony Vincent**

The only thing Tony Vincent likes better than teaching is learning. He enjoys technology because it continually gives him something new to learn. Since 1998 he’s been a pioneer in digital learning, having a class website where his fifth graders in Millard shared their writing, art, and projects with the world. In 2001 he had a 1:1 classroom full of Palm Pilots, and in 2004 he started one of the first podcasts by kids. Today Tony Vincent lives in Council Bluffs, Iowa and works as a self-employed consultant. He’s on a mission to help teachers be their best by connecting them with technology. He has traveled to 40 states, Canada, Australia, England, and the Caribbean to facilitate workshops and to make presentations to K–12 educators. His areas of interest include project-based learning, personal productivity, and presentation design. Tony has authored books, produced videos, created infographics, co-developed an iPad app, and blogged about learning and technology. You can find his work online at learninginhand.com.

**Therese Willkomm**

Therese Willkomm is the director of ATinNH, the New Hampshire statewide assistive technology program with the Institute on Disability and is an assistant professor in the department of occupational therapy at the University of New Hampshire. She holds a Ph.D. in rehabilitation technology from the University of Pittsburgh and has over 25 years experience in providing/managing assistive technology services. She is known nationally and internationally as “The McGyver” of assistive technology. Dr. Willkomm has presented in 38 states, five foreign counties, and three U.S. Territories and authored 22 publications including her most recent book titled *Make A Difference Today —Assistive Technology Solutions in Minutes.*

**Rachelle Wooten**

Rachelle Wooten is a Digital Learning Specialist with Fort Bend ISD. Her passion is designing and facilitating a professional development experience that empowers, inspires, and equips teachers with innovative, proven solutions to reach and teach each of their students. She is the author of the iBook: *Mission Pod'sible: A Teacher’s Guide to Podcasting.* She’s an authorized Google Education Trainer, Microsoft Innovative Educator, Adobe Education Leader, and Certified Adobe Education Trainer. She has also earned distinctions such as: an Edmodo Certified Trainer, and Common Sense Graphite Certified Educator, and is a Nearpod Pionear. She has presented at the Texas Computer Education Association (TCEA), SXSWedu, Region 4 Education Service Center (Houston area), Rice University, and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Conference and Association of Supervision, Curriculum, and Development (ASCD). She’s a proud member of several professional learning communities.

**Keynote/Featured Speakers:**

This year’s keynote speakers will be participating in “Neb Ed Talks,” short talks designed to inspire you to Embrace Your Passion. There will be two presentations each morning.

**“Neb Ed Talks” Speakers Thursday:**

- Robert Dillon
- Jennie Magiera

**“Neb Ed Talks” Speakers Friday:**

- Rafranz Davis
- Tony Vincent

**Featured Thursday:**

- Robert Dillon
- Jennie Magiera
- Alice Steinglass (Sponsored by CSTA, UNL Department of Computer Science and Engineering, and NETA.)
- Therese Willkomm (Sponsored by Assistive Technology Partnership/Education)

**Featured Friday:**

- Tony Vincent
- Rachelle Wooten

**Featured Thursday and Friday:**

- Ken Shelton
Are you tired of opening boxes of Wonka Bars hoping to find a golden ticket to attend the spring NETA conference without paying a registration fee or costs for your substitute teacher?

Are you leading your students to do outstanding work with technology tools in the classroom?

Are you doing great work with technology tools that you want to share with others? NETA contests are for YOU!

Clean slate
Every summer at the NETA planning retreat, the Board Contest Committee reviews all of the contests as we do our best to offer opportunities for students and teachers to showcase their work and promote it as classroom models to teachers across the state. This year, the Committee started from a blank slate in an effort to make our contests more teacher and student friendly, as well as more inclusive of all Nebraska educators.

Rather than offer contests with specific themes teachers need to fit their projects into, we’ve done away with specific contests to allow you to enter work you’re already doing with students as part of your curriculum. If you’re doing great technology-infused work with students, then we have a contest for you!

New Structure
Our new student contest structure is divided solely by media type: audio, video, interactive media and still images. Yet we also carried forward our popular teacher contests that allow teachers to win trips to the annual ISTE conference (in Denver next summer), earn grants for purchasing classroom technology, and be recognized as leaders in your local district and the region.

Digital submission system
And last but not least, we are implementing a new digital submission system this year. No more signatures in blue ink or racing off to the post office to meet the postmark deadline! Our contest submission window opened on November 1 and will close February 1 at midnight. Submit your winning contest entries now at http://netasite.org

Questions?
Please email your questions to the Contest Chair, Lynne Herr (lynne.herr@netasite.org). We know there are a lot of changes and will post any questions and answers in our new Frequently Asked Questions page in the Contests section of the NETA website.

Wanted!
Judges for all contests!
We are looking for people willing to assist with the NETA contest judging, scheduled on Saturday, February 6, 2016 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.

### lynne.herr@netasite.org

[
http://netasite.org
]
Eligibility
Student contests are open to Midwestern PK–12 students and pre-service teachers. All PK-12 student entries must include principal’s consent and contact information.

Contest Divisions
Each contest category will be judged by divisions.
- Grades PK–4
- Grades 5–8
- Grades 9–12
- Independent K–12
- Student Entry
- Pre-service Teacher

Contest Categories

Still Images:
This category allows students to showcase their work in the area of still images. Students will submit completed products such as, digital images, photographs, logos, graphic design, and infographics that were created as part of a classroom project.

Video:
This category allows students to showcase their work in the area of video. Students may submit completed non-interactive video projects. Examples of projects that could fall into this category include newscasts, movies, video podcasts, and animations.

Audio:
This category allows students to showcase their work in the area of audio. Students will submit completed audio products such as podcasts, radio shows and original music/poetry.

Interactive Media:
This category allows students to showcase their work in the area of interactive media. As defined by wikipedia, interactive media normally refers to products and services on digital computer-based systems which respond to the user’s actions by presenting content such as text, graphics, animation, video, audio, games, etc. Examples of interactive media that may be submitted to this category include interactive iBooks, websites created by the student, apps developed by the student, and more.

Judging and Awards
Contest entries will be judged on criteria that include connection to curriculum, originality, creativity, quality of product and innovative use of technology. Up to three awards per category per age division will be given. The winning students are strongly encouraged to attend the 2016 NETA spring conference along with their teacher to present a poster session about their project and to be recognized for their achievement.

The winning teacher will receive a non-transferable, complimentary conference registration and the teacher’s school district will be reimbursed the actual cost for the substitutes for both days.

Announcing winners
All entrants should refer to the NETA website (http://netasite.org) on or after March 1, 2016 for contest results. We request that teacher entrants do not register for the conference until winners are announced. Application materials will not be returned to entrants.

All submitted projects may be distributed freely by NETA. Educators submitting entries need to follow all of their district’s policies regarding the distribution of student work. The online submission form must be completed in full.

Awards will be mailed out to the teachers’ school districts following the NETA spring conference. All entries must be submitted online.

Submission Deadline:
The 2015–16 Contest submission window will be November 1, 2015 –February 1, 2016. All entries must be submitted through the contest submission system accessed via the NETA website (http://netasite.org).
NETA Educator Contests

Eligibility
NETA Educator contests are open to public and private educators in the Midwest, with preference given to Nebraska educators. In addition to any prizes specific to a particular contest, winning educators will receive a non-transferable, complimentary 2016 spring NETA conference registration and if a substitute is required, the winner’s school district will be reimbursed the actual cost for the substitute for both days of conference attendance.

Description of Educator Contest Categories

NETA Technology Grants
Classroom grants to support innovative technology use in the classroom will be awarded with a maximum of $1500 each. Each recipient will receive their award check at the NETA spring conference. Materials purchased with NETA grant money will belong to the recipient's school district. A mid-term progress report is due by December 1, 2016, and a final report of less than 250 words that describes the activities, tools and student impact is due June 1, 2017.

Grant recipients will be required to present their project at the 2017 NETA spring conference as a poster/playground session, where handouts and information about the project will be shared with other NETA educators. Grants are to be awarded for original projects only and are not to sustain previous grant projects. The number of awards may vary depending upon the quantity and quality of entries. Teachers may submit different applications over time. 2015 grant winners are not eligible to apply for this contest.

ISTE Trek Conference Scholarship
Up to four trips to the 2016 ISTE Conference in Denver, CO, will be awarded with a maximum of $1800 to pay for conference registration, coach class airfare, hotel, local transportation and meals. Entrants should use creative technology skills to submit a contest entry video explaining how you use technology to enhance student learning and how attending ISTE 2016 would strengthen what you already do or allow you to do something new. What are you hoping to learn or gain by attending sessions at ISTE 2016? Videos must be less than 90 seconds in length and will be entered via the online submission system. The winners will write a follow-up NETA newsletter article by July 15, 2016, explaining what projects or plans will be implemented in their classroom based upon what was learned through ISTE 2016 attendance. 2015 ISTE Trek winners are not eligible for this contest.

The winner will be awarded $600 for professional activities (which could include conference reimbursement, tuition, or subscriptions—to be spent by April 30, 2017). The winner will also be invited to be a special guest at a Wednesday evening dinner with the NETA Board of Directors where they will be asked to give short remarks about their work with instructional technology.

Winners will be determined by a panel of Directors from the NETA Board based on the following guidelines, determining the extent to which the nominee:

- positively impacts technology use in teaching, learning and administration; locally, regionally, or statewide.

(continued on the next page)
Excellence in Teaching With Technology Award

The purpose of the Nebraska Excellence in Teaching with Technology Award is to recognize and honor an individual teacher who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in implementing technology to improve PK-12 teaching and learning. This contest is open to Nebraska public and private school educators whose primary job role is classroom teaching directly with students. The winner will be awarded $600 for professional activities (which could include conference reimbursement, tuition, or subscriptions—to be spent by April 30, 2017).

Judging and Awards

Contest entries will be judged on criteria that include connection to curriculum, originality, creativity, quality of product and innovative use of technology. The winners are strongly encouraged to attend the NETA spring conference to present a poster session about their project and to be recognized for their achievement.

The winning teacher will receive a non-transferable, complimentary conference registration and the teacher’s school district will be reimbursed the actual cost for the substitutes for both days.

Announcing winners

All entrants should refer to the NETA website (http://netasite.org) on or after March 1, 2016 for contest results. We request that teacher entrants do not register for the conference until winners are announced. Application materials will not be returned to entrants.

All submitted projects may be distributed freely by NETA. Educators submitting entries need to follow all of their district’s policies regarding the distribution of personal work. All fields in the online submission form must be completed.

Awards will be mailed out to the teachers’ school districts following the NETA spring conference. All entries must be submitted online through the contest submission system accessed via the NETA website (http://netasite.org).
GoSoapBox and Mentimeter
Instantly Gauge Student Understanding

**GoSoapBox**
GoSoapBox has two great features I have not seen in similar tools: The instant “Confusion Barometer” and the Social Q&A.

The Confusion Barometer is a simple tool that allows students to let you know when they are confused. This quick tool gives you instant feedback as to where your students stand on their understanding of content you are presenting, to allow you to adjust instruction as needed.

Another great feature of GoSoapBox is the Social Q&A, which allows you to crowd source questions or topics that students most want to address during class time.

In addition to these two tools, GoSoapBox offers live polling for questions you may have already created in presentation software, quizzes and open-ended feedback questions. All data collected through polls and Social Q&A can be downloaded as spreadsheet files. GoSoapBox is free for classes of up to 30 students.

**Mentimeter**
Mentimeter is a free polling tool that allows you to ask questions of your audience or students and instantly display results in graph form. One very helpful feature is that with one click of a button, Mentimeter will generate a QR code to make it easy for students to access your questions without needing to type in a URL or access code. Students using computers can also easily access your “event,” which is how Mentimeter refers to class section, by typing in a web address and entering a code. Mentimeter also offers an instant voting feature.
Calendar of Technology Conferences & Seminars

Events of every type for educators, technicians & administrators

November 2015

iNACOL—Blended and Online Learning Symposium
November 8–11, 2015
Orlando, FL
www.inacol.org

January 2016

Florida Educational Technology Conference (FETC)
January 13–15, 2016
Orange County Convention Ctr, Orlando, FL
fetc.org

February 2016

Texas Computer Education Association (TCEA)
February 1–5, 2016
Austin, TX
www.tcea.org

Midwest Educational Technology Conference (METC)
February 8–10, 2016
St. Charles, MO
metcconference.org

NDLA (Nebraska Distance Learning Association)
Blended Pathways to Learning
February 24–26, 2016
Omaha Marriott (Regency)
Omaha, NE
ndla.org

Nebraska Association for the Gifted (NAG) Conference
February 25–26, 2016
Omaha, NE
www.negifted.org

March 2016

Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education (SITE)
March 21–25, 2016
Savannah, GA
site.aace.org/conf/

April 2016

CoSN’s School Networking Conference
April 4–7, 2016
Washington D.C.
www.cosn.org/events/

National School Boards Association (NSBA)
April 9–11, 2016
Boston, MA
annualconference.nsba.org

Infotec (by the AIM Inst.)
April 18–19, 2016
CenturyLink Center
Omaha, NE
infotec.org

NETA Spring Conference
Embrace Your Passion
April 21–22, 2016
CenturyLink Center
Omaha, NE
netasite.org

May 2016

United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA)
May 10–12, 2016
St. Louis, MO
http://www.usdla.org

June 2016

Nebraska Career Education Conference (NCE)
June 6–9, 2016
Younes Conference Center
Kearney, NE
nceconference.com

ISTE Conference
Education Transformation Starts Here
June 26–29, 2016
Denver, CO
www.iste.org

July 2016

Great Plains Summit
featuring Google
July 14–15, 2016
Southwest High School
Lincoln, NE
gpsummit.org
NETA
Nebraska Educational Technology Association
PO Box 484
Gretna, NE 68028

Membership Form

**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 2015, your membership is included with your registration. You will receive a printed newsletter. If you would like to receive a printed newsletter, but did not attend the Spring Conference, you may pay $35.00 for a printed September, November, February and April newsletter. Make checks payable to NETA. To become a member, please fill out the above form and mail with check to:

- [ ] I am a new member
- [ ] I was recruited by this current NETA member

NETA Membership
PO Box 484
Gretna, NE 68028

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