Growth Mindset: The Power of Yet
Do you have a fixed or growth mindset?

30 Years of Connections
NETA is celebrating its 30th year!
NETA Newsletter
Published four times yearly. Contributions are welcome.
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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!

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

**GROWTH MINDSET: THE POWER OF YET**

Over the past 10+ years, the work of Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck has influenced classrooms across the country through her book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Dweck’s research found that a key to personal growth is recognizing fixed mindset patterns and working to transform them to growth mindset patterns.

**Do you have a Fixed or a Growth Mindset?**

According to Dweck: “Believing that your qualities are carved in stone—the fixed mindset—creates an urgency to prove yourself over and over. If you have only a certain amount of intelligence, a certain personality, and a certain moral character—well, then you’d better prove that you have a healthy dose of them. It simply wouldn’t do to look or feel deficient in these most basic characteristics.[…] I’ve seen so many people with this one consuming goal of proving themselves—in the classroom, in their careers, and in their relationships. Every situation calls for a confirmation of their intelligence, personality, or character. Every situation is evaluated: Will I succeed or fail? Will I look smart or dumb? Will I be accepted or rejected? Will I feel like a winner or a loser?…”

In contrast, Dweck says a focus on growth mindset can be life changing for educators, parents, students and children. In this mindset, the hand you’re dealt is just the starting point for development. “This growth mindset is based on the belief that your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts. Although people may differ in every which way—in their initial talents and aptitudes, interests, or temperaments—everyone can change and grow through application and experience.” (http://bit.ly/dweck-brainpickings)

**NETA’s Focus Toward Growth and Growth Mindset**

As NETA President, I know that the Board and I strive to model growth mindset in all the work we do. Over the past few years, the NETA board has focused on growth in a traditional sense—moving the conference to a new venue at the CenturyLink Center Omaha, expanding our contests to better reflect the geographic diversity of our attendees and supporting the Nebraska Fall Ed Tech Conference in Kearney, for example.

As the Board worked through a vision and planning retreat in July, we confirmed that the efforts toward growth and expansion have served the membership well. The hallways are less crowded to allow you to move more easily through the venue to get to the sessions of most interest to you. The keynote ballroom can better accommodate large crowds. We have room for a hands-on makerspace, which has led to new partnerships. Our exhibit hall brings better space and more new products and services for you to experience during the conference. The downtown location in Omaha now offers opportunities beyond the conference as well. The inaugural partnership with the Omaha Track Club to offer a morning fun run will be back again next year, and the Old Market area offers great places for delicious food and fun.

While the Board is thrilled with the response to these new offerings and changes, we continue to frame Dweck’s work as the power of yet. Have we offered the best number of poster sessions to showcase educator work and still hold the physical space for hand-on exploration of the newest technologies? Not yet. Have we found a way to recruit more elementary grade level sessions to satisfy the hunger of this peer group? Not yet. But we never stop trying! And with the contributions and support of awesome NETA members, we are confident we will find great solutions.

**The Power of Yet**

As you transition into a new school year, how are you modeling growth mindset? Do you announce to your class that you were never good at math, or that you still can’t write an essay without hours of drudgery? Or do you model ways you are tackling the challenges you face as both a teacher and a human being? “I haven’t found out how to build a new website in Google Sites, yet, so there will be a sub here tomorrow while I am at my ESU learning more about how to do it.” Or, to a student who announces that they will never enjoy learning, could you gently nudge toward, “it sounds like you haven’t found your favorite genre or author yet?”

As an educator, your voice carries so much potential to the ears who are listening for it. As a NETA board, we hear you through your social media posts and your evaluation feedback. And for every critique or suggestion, we hear a yet. We challenge you to make sure your words to students in your classrooms and schools come with the same promise. ❖
NETA News

NETA 2016 Photo Gallery

September 2016

http://netasite.org
NETA 2016 Photo Gallery
Message from the President Elect

30 Years of Connections

This year marks my 10th year in education. As I think back to that first year, I’m reminded how quickly that year went by. It was a blur, filled with new situations and many, many questions on what to do. The only way I made it through were the connections I made with my colleagues. They served as counselors, advisors and friends. Most importantly, they encouraged me to try new things in my classroom and keep a focus on what was best for students.

Oh, and they told me I needed to go to this conference called NETA.

So many models and tools
We live in an amazing time. I’ve seen technology advance rapidly, even in my short time in education. As I look through my notes from past NETA conferences, I’m reminded of the first time I heard of the SAMR model, flexible learning spaces and innovative professional learning models. I also found many, many Web 2.0 sites—most lacking vowels and utterly unpronounceable unless someone told you how...

What wasn’t in my notes and is even more important, are all of the connections I’ve made over the years. Real face to face connections that are strengthened and extended with technology.

The goals
That’s why I’m excited by the outcomes of the NETA board’s strategic planning process. As a board, we looked at what was important to our members. We also looked at how we could best accomplish the organization’s purpose of providing leadership and promoting the application of technology to the educational process—across all levels and aspects of education. From there, we came up with two goals:

1. Make the NETA conference the best conference it can be by attracting a wide variety of attendees from throughout the Midwest.
2. Extend the content and connections made at the conference through digital tools, resources and extension opportunities.

Even with the many social networking platforms available today, there’s still something special about getting nearly 3,000 educators together that can’t be replaced. The energy of an emotional keynote speaker, meeting someone in the line for lunch and talking about your favorite sessions, finally getting an answer to a question that’s been bugging you from someone who’s been in the same situation, and seeing old friends and catching up are all part of the special experience that is NETA.

So they were right
My colleagues were right when they told me to attend NETA for the first time. The NETA conference is special. The people I’ve met as a member in this organization have become some of my closest friends. They influenced me to transform the way I taught and the way I provide professional learning opportunities. I wouldn’t be doing what I’m doing now without them.

In April of 2017, NETA will host its 30th conference, filled with many great sessions about incredible new tools, lesson ideas, staff development examples, and leadership development. Most of all though, it will be a time to connect and reconnect with peers, experts and friends. See you there!
In partnership with NCSA, NETA invites you to:

The Nebraska Fall Ed Tech Conference

The Nebraska Council of School Administrators (NCSA) and the Nebraska Educational Technology Association (NETA) are excited to partner to provide a comprehensive and informative conference on technologies available and utilized in Nebraska schools. Today’s students are actively engaged in using technology. They are early adopters of new technology and appear to be light-years ahead of the rest of the adult world. We challenge school leaders to understand and to successfully integrate technology to develop 21st century schools.

NETA’s membership asked for an additional conference farther west in the state. We listened, and hope you will join us at the Nebraska Fall Ed Tech Conference, October 6–7, 2016 at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney.

Conference Schedule at a Glance:

**Thursday, October 6th**
- Pre-Conference Workshops: 1:30–4:30 p.m. (registration required)

**Friday, October 7th**
- 8:00–9:00 a.m. Welcome and Keynote
- 9:00–9:30 a.m. Break (Visit Exhibitors)
- 9:30–10:15 a.m. Session 1
- 10:30–11:15 a.m. Session 2
- 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Lunch
- 12:30–1:15 p.m. Session 3
- 1:30–2:15 p.m. Session 4
- 2:30–3:15 p.m. Session 5
- 3:30–4:15 p.m. Session 6

**Friday’s Keynote**

Amber Teamann
Amber Teamann is the proud principal of Whitt Elementary in Wylie, Texas. Through her years in education, Amber has held leadership positions and served as an Assistant Principal and as a Title I Technology Facilitator which put her on 17 different campuses to help staff and students navigate their digital abilities and responsibilities. Prior to that, she taught fourth grade and loved every minute of it.

Her credo is that all subjects can be made more engaging to students if we are able to deliver it in a manner in which they want to learn. From being a part of district initiatives to sharing innovative ways to connect with our stakeholders across the country, Amber is always striving to make education more meaningful for her audiences. Recognizing the power of social media and our inherent role in controlling how our stories are told she has been privileged to work with educators across the globe in making transparency a reality for their campus and districts, as well as ones locally.

**Registration Costs:**
- Pre-Conference Workshops: $50 per workshop
- Conference Registration: $125 (includes Friday lunch)
- Group Registration: $10 off each registration for groups registering six or more paid on the same check, credit card or PO.

Registration is limited to the first 800 people. Please plan to register a team of individuals for group planning or yourself to continue learning how to successfully integrate technology into your school and classrooms.

A link to the full conference schedule, including session and workshop descriptions, is now available! For more information and to register, visit [http://www.fall.netasite.org](http://www.fall.netasite.org)
Reviews from the ISTE 2016 Experience!

Creativity and Wonder
Jackie Ediger, ESU 9

“Creativity is intelligence having fun.” ~ Albert Einstein

As a long-time attendee of technology-focused conferences at the state, regional and national level, I have noticed a trend where keynote and featured speakers focus less and less on technology, and more and more on the creativity, potential and wonder that technology tools can bring to the classroom. My favorite keynote at ISTE was the closing keynote by Michelle Cordy, and I’m thrilled that she will be presenting at the 2017 NETA Spring Conference. Michelle showed photo after photo of her students, and her dedication to them as learners and people. While technology is pervasive in her classroom, the focus is to give students voice, and connection and as a tool to facilitate learning.

Breakout EDU on Wheels!
Lynne Herr, ESU 6

One of the hottest tickets in Denver was for a 20-minute time slot for the Breakout EDU bus featuring a mobile escape room game: Dr. Bohr and the Quest for Hope. The game, focused on middle school science and using leveled content resources from Bird Brain Science, allowed groups of educators to experience Breakout EDU throughout the conference. Educators who were fortunate enough to secure a free ticket to experience a game saw the creative problem-solving, teamwork and academic skills needed to open locks, solve clues and break out of the bus! Once again, it’s great to see that the NETA Spring Conference brings the most current educational trends and tools to our attendees since many NETA folks were able to experience Breakout EDU before educators who attended a national conference!

NETA members Lynne Herr and Jason Rushing celebrate the success of the Nebraska team in breaking out of the bus!

(Reviews from ISTE 2016 Experiences continued on the next page)
attended this great networking opportunity with 500 other Midwestern affiliate members!

From the opening keynote to the last session, I spent several days immersed in technology and inspiration! I didn’t want to miss a thing so every day I skipped lunch in order to take in as much as possible. I attended 12 exceptional hour-long presentations and even managed to wander around at the Vendor Expo, snagging lots of free swag for workshop give-aways! The brain overload was so worth it!

**Blended Learning focus**
This year I focused on Blended Learning, Student Centered Learning and Literacy sessions. I was able to hear in person a few of my favorite people on Twitter: Pernille Ripp, Kasey Bell, and Alice Keeler. Their passion is contagious and they shared a message that resonated throughout the conference: technology should be used to maximize learning by providing students with choice, opportunities to collaborate and share with others, and the ability to create.

According to Pernille Ripp, students should always have at least one of the following choices available: in engagement, in product, in setting, in timeline, and/or in assessment. Choice is a great starting place for teachers who are just venturing into Blended Learning.

Kasey Bell, in her session, described Digital Differentiation as having these components: Essential Questions, Flexible Learning Paths, and the Teacher as Facilitator. She also provided some great examples of learning menus and choice boards during her session.

Alice Keeler is just a wealth of Google Apps knowledge and she did not disappoint! Her main message was to pick three things to learn, but she recommended everyone start using Google Slides to provide instructions and content for their students. Toward the end of her session, Alice said, “When students can access information, I can talk less, which means I can do more productive things with them!”

Attending ISTE as a NETA board member was a very rewarding experience. I was able to connect with other Nebraska educators in powerful ways. We had rich discussions and some fun social outings too! By the end of the conference, I was exhausted mentally and in much need of some reflection time, but I would not hesitate to do it all over again! If you ever have the opportunity, I highly recommend you attend the ISTE Conference, especially if it happens right in your backyard!
ISTE Teacher Trek 2016 Reports

Jill Domina
Schuyler Community Schools

“Don’t jump in the deep end.” This is what Alice Keeler told all of us in a session she was presenting at the ISTE 2016 Conference. It was a great reminder that while my brain is overloaded with new ideas and I feel like I want to try them all, I need to be realistic and focus on one or two in order to implement them effectively. So, in the hopes of not drowning in the deep end, I am going to focus on two big ideas I gained from ISTE: creating digital portfolios with my students and increasing/improving my utilization of Google Classroom.

Alice Keeler is a Google expert teacher and her presentation on Google Classroom was my favorite session at ISTE this year. I have only been using Google Classroom for a year, so my expertise on the topic was limited. Ms. Keeler presented shortcuts to grading, providing feedback, and creating assignments that will make it easier on the teacher side of things.

For example, did you know that you can sort documents your students have completed in Google Drive by “last opened by me” so that those you have not provided feedback for or viewed are at the top of your list? Ms. Keeler stressed the importance of putting students in charge of their own learning because, as she said, “The person doing the work is the person doing the learning.” She had a ton of practical tips and tricks (continued on the next page)

Matt Clemens,
Norris Elementary School

I traveled to the ISTE 2016 conference in Denver this summer as a first timer, not really knowing what to expect. My goal was to look for tools that my students could utilize as “producers” in the classroom. In retrospect, that was a little naive, like walking into a candy store because you want something sweet!

If you want to see something new, ISTE has it. With roughly 1,200 sessions, 2,000 presenters, and 600 exhibitors, there is no way that one person could see it all. Once the shock of it all wore off, though, I dove right in!

I listened in on session after session on tools from speakers such as Adam Bellow and Leslie Fisher. I talked to teachers at poster sessions who were using many of those tools in new and creative ways. I played with all sorts of tech at the digital playgrounds and in the exhibitor hall. I saw tech superstars like Hadi Partovi (code.org) and Ayah Bdeir (littleBits), media stars like Lavar Burton and R2-D2, and just plain inspiring people like Marley Dias and Amelia Earhart. I even learned that there are physiological reasons why you can’t help but smile when you are jumping up and down (Try it! It’s true!).

After the ISTE conference, my students have some cool new tools in our Makerspace. We have a handful of Ozobots (ozobot.com) and a couple Makey Makey sets (makeymakey.com) for experimenting and learning. Our Legos are set to become storytellers. PBS Learning Media (pbslearningmedia.org) and the Smithsonian Learning Lab (learninglab.si.edu) will give us rich new digital media resources to explore.

The star of the conference for me, though, has been virtual reality in the classroom. Google Cardboard (vr.google.com/cardboard) is no longer new, but there are so many novel ways to explore with VR. The Google Street View app lets users take their own 360 degree photos. Google Expeditions (google.com/edu/expeditions) is adding new kits all the time, and ThingLink (demo.thinglink.com/vr-edu) is bringing tagging options to 360 degree pictures and videos. Google even has a 3D VR painting tool called Tilt Brush (tiltbrush.com). I can’t wait to get started on a grant to bring VR to my classroom!

I leave this conference inspired and excited as I prepare for the upcoming school year. Thank you, NETA, for the opportunity to attend ISTE 2016 in Denver.
(ISTE Teacher Treks, continued) that you can also find in her book, 50 Things You Can Do With Google Classroom.

Digital student portfolios was also not a brand new concept to me, but after attending a couple of sessions about them and seeing how different teachers implement them, what apps they use, and the multiple advantages they offer, I am much more confident in my ability to try this with my class.

Overall, my ISTE experience was great. Not only did it give me some new ideas and inspire me to do more, it also showed me that I am already doing a lot of good things with technology in my classroom and that we are extremely fortunate in Nebraska to have such a wonderful state technology association that provides a similar educational experience every year on a local level. It’s easy to feel overwhelmed when attending technology conferences, but this year I’m not going to “jump in the deep end” but rather focus my attention on two new ideas and fine-tuning a few others. Thank you, NETA, for sponsoring my trip and making me a better educator!

Abby Fitzgerald
Bennington Public Schools
Just looking at the length of my notes document (29 pages to be exact), one could easily see that there were unending opportunities for learning and growth at ISTE 2016. I was beyond fortunate to be granted this experience, and I have numerous ideas and thoughts to bring back to the classroom this fall and beyond!

My first session on Monday morning delivered one of my biggest take-aways from the entire conference: The Amazing Race. This activity design keeps students extremely engaged, while allowing you to deliver and/or review content in a new way. The flexibility is immense allowing both individual or group work, as well as self-pacing throughout each challenge. This platform of learning could be extended to almost any curricular topic and adapted to fit a myriad of audiences. I absolutely fell in love with this learning platform and I am already working on ways to implement this throughout the school year in my classroom. Plus, I learned that by creating forms from a Google sheet, you can have several forms populate to the same sheet—who knew?! This is in addition to the seemingly endless list of tools that I collected from each session such as, dotstorming, time toast, Google Photos (so robust!), and post-it note plus, just to name a few!

The inspiration was high at ISTE and the keynotes only fueled that passion higher. I was reminded of the importance of technology in my students’ lives by Michio Kaku, how teaching kindness, understanding, and empathy are vital by Ruha Benjamin, and to show up and refuse to leave by Michelle Cordy. The IGNITE sessions fired up my passions further (see what I just did there?) by showcasing the importance of art, reminding me to be a “DJ” in the classroom, and by not letting those around you limit your goals and desires. While these are not tangible “tools” per se, they are most definitely messages and inspirations that will be guiding my instruction as I embark on this next school year.

Lastly, the connections and networking that I took part in were second to none. It ranged from sitting down randomly to charge my computer and meeting another fifth grade teacher from California with whom I swapped ideas with for 45 minutes, to simply having the opportunity to talk and meet so many outstanding Nebraska educators at the Midwest reception. I was so extremely lucky to have such brilliant minds around me that taught me just as much, if not more, than the individual presenters. The conversations in the hallways between the sessions were just as valuable and allowed for so many new education “friends” to be made.

I am so incredibly grateful to have attended another ISTE conference. It was truly life changing and will shape the way I teach and move forward in my classroom and other professional endeavors. I am so pumped to share what I have learned with my district and team. I am ready to cannonball into this next school year equipped with new ideas, and just like Michelle Cordy said, “show up, and refuse to leave!” Thank you NETA for the phenomenal trip and experience!

Lacie Wright
Southern Valley Elementary
I was fortunate enough to attend ISTE 2016 in Denver this year due to the amazing opportunity that NETA gave me with the Teacher Trek contest! First, and foremost it was an experience similar to a kid in a candy or toy store! There were so many ideas, gadgets, and toys... oh my! It was so HUGE and there was an abundance of educators. Where to begin, where to begin? I loved walking through all the playground (yes, playground for teachers), poster sessions, and vendor presentations.

My absolute favorite item was ClassFlow and the possibilities that open up for both teacher and...
(ISTE Teacher Trek, continued)

student. This web-based program allows any student device to work to the teacher’s projector/board. It allows the teacher to both share with the student and vice versa. The teacher can assign items live or for homework.

ClassFlow has ready-made lessons or you can make your own whether it be quizzes or a live math problem. To the teacher’s benefit it also has an option to give feedback to the teacher with data, for example which problem the kids are struggling with. When the students complete the problem they share it with the teacher and all results are on the board making it easy to click on one and discuss the answer or process. In looking into it further you can even make class groups so when you send out a problem that can be leveled per ability of the student.

Another great thing about ClassFlow is it is...wait for it...FREE! Yes, free! Now for the best part, I was totally star struck as I got to see the one, the only, Ron Clark, teacher of all teachers himself, present Classflow with his students! I was front and center and also left with some cool swag!

I also got to meet with the SeeSaw booth people, pros that have already been using it and other teachers interested in trying, where we were able to brainstorm and share ideas. SeeSaw was my go-to item for this last year! I also got to take a first class virtual field trip to the moon with the use of Google cardboard.

This doesn’t even touch the surface of the things I saw or want to try in my classroom. I do however want to put a plug in for the amazing group that I went with, the NETA reception I attended, seeing Kevin Honeycutt in my hotel lobby, and other educators I met while attending (whether at the conference or out to lunch). There were many conversations sparked and collaboration happening, the sharing of ideas and projects was a great experience that I won’t soon forget. Once again thanks so much to NETA for giving me this opportunity!

Midwest States Reception at ISTE

NETA sponsored a reception along with ICE-IL (Illinois), ITEC (Iowa), MACUL (Michigan), METC (Missouri), and REMC (Michigan) at the 2016 ISTE Conference in Denver, CO. Appreciation goes to Curriculum Associates, LEGO Education, SAFARI Montage, Schoology and Technology Resource Advisors for helping to sponsor the event. Over 600 conference participants attended the event at the Rock Bottom Restaurant and Brewery and enjoyed networking and catching up with friends throughout Nebraska and beyond.

Please plan to join us June 25–28, 2017, at the ISTE Conference, to be held in San Antonio, TX!
NETA’s Technology Grant Program
Final Reports from 2015 Winners

Brenna Barney
Bennington Elementary

Playaways and Ebooks in the Elementary Library

I am so thankful for the opportunity from NETA to provide Playaway Audiobooks and Ebooks for my elementary library. The process of incorporating them has gone great! My students love the Playaways! Next school year I hope to include even more of my younger grade levels, now that the Playaways aren’t quite as brand new that all the older students want them each week. I also want to provide more training for how to use and checkout the Ebooks. I cannot wait to get more Playaways and Ebooks in my library so that I can reach even more students.

Our population is continually growing and I love being able to give my K–6 students other options for reading with use of technology. It has been fun seeing students excited when new Playaways and Ebooks were put on the shelves.

Ginger Bygland
Boone Central Schools

Digital Portfolios

I started this project wanting to have a way to save students’ work and accomplishments throughout the year. Being awarded the NETA grant allowed me to purchase five iPads for my classroom. With those iPads I wanted the students to save their writings, projects, reading samples and pictures as a way to show growth and also a way to remember their third grade year. I have been able to accomplish that goal, but so much more has happened because of the NETA grant. My students have been more engaged in their learning.

I have used the iPads for taking Accelerated Reader tests. Our reading series can be accessed on the iPads, which allows for reinforcement with games and activities during center time. During math they have used different apps to practice the skills taught and for fact practice. In science the students have used apps including PicCollage to show their learning. Having the iPads readily available has made it easier to meet the varying types of learners in every classroom. Thank you NETA for awarding me the grant and helping teach students every day.

Susan Prabulos
Meadow Lane Elementary, Lincoln Public Schools

Kids, Coding, and Robots, Oh My!

The students at Meadow Lane are so thankful for the iPads and robot provided by the NETA grant! The grant allowed them to use iPads and Dash robots to explore Computer Science in a new way! My students were able to see coding concepts in a 3-dimensional environment and not just on a computer screen. The students used the iPads provided by the grant with Dash, Dot, and Sphero robots. They were also able to use other Computer Science apps like Scratch, Jr. I loved how the iPads provided many new ways for my youngest students to explore coding.

Over the year, my students were able to use the robots and iPads for learning in so many creative ways! Their coding projects were full of creativity and computational thinking. They loved to create stories using Scratch, Jr. or turn Dash into a new character using LEGOs and code. They also loved completing challenges by coding Dash to specific locations or making their codes more efficient.

By the end of the year, I was able to stand back and watch as my students freely collaborated and directed one another in using the robots for learning. The room was always full of life and learning when we had the robots out!

My students and I look forward to many more years of learning and creativity to come because of the equipment provided by the NETA grant! Thank you, NETA! ❖

New Board Member

FAREWELL—Kristina Peters left the NETA Board this year before her term was completed. Kristina served on the NETA board helping with the Contest Committee, Programming Committee and Conversation Strand. Kristina brought creative and fresh ideas to the NETA board and will be missed. Thank you Kristina for your contributions. We wish you success in your future endeavors!

We would like to welcome Becky Miller as a new Director on the NETA board. Becky had the next highest number of votes from the NETA Board election last winter, so we asked Becky to join the board to fill Kristina Peter’s open position. Becky attended the July retreat and has been actively participating in NETA committees. Becky is the Digital Integration Facilitator for Norfolk Public Schools. We look forward to working with you, Becky!

CenturyLink Teachers and Technology Grants

What about the grants?
If you are looking for the grant information for the CenturyLink Teachers and Technology grants, those are not being published at this time. CenturyLink is investigating funding options for the 2017 grants, but arrangements have not been finalized.

If CenturyLink Teachers and Technology grants are going to be available, we will publish the information in a newsletter, post the application forms on our web site, and notify you through our monthly NewsGrams sent to all NETA members.

Questions?
Please address any questions to Dr. Lynne Herr, NETA Contest Chair, at lynne.herr@netasite.org.

The NETA Board of Directors met in July in Omaha for their annual planning retreat.
The NETA board of directors participated in a strategic planning meeting at their annual July retreat in Omaha. Thank you to all of those who filled out the membership survey to help guide the planning to continually improve the organization. We would like to share the goals with you.

**Goal 1—**
Demonstrate continual growth in quality, attendance and offerings at our conferences. Key Performance Indicators include: to Obtain feedback from at least 10% of attendees a year for each conference; solicit current, relevant, and forward thinking sessions; increase offerings (workshops, sessions, virtual); and increase attendance. Details and action plans were recorded.

**Goal 2—**
Expand Learning Opportunities Beyond the Conference. Key Performance Indicators include: to Increase sponsored groups; Market presenter resources/content; Solicit and disseminate high quality resources on a regular basis; and Expand/enhance statewide partnerships. Details and action plans were recorded.
Pearls of Wisdom—
Celebrating NETA’s 30th Anniversary

Request for Sessions for the NETA 2017 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 20-21, 2017. 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 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. A limit of three presenters per session may be submitted. Students are allowed to assist in a presentation as guests of the conference (limit of four, and must be supervised at all times).

Questions?
Questions should be directed to Matt Lee, President Elect/Conference Chair, by email at matthew.lee@netasite.org

Mark Your Calendar—Submission Deadline!
Sessions may only be submitted at the online submission form, and must be entered by the November 11, 2016 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! ❖
I recently had the opportunity to catch up with an old colleague. We began our careers teaching and coaching together and had some really great years teaching in the same pod of our building. I don’t get to see that colleague much anymore due to the distance between us. When we do get the opportunity to see each other, we make the most of it with some great conversation. During our last chat, we had an interesting conversation. It was all about the new high school that his school district is constructing. The current high school that he teaches in is old, dingy, and ready to be replaced. Luckily, their school bond passed approving construction of a brand new multi-million dollar facility.

I asked my old friend if he was looking forward to the move. He has taught in the same classroom for the last 10+ years and I was curious about how much of a hassle it was going to be to pack and move all of the materials that he had accumulated. His answer really made me think. A lot.

The kicker
He told me that he was looking forward to getting into his new classroom this summer to get it ready for the new school year next August. I get that. What teacher doesn’t get a little excited to set up their room for the upcoming school year? But what he said next, was the kicker. He told me that he was getting rid of everything in his classroom. EVERYTHING. Everything from what he had in his filing cabinets to what he placed on the walls.

Wow!
He told me that he was excited to start fresh. He told me that it is invigorating to think that seventeen years into his career he is starting over. Starting fresh. He relishes the opportunity to create new units and lessons for the classes he has taught for several years. He said he felt like he did that his first summer right out of college when he was prepping for his first ever teaching position.

While driving home after our conversation, my mind began to comprehend this whole situation. Here is a veteran teacher that was excited, if not ecstatic, about starting fresh for his eighteenth year in education. I equated it to pushing the reset button on a video game.

Would you be willing to “push the reset button” in your classroom for this year? Have a great school year!

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**NETA Free Membership**

Please encourage your educator colleagues to become members of NETA.

Some information to share with them: NETA membership is open to anyone who has an interest in administrative, educational, and instructional use of technology and who subscribe to the basic tenets of NETA as proclaimed in the NETA bylaws. They may join or review the NETA bylaws by visiting www.netasite.org.

Individuals who attend NETA’s annual spring conference will receive all membership benefits, including a printed newsletter. Members not attending NETA’s annual spring conference have the opportunity to subscribe to the print newsletter for $35 per year.
Are you tired of opening boxes of Wonka Bars hoping to find a golden ticket to attend the NETA Spring 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!

Friendly and inclusive
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 is using the digital submission system again in an effort to make our contests more teacher and student friendly, as well as more inclusive of all 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!

Structure
Our 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 San Antonio next summer), earn grants for purchasing classroom technology, and be recognized as leaders in your local district and the region.

Digital submission system
The digital submission process will again save you time and paper. No more signatures in blue ink or racing off to the post office to meet the postmark deadline! Our contest submission window will open November 1 and close February 1 at midnight. Start thinking about your projects to enter now and log on to http://netasite.org on November 1 to get started with your entries!

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

Lynne Herr,
ESU 6, NETA Contest Chair

Contests!
NETA Student Contests

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 but are not limited to: 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 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.

All contest winners will be asked to submit poster sessions featuring their winning contest entries to present at the NETA Spring Conference.

Announcing winners
All entrants should refer to the NETA website (http://netasite.org) on or after March 1, 2017 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 2016–17 Contest submission window will be November 1, 2016–February 1, 2017.

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 2017 NETA Spring 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, 2017, and a final report of less than 250 words that describes the activities, tools and student impact is due June 1, 2018.

Grant recipients will be required to present their project at the 2018 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. 2016 grant winners are not eligible to apply for this contest.

**ISTE Trek Conference Scholarship**

Up to four trips to the 2017 ISTE Conference in San Antonio, TX, 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 2017 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 2017? 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, 2017, explaining what projects or plans will be implemented in their classroom based upon what was learned through ISTE 2017 attendance. 2016 ISTE Trek winners are not eligible for this contest.

**What’s Your Story?**

Tell us for a chance to win a NETA conference scholarship!

Recognizing that many teachers pay for NETA conference attendance out of their own funds and often must use personal days to be able to leave their classrooms, the Board wants to offer assistance through a new contest. Entrants will be asked to answer the question: How will attending NETA change your classroom story? Winning teachers will receive free conference registration and have the actual costs of their substitute reimbursed. They may also be interviewed to share their story with the NETA community.

**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. All entries must include the superintendent’s consent for contest entry and superintendent’s contact information. If a superintendent is submitting his/her own application, the President of the local Board of Education may be used.

The winner will be awarded $600 for professional activities (which could include conference reimbursement, tuition, or subscriptions—to be (continued on the next page)
(Contests, continued) spent by April 30, 2018). 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.
- involves the local community in their work or has facilitated partnerships with business and/or other organizations to advance the use of technology in teaching and learning.
- integrates deliberate planning in an effort to improve education through the use of technology.
- works tirelessly to improve the quality of education and/or work experience in their own school.
- contributes to the profession by presenting at professional conferences, seminars and/or workshops or publishing articles in print or through electronic media.
- reflects the mission and purpose of NETA.

**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, 2018). 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 leading technology initiatives.

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 and learning; locally, regionally, or statewide.
- involves the local community in their work or has facilitated partnerships with business and/or other organizations to advance the use of technology in teaching and learning.
- integrates deliberate planning in an effort to improve education through the use of technology.
- works tirelessly to improve the quality of education and/or work experience in their own school.
- contributes to the profession by presenting at professional conferences, seminars and/or workshops or publishing articles in print or through electronic media.
- reflects the mission and purpose of NETA.

**Submission Deadline:** The 2016–17 Contest submission window will be November 1, 2016 – February 1, 2017. All entries must be submitted through the contest submission system accessed via the NETA website (http://netasite.org).

**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 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.

All contest winners will be asked to submit poster sessions featuring their contest entries to present at the NETA Spring Conference.

**Announcing winners**

All entrants should refer to the NETA website (http://netasite.org) on or after March 1, 2017 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).
Tech Coordinators and Mobile Learning Community

The Tech Coordinators and Mobile Learning Community groups are two separate groups supported by NETA as part of efforts to encourage statewide technology initiatives.

Tech Coordinators
The Tech Coordinators Meeting will be Monday, October 17, 2016, at ESU 10 in Kearney.

Do you provide technical support for your district? The agendas for meetings focus on technology coordinator duties that are largely platform independent.

This group also has a listserv. You can join the listserv by going to the site listed below and entering your name and address.

Questions?
For questions, contact Lucas Bingham at lucas.bingham@netasite.org or follow the site http://netasite.org/techcoord.

Additional meeting times:
Wednesday, February 8th, 2017
9:30am-4pm
Grand Island Public Schools
123 S Webb Road
Grand Island, NE 68802
West Conference Room

During NETA 2017
April 20-21, 2017
CenturyLink Center Omaha
Exact time/location TBD

Registration is free and lunch is provided by NETA. This group is not open to vendors. Please look for registration information to be sent out via e-mail on the tech coordinators listserv or posted on the NETA site. Registration is typically open 30 days prior to the event.

An attempt to create remote sessions/connections will be continued at each event for those who are unable to attend in person.

Mobile Learning Community
(Formerly 1:1 Learning Community)

For many years, NETA has sponsored meetings geared towards 1:1 schools and those considering 1:1 initiatives. This year, rather than two smaller meetings, we will have one larger 1:1 summit at ESU 10 in Kearney.

Please mark your calendars for Thursday, January 12th. Lunch will be provided in Kearney and distance learning connections will be made available for those who cannot attend in person. Online agenda and notes are made available in Google Docs.

See more from the NETA home page: http://netasite.org. Click on Sponsored Groups in the left sidebar and follow the link for the Mobile Learning Community. More details will be coming out later this fall.
Calendar of Technology Conferences & Seminars

Events of every type for educators, technicians & administrators

October 2016

Fall Ed Tech Conference
October 6–7, 2016
Younes Conference Center
Kearney, NE
www.fall.netasite.org

ITEC (Iowa Technology Education Connection) Conference
October 9–11, 2016
Iowa Events Center
Des Moines, IA
itec-ia.org

iNACOL—Blended and Online Learning Symposium
October 25–28, 2016
San Antonio, TX
www.inacol.org

January 2017

Florida Educational Technology Conference (FETC)
January 24–27, 2017
Orange County Convention Ctr,
Orlando, FL
fetc.org

February 2017

Texas Computer Education Association (TCEA)
February 6–10, 2017
Austin, TX
www.tcea.org

NDLA (Nebraska Distance Learning Association)
Digital Learning: Connect and Engage
February 8–10, 2017
Omaha Marriott (Regency)
Omaha, NE
ndla.org

Midwest Educational Technology Conference (METC)
February 13–15, 2017
St. Charles, MO
metcconference.org

Nebraska Association for the Gifted (NAG) Conference
February 23–24, 2017
Omaha, NE
www.negifted.org

March 2017

National School Boards Association (NSBA)
March 25–27, 2017
Denver, CO
annualconference.nsba.org

Infotec (by the AIM Inst.)
March 28, 2017
Embassy Suites
La Vista, NE
infotec.org

April 2017

CoSN’s School Networking Conference
April 3–6, 2017
Chicago, IL
www.cosn.org/events/

NETA Spring Conference
Pearls of Wisdom
April 20–21, 2017
CenturyLink Center Omaha
Omaha, NE
netasite.org

United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA)
April 30–May 3, 2017
Indianapolis, IN
http://www.usdla.org

June 2017

Nebraska Career Education Conference (NCE)
June 5–8, 2017
Younes Conference Center
Kearney, NE
nceconference.com

ISTE Conference
Technology Charged Learning Starts Here
June 25–28, 2017
San Antonio, TX
www.iste.org
NETA
Nebraska Educational Technology Association
PO Box 484
Gretna, NE 68028

**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.

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If you attended the Spring Conference in April 2016, 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 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

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