

From the Superintendent's Desk
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So far, I authored two articles about technology for the district's website. The first was a nostalgic piece about how technology has changed over the years. The second had to do with the in-service teachers have had this year regarding technology. This article is a follow-up on what 5K-6th grade students are learning about technology.

Last year, following a *Bright Bytes* survey students and staff took pertaining to technology, it was discovered that there was a distinct need for our younger students to learn more about technology in a systematic way. It was felt that we couldn't continue having students learn how to use technology in an unplanned happenstance way.

The decision was made to restructure Sue Kuenster's teacher aide assignment and take advantage of her Business Education background to work with the younger students of the district. In her restructured assignment as a technology aide, she spends two, sometimes three, periods a week with students from five-year-old kindergarten through 6th grade. The main goal of these classes is to help children improve their keyboarding skills. To do this, they are using an online program called "Typing.com." They are also getting some 'old school' keyboarding practice—Sue calls out the keys and the students type. They are learning 'home row' and where to place their fingers on the keyboard. Then, it's a matter of practice and repetition. Familiarity with the keyboard and function keys is becoming commonplace.

The second goal is getting students to explore technology and various software applications. During the first quarter this year, students were introduced to the concept of the 'network', sharing information, logging onto their network folders, and exploring their desktop. They also reviewed the two operating systems that they work on—Windows and Google Chrome. They have talked a little about a third platform—Mac/Apple. Identifying parts of the computer and software programs and using correct technology terms is always emphasized. Students have also explored computer safety which includes internet dangers and 'cyberbullying.' They have refreshed on software such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft Powerpoint, and have explored the new 'Wixie' presentation software.

The students have appeared generally excited about keyboarding and technology time. And, Sue is enjoying working with them. I will be anxious to hear what other things they have been learning about as the school year continues!