Technology Goals for 2014-15

Technology continues to move forward as students review skills from the previous year and build on that knowledge to learn new techniques, programs, and skills. Below is a basic outline of some of the software, learning, and projects developed for each grade level.

Kindergarten: Our first focus is logging on and entering a user name and password. After that, our main focus for the year is using the mouse correctly. We will use various resources where the mouse needs to be clicked, dragged, double clicked to make movement or photos happen. Around Christmas, we'll begin work with ABC Mouse and a customized lesson plan that focuses on the alphabet and number learning. Basic terminology is used in class weekly to familiarize students.

1st Grade: We'll use various online resources to enhance classroom learning. Students will also be introduced to entry level Power Point and MS Word using basic skills such as typing their name and changing font colors. Vocabulary will include items like desktop, cursor, cut, paste, font, bold, and underline. Their will be an emphasis on getting comfortable on the keyboard.

2nd Grade: More projects will be introduced using MS Word. Students will be expected to research, cut & paste a photo, copy an element, center items and change type size and styles. Students will also be introduced to Google Earth as they explore landscapes. MS Excel will be explored. Vocabulary will include all of the above as well as task bar, tool bar, log off, and icons. Saving work is also introduced and practiced. Digital citizenship rules are presented to recognize how to stay safe online. Additional emphasis on keyboard familiarity.

3rd Grade: Students will have a unique user name and password to remember each week when they log on. We'll be researching using approved web sites and taking notes on information. We'll use our information in Power Points and Word documents with Spellcheck feature. Excel will also be expanded using a class survey. We'll talk more in-depth about digital citizenship, including our personal responsibilities for being safe. Keyboard focus will now include home row hand placement as we begin to learn where the keys are with each hand. We'll toggle between screens, expand our vocab, and create personal avatars. Students will be introduced to basic coding skills using games. In November, we'll hold a Skype conversation with rangers at Yellowstone.

4th Grade: It's during this year that our keyboard skills take focus. Each class period from 4th grade onward begins with keyboarding time and progress is tracked. Digital citizenship will focus on cyberbullying. We'll expand our research skills and learn about Wikipedia. Students will learn to edit and crop their photos, use Paint, and add to their vocab. Excel will be expanded to include charts and graphs. Coding skills will be taken to the next level with a unit that introduces basic concepts and then applies them online. Several online resources will be used throughout the year as well as more in-depth projects using Word and Power Point. Skills will be expanded in both of these programs including transitioning slides and limited animations.

5th Grade: Our tech vocab is expanded so students understand gigabyte and pixels. We discuss copyrights and how to give credit for photos borrowed online. We compare and contrast a MAC computer with a PC. Keyboarding skills are occasionally tested and we now have benchmarks students need to reach. Research is a major focus during this year and we work with finding answers beyond just "googling them." By this time, we are ready to further expand our experience with Excel, Word, and Paint. MS Publisher is also introduced and students create projects using desktop publishing. Coding is further explored and students create characters that move, bark, fly, or dance using SCRATCH. Photo editing is expanded.

6th Grade: In 6th grade we explore how a computer runs by taking a look inside and learning what part a motherboard, RAM, and graphics card play. By now students vocab includes understanding of browsers, minimizing, hardware, software, downloading, cropping, pixels, and more. Students create artwork using Paint and following a tutorial. Research skills are enhanced. Online sites such as Storyboard That and Tagexdo are used. Coding skills are expanded to include production of a space invaders game. Computer shortcuts are used and Word skills now include headers/footers, multiple columns of text and adding drop caps. Excel is expanded. We will also incorporate blogging into our technology and literature curriculum.

7th & 8th Grade: By this time, students are familiar with basic Office products. While we continue to practice and use those skills during the year for various project work, we'll also look at computer menus such as the Control Panel, the Save As feature and saving a file in a different format. Work with Excel will take a more specific focus as students work with databases and formulas. Coding and Digital Citizenship are continued at an upper grade level with a focus on social media issues. Online resources play a large role in the upper grades. My first goal is to demonstrate a wide variety of sites that will give them more options for classroom work. We'll use Prezi, Storythat, Comic Strip Maker, Gamestar Mechanic, Crossword Puzzle Generators, and more. We'll also explore sites that are just fun to use and allow them to express their more creative side. It is my hope we will even get into a little CAD work. Students in these grades will also be introduced to photography and various programs that offer them many options once good photographs are taken.

By 8th Grade, students will be working with web site creation and video editing sites as well. The 8th grade will be recording audio, editing and producing videos as well as submitting photos and press releases for the local newspaper.

Note to Parents: If you have a special area of expertise that might work well in our technology curriculum and offer students insight into an area which revolves around computers/web sites/technology, I'd love the opportunity to discuss a guest speaker or demonstration opportunity with you for one or more of our grades. danapoepsel@yahoo.com   Thank you.