



# Sweetwater County School District #1

## Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

### November 2017 Newsletter

**In this issue:** Science Update, Gifted & Talented Future City, Grants & Federal Programs, Young Author Info, Digital Citizenship Night, WY-TOPP Testing Info, Upcoming Events Calendar

#### School Improvement Planning

New School Improvement Plan (SIP) guidelines were released by the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) this year. Schools must base their SIP on the indicator of the Wyoming Accountability in Education Act (WAEA) report with the lowest performance level to set at least one SMART goal. Schools in the Partially Meeting or Not Meeting categories are required by WDE to complete the School Improvement Plans. However, SCSD#1 is requiring all schools to complete a SIP in the belief that schools should continually be moving forward in their progress.

School Improvement Teams met twice in October to start the process of writing their plans. After the teams were introduced to the new SIP format being used they reviewed their WAEA reports. During the second meeting teams had time to continue their work on plans and gain feedback from a peer review process. SIPs will be submitted for additional district review before being given to the board for approval this month. All School Improvement Plans can be found on the SCSD#1 [School Improvement Plan](#) webpage.

#### Visible Learning PLC Tools

Take a look at this quick reference guide to [Hattie's Visible Learning Influences](#) on student achievement. This guide can help PLC teams quickly identify teaching strategies that can have the highest impact on student learning.

This guide, [Visible Learning Synthesis of Research and High Effect Strategies](#), is helpful for teachers to use to support instructional decisions especially within the data team cycle. This guide provides additional information about what the strategy looks like during implementation.

#### October 20th PD Survey Results

Overall participant response to the October 20th professional development surveys was predominantly positive. View full survey results on the SCSD#1 [Survey Results](#) webpage.

#### The STEAM Powered Classroom

In the October issue of Educational Leadership, Charlie Harper starts out his article with, "This article is intended to be a message of hope and a call to action for any teacher or leader who dreams of transforming learning in their school."

In his article he talks about integrating STEAM in the classroom everyday requiring students "to use active inquiry, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills." Harper also lists some STEAM-PBL Lesson ideas:

- Use the engineering design process to design and construct a gingerbread house.
- Construct a lasting work or environmental art that provides ongoing learning experiences, such as a terrarium, bog, or bat house.
- Use cinematography, graphic design, or web design to create a public service announcement or run a public awareness campaign addressing a current issue.
- Build a first aid or supply kit for a Civil War soldier based on the technology of that time.

To see more lesson ideas [read the full article](#) (Harper, 2017).

Academic Vision: To implement the Instructional Model which includes purposeful planning, quality instruction, resources, and assessment.

# Science Update

The Science Subject Area Committee (SAC) has been continuing to map their curriculum. The committee reviewed feedback from teacher

questionnaires to see what was actually being taught. They then compared the feedback to the standards to see where there might be gaps. The SAC will meet at the end of this month to start writing the curriculum maps. The committee intends to have draft maps ready for second semester allowing teachers to have more time to use and provide feedback on the maps.



Friday, October 20th Science teachers participated in a GIS session with Carla Hester-Croft during their professional development time. Geographic Information System (GIS) is a mapping program teachers can use as a classroom tool.



Carla Hester-Croft, Associate Professor of Information Technology at WWCC led a training session on Computational Thinking for Educators to help educators integrate computational thinking (CT) into their current curriculum. CT is essential to the development of computer applications, but also supports problem solving across all disciplines. Students who learn CT across the curriculum can begin to see a relationship between academic subjects, as well as, between life inside and outside of the classroom.

Carla also held a session with code.org offered by Technology & Innovation in Education (TIE), Teachers Teaching Tech, and WyoCSZone. This workshop prepared teachers to teach computer science as an integral part of math, science, and ELA.



## Gifted & Talented Students Build a Future City

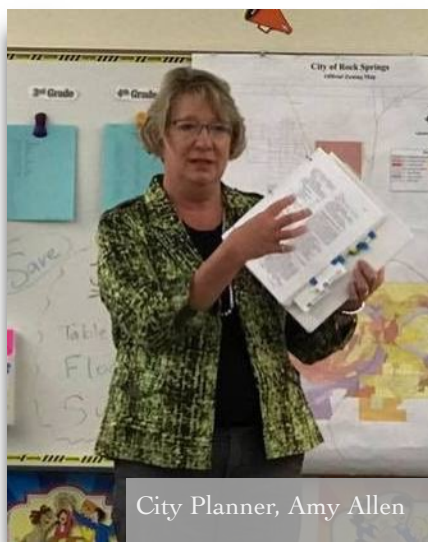
Dr Cristy Pelham has tasked her 6th grade gifted and talented students with building a Future City. Future City is a project-based learning program in which students in 6th - 8th grades imagine, research, design, and build cities of the future. Keeping the engineering design process and project management front and center, students work in teams to ask and answer an authentic, real-world question: How can we make the world a better place?

Students involved in the Future City project will spend approximately four months creating cities that could exist at least 100 years in the future. Each city must incorporate a solution to a design challenge that changes each year. This year's challenge, The Age-Friendly City, asks students to identify an issue troubling elderly adults then, engineer

two innovative solutions so the elderly can remain active and independent. In February, students will present their cities before a panel of judges.

The project will include a proposal, a 2D map of the city zoning, a 3D map made of all recycled materials, a Sim City Simulation, and an essay. The current 6<sup>th</sup> grade gifted and talented class will split into two teams, competing against each other, mentored throughout the process by Daniel Hayes.

*~Information provided by Dr Cristy Pelham, Gifted & Talented Teacher*



City Planner, Amy Allen



Eric Nunn, Environmental Engineer, informs students about different inspections needed for building construction.



## Sweetwater BOCES Supporting Dual & Concurrent Enrollment

Dual credit classes and concurrent classes are offered at all three district high schools in collaboration with Western Wyoming Community College and Sheridan Community College. Dual and concurrent classes allow students to gain credit for the classes at both the high school they are registered at as well as the college.

This fall 158 students throughout the district are taking dual credit classes in 45 different courses to receive a total of 793 credits. Concurrent classes in four different courses are being attended by 62 students receiving a total of 249 credits. 205 textbooks were provided for students in these classes. Sweetwater BOCES covers the cost of credit hours (up to 10), books and lab fees for these SCSD#1 students.

Sweetwater BOCES also provides funding for equipment used during concurrent classes occurring at the high schools. This funding ensures students will receive the same experience in class at their high school that they would if they were attending the this class at the college.



Greg Buel teaches the Welding II concurrent class at RSHS. He feels the biggest reward for students taking concurrent credit is "The sense of accomplishment. I mean they have six credits complete when they finish the class. It gives them a head start on their career or college or whatever their plans are after high school."

When asked why she opted to have in-class podcasts and weekly visits to RSHS versus teaching students at WWCC, Susan Heyborne, WWCC instructor of dual credit Math 1400/1405 stated, "Convenience. These students are young and most are not driving yet. [Organizing] busses and all of that would just be too timely."



RSHS senior Taylor Applegate felt the biggest hurdle to taking her Phlebotomy class is "Only being able to do our pokes [blood draws] during class hours as that is when our instructor is present. It is an online class but the lab is in the class so sometimes communication can get scrambled [between the two instructors]." She said she alleviates this by emailing her instructor to get it taken care of.

*~Information & photos provided by Mandi Hull, Perkins Grant Career Center Paraprofessional*



**Supporting English Learners All Day, Everyday: *Teach, Model, Practice, Apply****Make Learning Visible*

Incorporating more visuals and nonlinguistic representations can greatly support all learners, especially for English Learners (EL). For example, take the vocabulary being taught from ReadyGEN, Springboard, or the content area and create/show a visual representation (picture) to support building background, schema, and context for your students.

*Pre-Teach Whenever Possible*

Any opportunity to preview the material for an English Learner will help support the student to better understand when it is presented to the whole class.

*Communicate with EL Teachers*

Make time for conversations to support students. Share strategies that have been effective. EL teachers are a great resource for supporting Language Acquisition!

*Use Sentence Frames to Give Students Practice with Academic Language*

All students need practice with academic language. Example: I agree with \_\_\_(character in the story)\_\_\_ or I disagree with \_\_\_(character in the story)\_\_\_\_. Sentence frames can be as simple or as complex as you make them to support the needs in your classroom!

*Teacher Resources for English Learners*

The [WIDA website](#) provides a number of great resources for teachers supporting English Learners. On the website, “can do descriptors” are found under Standards and Instruction, which provides teachers with examples of performance for each language acquisition level.

*Supporting ALL Students During WYTOPP Testing*

With interim assessments taking place it is good to review the individual needs of students and the accommodations that are allowed during the assessment. Students who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) may have specific accommodations for testing.

*~Information Provided by Shannon Garrison, Director of Grants & Federal Programs*

**Young Author Competition Begins**

The Young Author Competition is open to all students in grades K-12.

Fiction, Non-Fiction, and Poetry entries will be accepted until the  
***February 1, 2018*** deadline.

For more information visit the SCSD#1 [Young Author](#) webpage.

## Digital Citizenship Family Night & Chili Cook Off

Wednesday, Oct. 11th Eastside and Pilot Butte Elementary collaborated with Western Wyoming Community College (WWCC) and Rock Springs Police Department (RSPD) to host the 5th consecutive Digital Citizenship Night.

Inspiration for this event came from a conversation between Eastside principal, Brent McMurtrey, and a parent who is an Assistant Professor of Office Information Systems/Computer Science at WWCC. Mr. McMurtrey shared issues he was seeing regarding students' use of technology. He noticed that each year new apps and

technologies were being used at rapid rates by children and teenagers, often leaving parents, guardians, and educators unaware of what young people were exposed to. WWCC, Eastside, Pilot Butte, RSPD and Prevention Management Organization joined forces to organize the first Digital Citizenship Family Night to inform both students and parents about responsible use of technology.

Digital Citizenship Family Night and Chili Cook-off helps increase our community's safe, responsible and respectful use of digital technology through informative sessions, WWCC students' posters, and Q & A. It's also a fun night to play in the digital playground and warm up with some chili.

The night started off with the Digital Playground and the WWCC Poster Session as families entered Eastside. After the welcome and introductions, families moved on to the chili cook off. Winners of the chili cook off were 1st Place-Team 1 Teachers (David Galindo, Bryant Blake, Tonja Vessels, Shari Hollingshead), 2nd Place-Rock Springs Fire Department, 3rd Place-Team 4 Teachers (Machenzie Lucero, Kayla Galindo, Sandi Henderson, Kendal Chandler)

After a hearty meal of chili, participants moved into different sessions. This year sessions were: Safety on the Internet, Digital Footprints Left Behind, The Zen of Being Digital, Growing up YouTube, Gadget Habits & Your Kids, Google Maps & 360 Photos, iEducation & Tutoring. A special session for kids was offered with RSPD Detective Amanda Salazar and SCSD#1 techs were available to answer questions. The evening ended with cookies and conversation in the Eastside cafeteria. This year's sponsors were Eastside Elementary, Pilot Butte Elementary, WWCC, RSPD, Rock Springs Fire Department, Prevention Management Organization of Wyoming, Dominion Energy, and SCSD#1 Information Technology.



*~Information provided by Teresa Klatka, Eastside Elementary Counselor*

*~Photographs provided by Jessica Castillo, USDOE Counseling Grant Coordinator*

**WY-TOPP Testing Tips & Reminders**

- Test Administrator (TA) and Proctor computers will log out of the testing session after 20 minutes-if students are logged into that testing session, they will be logged out of their test.
- If a computer screen freezes or goes white, a hard shut down can be used to reset the computer. Students can then log back into the same testing session.
- If a student has not finished their test, but the test session is being stopped/paused, make sure students review all completed questions up to that point. When logging back in to the test after 20 minutes, students will not be able to review or change answers for the portion of the test that is completed.
- If a student's test is paused during the writing portion of the ELA test, they will not be able to go back into the writing portion to finish after 20 minutes of being paused.
- When setting up your test session the **Session Attributes** window will open after the test selection window. Choose **Fall** from the **Test Reason** drop down menu. If you do not choose the same test reason for all students being tested, student results will not all be in the same report in AIR Ways reporting.

**WY-TOPP Informational Sessions Offered**

Now that WY-TOPP testing has started, results are available on the AIR Ways Reporting tile within the WY-TOPP Portal. If you would like help accessing or interpreting this data or have other questions about reports or testing, the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment office is offering open sessions to review this data and answer questions. Watch for an email coming soon with the date, time and location for a session in your school.

November						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Data Teams Coaching	2 Data Teams Coaching	3 Data Teams Coaching	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17 WY-TOPP Interim Window Closes	18
19	20	21	22 Thanksgiving Break	23 Thanksgiving Break	24 Thanksgiving Break	25
26	27	28 Science SAC 8-4 Board Room	29 Science SAC 8-4 Board Room	30		

December						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22 Professional Development	23
24	25 Winter Break	26 Winter Break	27 Winter Break	28 Winter Break	29 Winter Break	30
31						