

A Message from Dr. Bell



That wish is extended to all of you served by ESU 10 staff as we “partner with our customers to meet changing needs through professional expertise, training, and support.” I’ll even include the retired principal/educator/all star high school hurdler – you know who you are – who called to let me know he was cheering for the lions on my recent trip to South Africa. I’m just impressed and amazed that this retired educator located his bifocals, figured out how to turn on his computer, and took the time from his busy schedule to call. It verifies the old saying that retired principals never really ever stop being viable educators - they just lose their faculties.

I really do miss all of my former peers out there in retirement world. Your contributions over the years have been a major benefit for all of us.

To keep current in our knowledge bases, three ESU 10 board members and I had the opportunity last month to attend the Association of Educational Service Agencies Annual Conference. This conference is focused on the needs of educational service agencies and is an excellent place to gain knowledge, investigate new products and programs, and just network with peers from around the country.

The keynote presenters all had something to offer that either benefitted or validated work being done or considered at ESU 10. Dr. Michael Fullan validated the current ESU 10 Team Blue effort as we attempt to use the right drivers to build capacity, promote teamwork, identify technology, and use pedagogy to create systemic change in schools. Dr. David Sousa emphasized that education is the only profession that has the purpose of changing the brain every day. He also highlighted the fact that student working memory has decreased and since students don’t remember as many items they instead remember where to find them. Adora Zvitak, a high school student living in Washington, shared her “kid’s eye view” on a number of topics that have relevance for teachers and students in the ESU 10 area.

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UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

January 2012

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Various workshops that I attended dealt with partnerships for career and technical training, collaboration with other states to provide online learning opportunities, strategies necessary to serve rural school districts in the years to come, and a software solution intended to effectively impact student behavior and create a climate that is more supportive and affirming for all students. Exhibitors also had some good offers and those school districts represented on the ESU 10 Administrator Advisory Council will be offered the opportunity to be a pilot project for a product designed to inspire higher levels of reading, writing, and critical thinking in high school students.

It's always good to learn and grow. Now it's time to stay home and develop, or discard, some of these new ideas to benefit school districts and children. Please feel free to share with ESU 10 staff exciting things that you discover that could benefit all of us. An active exchange of ideas can only make us all better.

SCIENCE TEACHERS NETWORK

by Emily Jameson, Professional Development Coordinator



Science teachers from the ESU 10 district came together on November 9th to collaborate and learn from one another. The theme for the day was Raising Questions and included a visit with ESU 4 science teachers and Jim Woodland from NDE via distance learning. We also took a look at the recently released NeSA-S Table of Specifications. The highlight of the day was completing an inquiry-based experiment with ice balloons. Through this experiment, teachers were able to explore how to scaffold student questions and guide them to design their own investigations to find out more about the questions they ask. The Science Teachers Network will meet again on **January 18, 2012**; registration is currently open on [ODIE](#).

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TIPS FROM THE MAC PRO

by Marc Regenos, Systems Specialist

Here's a little utility that I found that has become a must have in my software toolbox. It works for both personal machines or servers. And best of all it's free! [Disk Inventory X](#).

If you've ever wondered where all the space went on your Macintosh hard drive, this little utility will help you find it. I use it to clean up unwanted music files that somehow made it to the school server. Give it a try on a test machine sometime.



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Paper.

It is a part of a teacher's life. Worksheets, post-it notes, essays, and the technical cliché, "The printer is out of paper!"

With all the technology at our disposal it amazes me how much paper we go through in a single day. This month's article will look at a couple of ways we can reduce the amount of paper we use in our classrooms.

The first tool is the site [Print Friendly](#). The purpose of this site is to make web pages more print friendly by removing advertisements, images, and even delete parts of an article you don't need. You can use the home page or add the bookmarklet to your web browser and access the print friendly option from the site you are on. The other useful parts of Print Friendly are the options to save the information as a PDF or email it to someone. This is a great tool for students, especially when they are involved in a research project. Print Friendly will save a ton of paper (but I don't guarantee it will eliminate the printer is out of paper cliché).

[Stixy](#) is a great web tool for post-it note lessons. Stixy is basically a digital bulletin board. My students inspired me to start using a tool like this because of their use of Stickies on their (Mac) computers. I noticed that they used the stickies to record homework, messages to each other,

and other fun or educational information. I started using Stixy boards for quick posts. As a teacher you can have a number of different boards, and even make them password protected.

The surest way to save paper is to go paperless. If you are using a learning management system like Moodle or Angel, this can be accomplished with just a little work. Each system has its own options, but many of the everyday activities, like crossword puzzles, are built into these learning management systems. A bonus is that they are automatically graded.

For more in-depth writing, the text based drop boxes allow the students to write paragraphs and even essays (if you don't mind the basic formatting) to hand in digitally. For more serious essay writing, students can attach a word document in the drop boxes or email them to you.

There is a negative side to this paperless option, your time. During the first semester I decided to go paperless

with a writing course. Essays and journals were word attachments. It was nice to use the "track changes" option as I graded, and I have a copy of each assignment for every student. Even though it doesn't seem like much, the added steps of downloading, grading, renaming and saving the file, and then finally entering the grade and uploading the graded file for the student made for a stressful semester. A two-page journal took me on average seven minutes to go through the complete cycle. Times that by 40 students, and time becomes a huge factor. Be prepared to spend extra time grading.

Reducing the amount of paper in the classroom is easy, from simply making sure to print only what you need, to changing some of the daily activities to a digital form. Share how you are reducing paper in your classroom on ESU 10's Facebook page or with me on Twitter (jdog90).





According to Marzano’s 9 Strategies, Note Taking is #2 in effectiveness. So naturally, we as teachers want students taking notes over materials we cover in class. Have you taught them how to take notes? Have you taught them what to do with the notes once they have jotted all those gems down on paper? This is not a skill that we are born with which I think we overlook often with students because typically, teachers are good note takers.

Here are five engaging activities that you can do with students to either take notes or review the notes they have taken.

1. Use comic strips for both reviewing and summarizing notes! Many students are visual learners so having them create visuals for their own learning is a great way for them to review. “In four comic frames or less, summarize Plate Tectonics.” “Tell a comic story using 10 of the 25 vocabulary words from this unit.” These particular ideas can be done on paper or digitally. You will find there are many web sites for building comic strips out there. Here are four different sites you might use:

- [Super Hero Squad Create Your Own Comic](#)
- [Read Write Think Comic Creator](#)
- [Make Beliefs Comic Builder](#)
- [Strip Generator](#)

2. Use those graphic organizers! [Ed Helper](#) has a great list of graphic organizers to use with students! Remember that Marzano’s #1 strategy for learning is to look at **Similarities and Differences**. Have students do some comparing and contrasting with notes using a simple Venn Diagram. You will also find many graphic organizers built into the software for your interactive whiteboards like Venn Diagrams, tables, and KWL Charts.

3. Use a feedback system whether it is clickers, sticky notes on the wall, or using a web site such as [Stixy!](#) Use the

stickies to have students do a KWL chart for each unit. Ask students often to jot down an understanding about the material. Ask them a “what-if” question about the material. This gets them applying the new knowledge. “What if we had volcanoes in Nebraska? What characteristics would they have and why do you think that?”

4. Train the class as Google Jockeys and Class Note Takers! Each day of lecture assign one student to be the Google Jockey which is someone that is ready to do Google searches at anytime. This could even be expanded into several jobs: someone to search for images on the topic at hand, someone to search for more, quality/scholarly materials on the topic, and possibly a biographer, someone researching the lives of those involved in the topic. A class note taker would be the official notes for that lecture to be shared with all the students at the end of class. For this job, it is crucial for the teacher to make time at the end of the class period, together with the class, to critically review those notes and to add or change anything the class feels was missed. This demonstrates to the students to review the notes as well as remember what was said in class.

5. Create a backchannel to empower students to ask questions! Have you ever gone to a workshop and sat by a friend and during that time you made comments, made a connection to something that was said, or asked questions of each other? Or in Kindergarten when the teacher brought up a new topic and everyone’s hands shot up because they have a story to tell? [Today’s Meet](#) is a simple web site just for such activity. Next time you watch a video or have a formal lecture with students, set up a backchannel and use it to gather questions, have the students add links or images to what they are already learning, or maybe even have them make connections to other knowledge they may have. Keep in mind, this is not something you can assume students instinctively know how to use **APPROPRIATELY** in class. Pre-teach and Participate! Let them know how they need to use the backchannel and how everyone will see what is posted. Also be a part of the chat that is going on. It lets you know when you might need to pause the video or reteach a concept. Allowing students to add their voices to the unit gives them buy in and ties them to the materials!

Poster and PSA Contest Guidelines



Sponsored by the
Nebraska Attorney General and Educational Service Units

The ESUs of Nebraska in partnership with the Nebraska Attorney General’s Office are sponsoring an Internet Safety and Digital Citizenship Poster and Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest for students in K-12 Schools in Nebraska.

1. Eligibility

Any public or private school/district within an ESU may participate.

2. Categories

Each school or district may submit one entry in each category from each grade grouping: K-4, 5-8, 9-12, i.e. three entries per school for each of the five categories.

3. Entry Formats

- Poster High quality computer generated (pdf, tiff, jpg, or png);
- Poster Hand drawn
- Audio PSA Submit on labeled CD (mp3, aiff, or wav format).
- Video PSA Submit on labeled VHS, DVD, or CD (QT, WMV, or RM format).
- Open A submission which does not fit a poster or PSA category above—could be a brochure, video documentary, etc.

4. Rules

- No real names used on posters or in audio or video PSAs.
- Copyright laws must be followed, i.e. images, sound, etc.
- 29 second target time on PSAs (audio and video).
- Label CDs and DVDs with ESU Internet Safety Entry Form info. (See next page.)
- Put ESU Contest Entry Form on back of posters
- Poster Size: minimum – 8.5” X 11”, maximum – 16” X 22” (recommended delivery in protected mailer, such as tube or flat box. Do not bend.)

5. Deadline

Entries must be submitted to ESU 10 by **March 9, 2012**.

Send entries via media route or mail to:

Graci Gillming
Educational Service Unit 10
PO Box 850, 76 Plaza Blvd
Kearney, NE 68852

6. Award

One entry in each grade grouping from each ESU will be selected and given state ESU recognition. Winning posters and PSAs, audio and video, will then be eligible for awards and/or use by the ESUs and the Nebraska Attorney General’s Office. A winning entry in each category will be selected and sent on to the Attorney General’s office for special recognition.

2012 ESU Internet Safety Contest Entry Form

Complete this form and place on the back side of each poster entry and submit along with each audio and video entry. Please label CDs and DVDs.

Student(s) Name(s): _____

Student(s) Age(s): _____

Grade(s): _____ Circle Category: Poster (HD or CG), PSA (Audio or Video), Open

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

School City, State, Zip: _____ School Phone: _____

Teacher Name: _____

Teacher email address: _____ ESU: _____

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All images and music are original, are royalty free, or copyright permissions have been granted for broadcast and display.

I hereby grant permission to use this entry for positive recognition, display, publication, or broadcast by the Nebraska Educational Service Units and/or the Attorney General's Office of Nebraska.

Student Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Teacher Signature

Date