

City School District Tonawanda

A publication of the Tonawanda City School District Board of Education

WINTER 2013

Shared Learning on iPads

Mr. Charles Hout's second-grade students at Mullen School have been using the iPads and have become the experts at their school. These tablet computers are the perfect size for students to use. The colorful graphics and multiple applications make learning fun. The students in Mrs. Barbara Hoddick's kindergarten class were interested in learning to use this new technology. Mr. Hout and his students readily agreed to assist them and began tutoring the kindergarten students. Mr. Hout's students are true Mullen leaders. Pictured are second-grader Jordyn Mangold and kindergarten student Kaylie Marmo working together. Be sure to read the other stories in this issue about how students throughout the district are using iPad technology.



Newly Adopted Elementary Math Program Prepares Students for Assessment Exams

Earlier this year, the Tonawanda City School District adopted the Go Math! textbook series to help address the new Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).

For each grade level, the chapters are organized by critical area. Each chapter begins with a "Show What You Know" which is a quick assessment that allows teachers to gear instruction based on students' prior knowledge of prerequisite skills. Throughout the lessons, students are taught concepts and skills by transitioning from the concrete (manipulatives, drawings) to the abstract (traditional pencil-and-paper).



Of the many resources associated with the text, several involve the use of technology. Teachers have online access to digital copies of all materials, interactive iTools, real world videos, and animated math models which provide teachers with instant feedback and help students become more comfortable with taking computer-based tests. Pictured is fifth-grader Clayton Hill, a student in Mrs. Diane Sharry's class at Fletcher Elementary School.

Teacher Publishes NYS ELA Test Guide

Melissa Miller, an eighth-grade English teacher at TM/HS has recently published her latest review book set to be released in February. It's titled *The Barron's New York State Grade 8 English Language Arts Test: All You Need to Know for the Grade 8 Test*. Co-authored with Cindy Lassonde, this is the follow-up to the seventh-grade review book that the duo published through Barron's two years ago.

This brand-new book is fully aligned with the Common Core State Standards and opens with an explanation of New York State's standards for English Language Arts and Literacy. Teachers are directed on the best way to use this book, students are advised on preparing for the eighth-grade ELA test, and it presents a diagnostic test with answers to analyze students' strengths and weaknesses.

Chapters focus on test overview and effective test-taking strategies, practice exercises in reading, listening and reading, and reading and writing. Also included are two full-length practice tests with answer keys and a strategies checklist. The manual also features a helpful glossary of literary genres and terms.



TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Did you know...?

A recent interview with our new superintendent yielded some fun facts that you might not know about him. He certainly has a sense of humor!

Do you have hobbies and what are they?

A hobby that I love, but have not had the time to do is Amateur Radio. I am an Amateur Radio Operator. I know the Morse Code and have used Voice to talk to countries worldwide. I would love to get more engaged in this hobby. My call is KC2NY. Feel free to ask me to spell your name in Morse Code.

If you were not in education what would you be doing?

I probably would be working as an engineer. Most of my technology college courses were hands on and included a lot of math and science.

Do you dream in color or black & white? What is your favorite color?

I think I dream in color - my favorite color is blue.

If you were a tree - what tree would you be?

Oak - because it represents strength and endurance. However, some would say I should be a FIG tree because of my last name - FIG NEWTON, then, of course there's the APPLE tree (Isaac Newton)!

2013 Quality Students

We congratulate the following students for being named as Quality Students:



Jacob Choate, Breanna Eckrote, Mark Emery, Hannah Fremont, Julie Gagliardo, Riley Gardner, Daniel Gertis, Rachel Haentges, Devon Holler, Michael Iuvino, Timothy Korff, Seth Krajewski, Grace MacKay, Joanna McCarthy, Abigail Moore, Nicholas Pullo, Christina Stuart, James Stuart, Juliana Tirone, and Steven Warthling.

A Message from the Superintendent:

Dear Tonawanda City School District Residents,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing me to serve as superintendent of our great city school district. As most of you are aware, I have been employed in the district for 14 years as a secondary principal. I replaced the legendary Mr. Richard Catlin.



A smooth transition is essential to ensure the superintendent is a successful district leader. Building trust, accumulating situational awareness, and ongoing communication are fundamental to creating a community that supports the school district. I will continue to generate a strong community presence as well as assess the district's strengths and identify critical issues. I will review and establish priorities and focus on achieving short-term goals and develop long-term goals.

My vision as superintendent will be to build on the HOPES of the Superintendent Search Advisory Committees. These committees represented all stakeholders and included a student representative. When interviewed, the committees asked me what I would do for the district. I told them that as the new superintendent, I would be a positive leader who continually promotes our district's assets and builds a positive morale with all stakeholders. Shared Decision Making is essential, especially when major decisions are made. Student achievement is the highest priority.

Schools are here to educate students; therefore, all decisions must be made by closely examining student needs. There are many monetary increases that are beyond the district's control such as retirement system, insurance and salaries. While understanding that reductions will need to be made, we will need to look at other areas to cut spending prior to reducing teachers and program. Of course, class sizes, staffing and program will be analyzed to determine what is best instructionally for our students.

Shared services need to be pursued and used to the greatest feasible extent. Operational consolidation should be examined in the areas of central office, support services, special education programs and joint purchasing. I will work with the Tonawanda City Council to look for ways to share services with them.


The Capital Project has recently been approved by the State Education Department. Bids have been sent out and construction of the music wing and the new Clint Small Stadium will begin in March. The stadium should be completed by the start of the 2013-14 school year.

I am hopeful that the Board of Education and I will develop a high level of trust and maintain a respectful working relationship. The search advisory committee, as well as the community, expect us to be professional and courteous to one another.

I look forward to serving as the Tonawanda City School District Superintendent. I will do my best to keep communication ongoing within the community. As a building principal, I always had an open door policy; I will continue this practice. Feel free to contact me with any concerns, questions or comments. We need to work together to create a climate where all students feel safe, student achievement increases, and we continue to offer a quality education within the confines of our budget.

Thank you once again for supporting me as the Tonawanda City School District Superintendent.

Gratefully,


James P. Newton
Superintendent of Schools

TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Goals 2012-2013

Focus on Instruction: The district shall provide a curriculum, instruction and programs for the effective education of all students.

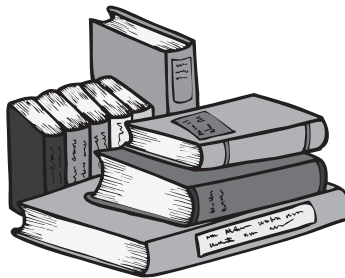
Objectives:

1. Explore District staffing levels and establish program goals for minimum and maximum class size levels.
2. Provide an Enrichment Curriculum for Grades 3-5 for 2012-2013 with exploration for program growth. Compare prior year results with current.
3. Promote a positive school environment through the installation and implementation of programs such as Leader in Me, Rachel's Challenge and the Olweus Program and develop a mechanism to record events in order to measure progress.
4. Ensure that District curriculum aligns with Common Core Standards across all academic disciplines with the intent to increase Mastery levels in all assessments by 10% over prior year results.
5. Positively affect District attendance and drop out rates by strengthening the District's RTI program, increasing attendance to greater than 95% at the elementary level, 92% at the secondary level and reducing dropouts by 50% from the prior year.
6. Choose and implement a program of evaluation for District faculty and Building Administrators based on Chapter 103© Regulations.
7. Prepare a Professional Development Plan for those staff members identified as needing improvement.

Focus on School and Community Relationships: The district shall promote a positive image and provide a pathway to continue building strong relationships with community, students and staff.

Objectives:

1. Prepare a plan of action to develop a Marching Band at the Tonawanda Middle/High School.
2. Prepare a plan of action to update and advise progress of the Capital Project.
3. Evaluate current and explore new means for the dissemination of District initiatives and information.
4. Incorporate the Task Force Model to encourage community input on District issues.

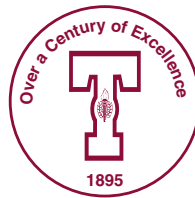


Focus on Fiscal Stability and Facility/Equipment: The district will continue to explore the effective use of district facilities in order to provide an improved educational environment and to control future costs of the district.

Objectives:

1. Proceed to implement the recommendations that affect the District athletic and educational facilities.
2. Present a balanced budget to the community that supports students and program while reflecting the current economic climate and legislative initiatives.
3. Continually monitor the status of all sources of revenue and take appropriate actions to accommodate any deficiency or surplus.
4. Evaluate and review aspects of the District transportation program.

Adopted by the Board December 11, 2012



Child Find Notice

As part of the Child Find obligation, part 200 Regulations, the Tonawanda City School District is seeking information from parents regarding their children's learning. If you believe your child is not learning at the same rate as his/her peers and you suspect it is due to a disability, please contact the office of the Director of Special Education at 716-694-7684.

Three Board Member Openings

There will be three openings for the Board of Education for the May 21, 2013 budget vote. Members will serve a three-year term commencing July 1, 2013 and expiring June 30, 2016.

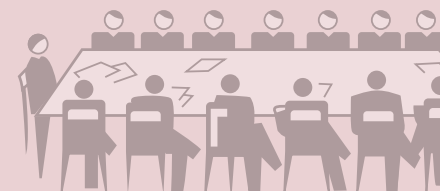
Application Process:

Interested candidates can pick up applications from the Board Office located at 100 Hinds Street between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Petitions must be signed by at least 100 eligible/qualified voters. Completed petitions must be filed with the Board Clerk not later than May 1, 2013 at 5 p.m.

Qualifications for School Board Membership:

You must be a citizen of the United States, at least 18 years of age, a resident of the district for one school year prior to the election (before May 15, 2013) and able to read and write.

The Erie County Association of School Boards free workshop, "Training for Prospective School Board Members" will be held March 23, from 8:30-12:30 pm at Erie 1 BOCES. Register by phone at 821-7297 or email snowak@elb.org.



TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Leadership Begins at Riverview with P.I.G.S and W.I.G.S

Riverview School is continuing to achieve its school-wide goals by focusing on its PIGS (pretty important goals) and WIGS (wildly important goals) based on the philosophy of Dr. Franklin Covey's "Leader in Me". So far the school has implemented a leadership board in the cafeteria, created and posted classroom mission statements and begun their leadership role application process. They also participated in the district parent Leader in Me night. Members of the Lighthouse Team have been invited to present in May at the national Leader in Me symposium being held in WNY. Stay tuned as the school makes its way to their next pretty important goal with student data notebooks.

Stadium and Music Work Begins

On Thursday, Jan. 10, the State Education Department notified Tonawanda Schools that they had completed their technical review of the project and that a building permit has been issued for construction. With approval in hand, Wendel, the architect, and Pike, the construction manager, put the project out to bid on Friday, Jan. 11. Bids will be received in February, and we anticipate awarding a contract for construction at our Feb. 26 board meeting.

The public should see the first signs of activity on site in mid-March. The contractor has an early August deadline to complete the stadium, so work will initially be focused on that area. A temporary parking lot will be constructed, which will allow the demolition of a portion of the existing lot, allowing construction of the new field and track to begin. By mid-April, construction of the concession and restroom facilities will be underway, as will foundations for the new music addition. With the end of school on June 23, construction activity will move into high gear, with installation of the bleachers, steel for the addition, and renovation of interior spaces.

By September, the sports teams will have been using the new field for several weeks, the new bus loop will be finished and students will be arriving through the new entrance. For the most part, the only work left to be completed will be the interior of the new addition. The project should be complete by sometime this fall.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEWS

Mullen is Moving Up the Clip Chart

"Clip up." "Clip down." "Choose a jewel." "Move to Leadership Lane." You may not know what these phrases mean, but ask any of the students at Mullen Elementary and they can tell you. A new behavior system is in place this year to help the students grow into leaders. Using the clip chart system, students are rewarded for behaving like leaders. Those who are not acting in a leadership manner are given consequences for making incorrect choices.

Each student has a clothespin with their name on it. Everyone begins the day with their clothespin in the green Ready to Learn section. As the day progresses, students are instructed to clip up the chart when they display good qualities. They move from green section, to yellow Good Leader, to orange Great Leader to red Outstanding Leader. If at the end of the day that student is still on red, they choose a jewel to glue onto their clothespin. The next day all the students begin the day on green again.

If a student makes an unfortunate behavior choice, they will be asked to clip down to the blue Think About It section. If more incorrect choices are made, that student will have to clip down again to purple Teacher's Choice and then pink Parent Contact. If that student is able to make better choices during the day, they can clip back up and still have a chance to earn a jewel for the day.

Once a student earns four jewels on their clip, they take it to the main office where it is clipped on the Leadership Lane display. Principal Jessica Lyons chooses a few each day to wear on her lanyard and stops by the classroom to personally congratulate the students for their great work. Afterward students are able to take their clip home and share their success with their families. Students are then given a new clip at school so they can start earning another set of jewels.

Since there is recognition for good behavior, all students have the chance to be positively recognized during the day. This positive attention helps all students strive to be successful. Teachers report that there are less discipline problems in the classroom. This system has been so successful it is being used on the bus and will soon be used in the cafeteria.



Pictured is Sydney Miller clipping up on the clip chart in her classroom.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEWS

Reading + Nonfiction + iPads = Fun

As a reading lesson under the direction of third-grade teacher Mrs. Hilbert at Riverview, students learned how to make paper snowflakes using reading A-Z on the iPads. In small groups they took turns reading the directions aloud to each other. They analyzed the visuals and followed the steps together to design pretty snowflakes. Pictured is Ryland Schloerb reading a “how-to” on the iPad.

When asked what they liked about the new technology, the main response was the touch screen. “One finger and thumb are all you need,” Dylan responded. He added, “They’re more creative and they give you better ways to do things and enjoy books.” Kira remarked, “I love that you don’t have to use a mouse.” Caleb agreed, saying, “You can zoom, enlarge, rotate and move around quickly.” Jaelynn also loves zooming and said, “On Google Earth you can even find your house.”

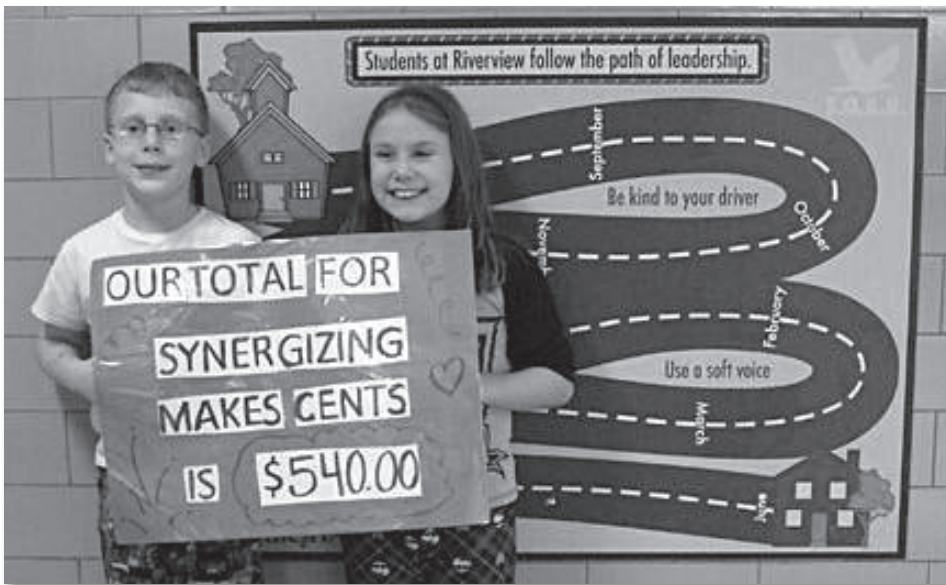


Mullen Teacher Wins Grant

Amy Feldmann, a special education teacher at Mullen Elementary, recently won a \$250 McDonald’s McTeacher grant. Mrs. Feldmann will use the money to buy cooking supplies to enrich her curriculum with activities that teach her students life skills. They will have to read each recipe before making a new or favorite dish. The students will use math skills to figure out how much of each ingredient is necessary to make their food. With the help of this grant, the class will be able to cook something each week. Congratulations to Amy and bon appetit to the class. Pictured are Charlie Tanner, Adam Hodge, Nolan Argento and Cody Troidl making donuts with Mrs. Feldmann to celebrate “D” week.

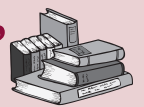


Synergizing Makes “Cents”



At Riverview School students learn the importance of working together as a team to make great things happen. With this in mind, students held a penny drive called “Synergizing Makes Cents” to help support Mullen School’s “Relay Recess...Heroes Come in All Sizes!” At the end of the month, the pennies were counted and a check in the amount of \$540 was presented to Mullen. What a great way to support our fellow school. Pictured are Matthew Morrow and Jayden Hughes.

Shoot, Score, Read More!



Riverview students scored an ice cream party and a visit from Buffalo Sabres’ mascot Sabretooth after winning Perry’s Ice Cream Shoot. Score. Read More! program. The program encourages students to read each night. As a school, over 75,000 minutes of reading were logged during the four-week contest. Last year Riverview School won second place and received an ice cream party and visit from Sabretooth. Students were proactive by picking up a good book to read and synergize with parents during at home reading time. The school is looking forward to Sabretooth’s visit in March. Working collaboratively we can achieve anything!

MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

NYS Scholar Athlete Teams: Fall 2012 Season

Cross Country: Coach Elizabeth Randell. Athletes are Andrew Ball, Anne Draves, Dakota Harvey, Patrick Ball, Thomas Draves, Matthew Bowser, Jaimee Harmon.

Football: Coach Robert Gross. Athletes are Shane Guenot, Paul Palladino, Nicholas Pullo, Timothy Korff, Clayton Hess, Tyler Hughes, Steven Warthling, Clint Hylton, Jared Zellner, Jeffrey Noworyta, William Galley, Connor Pumm.

Girls Tennis: Coach Sarah Yates-Kaus. Athletes are Nicole Bui, Alexandria Lutz, Tiffany Arrington, Sarah Kottke, Michaela Morath, Angelina Buscemi, Patricia Maess.

Girls Soccer: Coach Julie Johnson. Athletes are Alexandra Moore, Kalyn Compeau, Alyssa Pigott, Jesalyn Cala, Kristin Carson, Ashley Ostrowski, Megan Tuskes, Meghan Thomas, Jessica Bowser, Jordan Johnson, Faith Schoelerman, Jocelyn Lorenz.

Girls Volleyball: Coach Lindsay Morris. Athletes are Alyssa LoGrasso, Samantha Rodriguez, Abigail Moore, Carly Morris, Sarah Sankey, Juliana Tirone, Julie Gagliardo, Joanna McCarthy.

Fun Facts About Student Organizations



- Student Council held an event for Fletcher Students called Kidz Bash. Approximately 60 students attended. During the evening the kids played gym games, decorated cookies, ate pizza, and made a craft. It was a great chance for high school students to interact with elementary students.
- Donate Life held their first Blood Drive of the year. There were 76 donors who came to help others in need.
- The National Art Honor Society is creating a mural for the Tonawanda Public Library. The theme is Tonawanda history, and the students are painting the hallway that leads from the parking lot to the library. The students worked through Young Audiences with local mural artist Augustina Droz to come up with a design.
- FBLA has many clothing items available from the last Tonawandagear.com sale. They are looking for avenues to sell those clothing items including possibly displaying them in the showcase windows or on a moveable coat rack in Mrs. D'Amato's room.
- In keeping with tradition, FBLA visited Ronald McDonald House in Buffalo to prepare a meal for their guests.
- In Career & Financial Management each Friday there are guest speakers from all different career areas. These speakers range from different areas of law enforcement, talent scouts, veterinarians, architects, engineers, dieticians, and business people to name a few. Students are getting a chance to speak to and ask questions of someone first-hand in their career of interest.
- Student Council will be hosting a "Hats On" week to collect money for the Serrano family. Plans are in the works, at the suggestion of student Brandon Frye to collect coins for the family. Containers will be placed in every classroom.
- The science club is taking an educational field trip to Cape Cod to go on a naturalists tour and whale watching May 31-June 3. The students have been working hard to raise money to lessen the cost by selling candy-cane-grams, spook-o-grams, and ornaments at the Buffalo Athletic Club open house.
- Several students from Student Council and FBLA went to St. Luke's Mission in Buffalo to volunteer for their annual holiday food packing event.

National Honor Society Induction 2012

Congratulations to the following students on their recent induction into the National Honor Society. Seniors include Philip Giuga and Alexandria Henderson; juniors inducted were Sarah Bailey, Jeremy Baumann, Kristin Carson, Anne Draves, Jordan Hughes, Jenna Ivancic, Ashlyn Keser, Alyssa LoGrasso, Emily Maxwell, Michaela Morath, Carly Morris, Laura Opalinski, Alyssa Pigott, Crystal Schneider, Faith Schoelerman, Mia Sette, Benjamin Stich, Erin Thurston, Megan Tuskes and Alexandra Tyler.



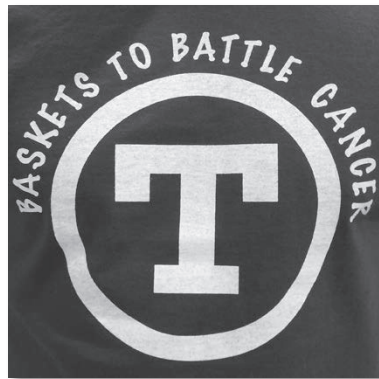
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

Faculty Basketball Game Benefits Charity

The Middle School Student Council held a faculty basketball game and raised \$724 to benefit the Leukemia/Lymphoma Society. Under the direction of Mrs. Kristin Witkowski, student council members recruited faculty to play basketball, to cheerlead and to collect tickets. Over 25 faculty and staff members participated in the game held in Miller gym. Student Council members coached two teams of teachers during a close, skillfully played game!

It was lots of fun and some players even got very competitive! Brad Halgash (maroon team) was being hounded by Jill Runfola on defense (white team). She literally climbed on Mr. Halgash's back as he ran down the court, carrying her and dribbling the ball. The referee never called the foul because they were putting on quite a show. Needless to say, there were many fouls that were NOT called but it was all in good fun because this was a game for charity.

At half time, the cheerleaders were asked to put on a show. The only one who was prepared for this was Leanne Downey who did a few acrobatics including a split. Everyone was having such a good time and laughing at each other, especially when mistakes were made.



Boys Soccer has Outstanding Season

Congratulations to our New York State Section VI Class B2 Boys Soccer Team for a winning 2012 Fall season. Our team is loaded with NYS Scholar Athletes. The team is coached by James Gabor. Team members include: Sam Battistella*, Jesse Bortz*, Mark Emery*, Alexander George, Jordan Hughes*, Kyle Maracle, Jedidiah Woomer*, Jeremy Baumann*, Jacob Choate*, Christopher Freer*, Phillip Giuga*, Michael Iuvino*, Charles Richards*, Jonathan Baumler, Cory Campeau, Riley Gardner*, Nathan Holler, Robert Liebel, and Joseph Spano. Coach James Gabor led the boys to victory. (*Designates NYS Scholar Athlete)



Back row, l to r: Alex George, Riley Gardner, John Baumler, Nate Holler, Jess Bortz, Mike Iuvino, Chris Freer, Joey Spano, Bobby Liebel, Jeremy Baughman, Coach Gabor. Front row, l to r: Sam Battistella, Mark Emery, Jake Choate, Phil Guiga, Kyle Maracle, Chuck Richards, Jordan Hughes. Front center: Cory Campeau

THS Wins 3 Events, Finishes 2nd at Tech Wars

Tonawanda High School technology students fell short of winning the Tech Wars Championship at NCCC this year, but claimed victory in the Hockeybot Competition (Kyle Maracle, Brandon Steiner, and Tyler Hughes), King of the Hill (Phil Guiga and Jacob Choate), and Video Challenge (Zack El Sharif and Juliana Tirone). It was the second straight year THS has won the video competition.



Alex Ricchiazzi finished second in the Hockeybot competition. Julina Tirone and Nazariel Gonzalez finished second in T-shirt design. Juliana Tirone is pictured with her winning t-shirt design. Matt Farnham, Nik Zimmermann, and Steve Warthling finished third in the Sumobot Competition.

Tonawanda City School District
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James P. Newton, Superintendent

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Educators + Technology + 21st Century Skills = Fletcher School

It's flexible, creative, challenging, complex and reflective of a rapidly changing world. It's 21st century technology skills and Fletcher's teachers and students are embracing it.

One of the most fascinating links on the library webpage includes a website on ratio and proportions that shows a human being in proportion to other items such as a basketball or an elephant and allows the user to "zoom in" to atomic levels or "zoom out" to astronomical levels so the students really get a good feel for proportion.

Fletcher school has recently become the home for 24 iPads. The students use the iPads to support their learning in their coursework. In Mrs. Melissa Schmidt's class, they have downloaded educational apps such as the Rock Cycle app which is an interactive story about the life of a rock. Weathered and aged, he tells his life story in the form of a poem. Each stanza is supplemented with interactive images, diagrams, and mini-games.

Pictured using the iPads are fifth-graders Carly Liebel and Marty Latko, both students in Mrs. Schmidt's class.

Students have also used the Journey through the Solar System app which includes a few comments and facts about each planet, along with a close-up image of the planets. There is also an animated orbit for the planets. Students have also used a NASA app to learn about the planets and the sun as well.

In addition, Mrs. Schmidt reports that her students have also used the iPads to learn about the Periodic Table of Elements. Students swiped and touched each element to learn the element's name, symbol, atomic



number and atomic mass. They even learned how elements combine to make everyday objects such as a cup of coffee. Recently they were able to build an element, adding in the correct number of protons, neutrons and electrons. The students really enjoyed seeing the electrons darting around the atoms, and teachers really enjoyed seeing smiling students who love learning so much!