

Technology at Old Bonhomme Elementary

Overview

Writing, writing, writing is one way to look at our curriculum. We do a lot of it. Writing is the essence of much of our technology work as well. In a nutshell, we are mostly project oriented, with many of curriculum-related software packages and internet websites to supplement what we teach. Projects are differentiated in that students are presented with a basic structure. Some stick to the basic structure, some elaborate on that structure.

The computer lab is available to the Kindergarten for a half-hour weekly time slot. The 1st grade may come for one or two half-hour slots. Grades 2-5 sign up for two half-hour slots weekly. If time allows in their schedule, a teacher can extend one of those periods to 45 minutes. There are additional time slots in the lab schedule available when a classroom needs extra time to work on a special project.

Students in all grades save their work on the Old Bonhomme file server. Files are never saved on the local computer. This way, students can work on their files from lab or classroom computers. The File Server is accessed via the GO MENU on the Macintosh Finder screen.

Teachers are ultimately responsible for the delivery of curriculum. This is true in the computer lab as well as the classroom. The lab is considered an extension of the classroom. The very best technology-assisted lessons are those that have been developed by the classroom teacher. No one knows the students OR the curriculum better.

The Instructional Technology Coordinator is available to assist with technology use in either the lab or the classroom when you need it. I can lead a lesson, co-teach with the classroom teacher, or act as an assistant. Whatever is required can be done. Since I have other responsibilities around the building, I may not be available when your classroom is in the lab. Make sure your needs are known ahead of time. New teachers are the exception. I will make every effort to be in the lab with them unless they make it clear that no help is needed.

At Old Bonhomme we take advantage of the latest Macintosh System interface. Applications used by students or staff can be opened quickly by clicking on them in the “dock” at the Finder screen.

Each classroom has four computers. ALL should be made available to students. One of the computers is designated as the teacher's system and has additional software installed for staff (FileMaker, MS Office, etc.) That system should be made available to students when you're not using it and when you believe it's appropriate. Classroom computers are to be used as part of your instructional management strategy, not for free time or rewards. You should let me know if any of these systems are down.

Automated software installation occasionally deletes files or places unwanted files on your computer. Therefore, NO ONE may install software on their computer without talking to me first. There are no exceptions to this rule.

In addition to the computers we have digital still and video cameras, and microscope-like cameras that can attach to your classroom TV. One classroom at every grade level plus the library, has full cable TV programming. Many shows relate to our curriculum and some of them may be recorded for classroom use.

Administrative use

All classroom teachers have full internet access and email use. Remember that all computers and the software running on them are district property. They need to be used first and foremost for your professional needs. *Do not write anything on an email message that you wouldn't want your principal and your mother to read while sitting together.* ☺

All teachers are provided with Microsoft Office and Filemaker Pro to assist in their administrative needs. All inter-district documents should be written in Microsoft WORD. Report cards and online forms are written in Filemaker Pro. At Old Bonhomme School, some of the online forms we use include: Daily Attendance and Lunch Count, Student Improvement Plan, Classlists, the Enrichment Library and Field Trip forms.

Old Bonhomme has several pieces of software in our collection that will track the progress a student makes in a variety of curricular areas.

- Scholastic Reading Inventory provides students Grade 1-5 a calculation of their reading level.
- Orchard Math tracks student improvement and provides exercises in Math for Grades K-3.
- Wild West Math tracks student improvement and provides exercises in Math for Grades 2-5.
- Chuck Wagon Bill tracks student improvement and provides exercises in Grammar for Grades 2-5.
- Fitnessgram is used by the PE teachers to track student fitness as it relates to state requirements

Technology is expected to make our lives more efficient. If you have ideas or suggestions on new and better ways to use all that we have available, please share them. My job is to help make the technology work for you.

Internet use

For Teachers

Teachers are encouraged to use the internet for professional development.

- MyLearningPlan.com is used for documenting your staff development activities
- AtomicLearning.com has online tutorials in many of the software applications used in the school district.

Many sites exist for educators to use for lesson plans and teaching ideas.

For Students

All students and staff have access to the Internet. Parents must sign a waiver to permit their children to use the Internet at school for instructional purposes and to permit student photos to appear online. We rarely label pictures with student names and when we do, it's first names only. Students are not permitted to enter chat rooms or use email services, other than those provided by the school district.

We use the Internet for research, supplemental instruction and review all the time. Teachers submit websites they believe would be helpful for their students. There is a link to these sites on the front page of the Old Bonhomme website for all to see and all to use.

We also use the website to act as a presence in our community, allowing parents and other constituents to see the excellent work we do here. Teachers are encouraged to take digital photos of classroom activities and submit them along with a description for Internet posting. Every grade level has a digital camera for this purpose.

Other useful sites for students:

- BrainPop.com contains a wonderful collection of short videos on a large number of curricular areas and can be used with most classrooms in Grades 2-5.
- UnitedStreaming.com contains thousands of CSD videos that can be downloaded and shown to your classroom. Many of the videos have Black-lined masters suitable for copying and distributing to your students. Some of the videos have Teacher's Guides.

Grades K-3

Internet use is strictly supervised by the classroom teacher. All students access the same website at the same time.

Grades 4-5

In addition to websites that provide review of skills learned in the classroom, students are permitted to use the Internet for independent research on topics reviewed with the classroom teacher. It is the teacher's responsibility to know what their students are doing online.

Activities and Software

KEYBOARDING

All classrooms in grades 3-5 will begin the year with two months of keyboarding, exclusively. We currently use the Type to Learn keyboarding package. At the completion of the software, students should have the skills necessary to create a technology component through Word Processing in the Writer's Workshop that has been adopted.

Additional Resources

- We will have three portable computer carts available for teachers to check out so students have better access to their word processing files. The larger lab is located in Mrs. Andrews' room 105. Two smaller labs with six laptops each are located in Mrs. Shockley's room 104 and Mr. Andrews' room 303.
- The Computer Lab workroom has four desktop computers and a round study table available for independent use.
- The Library Media Center has four desktop search stations that may be used for independent study when they are not used for searching.

WORD PROCESSING

Since writing is central to what we do, then the teaching of word processing is urgent. Students start writing in Kindergarten and become more sophisticated through their stay. We introduce skills on an “as needed” basis, but here is the structure:

Grades K-2

- Using the keyboard, including how to make a keystroke.
- Use of the Shift key, return key, delete key and space bar.
- Use of the mouse to determine location of the text cursor.
- Launching and quitting the word processing application

Grade 3

- Skills taught in K-2
- Introduction to keyboarding
- Using two hands while typing
- Basic formatting, bold and underline
- Spell checking
- Inserting graphics
- Saving and opening files
- Printing

Grades 4-5

- Skills taught in K-3
- Advanced formatting – colors, fonts, paragraph and document format
- Cut and paste
- Touch typing where possible, more so in grade 5
- Use of the Thesaurus
- Adding page numbers in longer documents

Grade level activities

Kindergarten

- Basic keyboard and mouse operations
- Basic drawing tools
- Living Books
- Orchard Math
- My Make Believe Castle
- MicroWorlds

First Grade

- MicroWorlds projects especially regarding classroom literature
- Kidspiration
- Orchard Math
- Math Arena
- Word Parts
- TableTop Jr

Second Grade

- MicroWorlds Projects on Solar System and the Human Body
 - Projects are multi page and more sophisticated
- Kidspiration
- Orchard Math
- Math Arena
- Word Parts
- TableTop Jr

Grades 3-5

More sophisticated multi-paged projects to demonstrate their knowledge in various curricular areas. Some projects over the last few years have included:

- Ecosystems
- Probability
- Human Body
- Westward Expansion
- Constellations
- The Solar System
- Geology
- Patterns

- Webquests are also used more frequently at this level. These are activities that use Internet resources to investigate a variety of curricular areas.

Here is a list of the software used at Old Bonhomme:

- AppleWorks - primary software used for students in word processing. Used by many teachers to create classroom newsletters with graphics.
- Chuck Wagon Bill – reviews basic grammar. Suitable for Grades 3-5
- Earth Browser – real time look at the Earth. Includes information on Weather, Time, and Major Cities
- Finale – used by music teachers to have students compose their own music.
- Fraction Attraction – provides practice in fractions.
- Graph Club – practice in understanding graphing concepts. Mostly for grades 1-3
- Kidspiration - visual organizing software
- Math Arena – practice in a variety of math concepts for grades 1-5
- MicroWorlds – used for project generation. Also used for CSMP’s Living
- Minicomputer software.
- Missing Links - language software. Provides practice in using inference to determine proper word location and spelling. Uses great children’s literature in the process
- My Amazing Human Body – software that correlates nicely with Human Body curriculum
- Orchard Math – math software for grades K-3. Tracks progress and provides practice.
- Starry Night – shows the constellations and other celestial objects in real time.
- TableTop - data generating and graph manipulation software
- TimeLiner – creates a timeline
- Type to Learn – keyboarding software
- Wild West Math – basic math skills. Suitable for grades 2-5
- Word Parts – provides practice in reading skills
- Zip Zap Map – provides practice in understanding the location of states and capitals

In addition, all teachers have access to the Apple iLife suite if they would like to work with digital media to create special products for use in their classroom.