# Welcome back everyone! It's going to be a GREAT year!

## *This Month's Learning Focus: Creating a 21st Century Learning Environment*

Creating a 21st Century learning environment is very important for creating 21st Century learners. There are many ways to do this. One way to do this is to change the way that material is taught, i.e., using technology and flipped learning instead of lecture style. Another way is to change up the physical environment of the classroom itself. Students should have the ability to make choices and learn now to think and problem-solve rather than simply be told what they will learn and how they will learn it. This month's Practitioners in the Spotlight features two Practitioners in our district who have changed their physical environment for more student-centered, 21st Century Learning.

*Edutopia'* s article, **Visualizing 21st Century Classroom Design**, discusses five essential steps to create a 21st Century learning environment in the classroom.

Step 1. **Establish Zones**: "Instead of requiring students to learn, work, and think in one place all day, consider how your space might become more flexible."

Step 2. **Ensure Resource Accessibility**: "To walk the talk of a real classroom community, we must ask ourselves if all of our resources are designed and arranged for the convenience of all learners."

Step 3. **Encouraging Mobility:** "We need to be sure that we're not catering to just one type of learner. Be mindful of your introverts, extroverts, collaborators, solo thinkers, writers, dreamers, and fidgeters -- and design a flexible environment that can meet everyone's needs."

Step 4. **Igniting Inspiration:** "We often expect students to passively wait until we present opportunities to create, and then we expect them to turn on that creativity like a faucet. We should find ways to foster    on-going inspiration and creativity."

Step 5: **Fostering Respect:** "Consider our students who don't do school very well. You know the ones -- the kid who rarely earns stars and class bucks, the kid who never brings homework, the kid whose name is called far more frequently than others (but usually for remonstration).
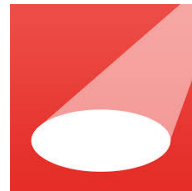
## *Practitioners in the Spotlight*

Webster's Dictionary defines a Practitioner as someone who is **"actively engaged in an art, discipline or profession"**. A **21st Century Practitioner** is someone who is "actively engaged in the art of the 21st Century Learning Practices" by infusing them in his/her instruction. This feature of the newsletter shines a spotlight on 21st Century Practitioners in our district who are doing amazing things in their classrooms utilizing the 21st Century Learning Practices and working towards making our students college and career ready.

### Ms. Jillian Welch, Kate Smith ES
### AND Ms. Vicki Smith, Maxwell ES

*Ms. Welch: Please give a short background of yourself, what you teach and when you first started using the 21st Century Learning Practices?*
This is my first year back in the classroom, teaching 4th grade. I first started using the 21st Century Learning Practices while I was working with other teachers as a STEM Instructional Coach at Kate Smith, 5 years ago.

*How have the 21st Century Learning Practices guided the setup of your classroom environment to make it more student-centered and a 21st Century learning environment?*
The main change I made for this year is to use flexible seating options in my classroom. Students are able to choose how they best learn and sit comfortably around the classroom. During direct instruction, I ask the students to come closer to the board, however even then I do not insist on students sitting on the carpet, they may bring small chairs or cushions if they want to. Students are learning to make good choices with their options in order to determine how they can be successful learners. With this transformation, students are learning about themselves, while recognizing if their choice is causing a problem for anyone else so that any problems can be resolved.

**EVENTS**

- **CUE of NEVADA events** - Our own Terra Graves will be the Keynote Speaker at the **Fall** Conference!

- **Discover Science Lecture by Jaime Casap** Aug. 22

- Leaders Network Day 1 **Sept. 25, 2018**, Microsoft

- Nevada State Science Teachers Association - Lots of things going on here!

## *Practitioner in the Spotlight* cont. from Page 1

*Interview with Ms. Welch continues: How has implementing the 21st Century Learning Practices transformed your instruction?*

Requiring students to think at higher levels, engage in project based learning and the engineering design process, and planning for mastery using the backward planning model are the starting points of all lesson planning. From there, we work to determine where the students are currently and how to get to our goal. When we start by thinking about the higher levels of thinking we want students to achieve, we can work to reach that goal.

*How has implementing the 21st Century Learning Practices transformed your students' learning and their achievement? ?*
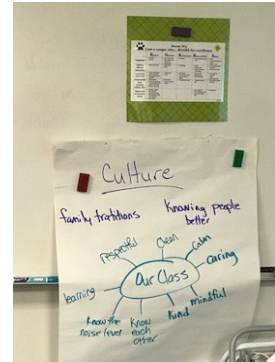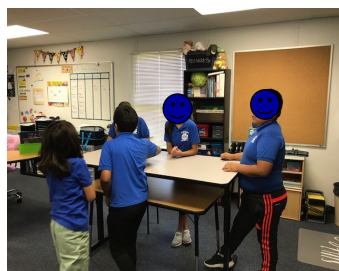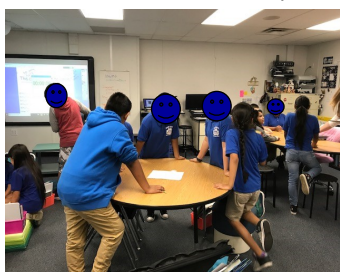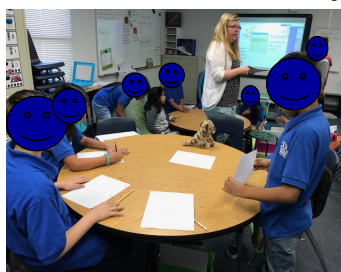
Students understand that learning is not easy, but that with persistence they can achieve high levels of mastery. All students have the ability to reach the highest levels, we just have to work to determine what they need to get there.

*In thinking about planning with, and implementing, the 21st Century Learning Practices and student-centered learning, what advice would you give to someone who is new to 21st Century Learning?*

Start slow, work with one competency at a time to improve the instruction, and look for the places where you are already reaching the higher levels of each practice because we are all doing it in some places already!

*A picture says a million words… Tell us about your classroom and students.*

Students were working on gaining a better understanding of the Engineering Design Process by engaging in some instruction about it alongside a hands-on activity. Along with learning about engineering, we used this activity as a community builder, learning to communicate and work with each other. Students were working with skilled communication to problem solve, self-regulation to revise their work, and collaboration.
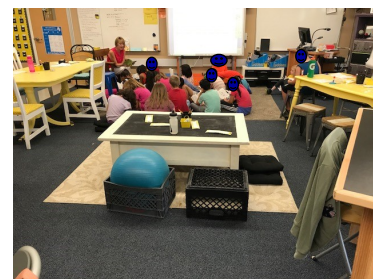
# Introducing Ms. Vicki Smith, Maxwell ES

*Ms. Smith: Please give a short background of yourself, what you teach and when you first started using the 21st Century Learning Practices?*

I have been teaching for 14 years. The last 4 years I have been the STEM Implementation Specialist at Maxwell Elementary School. This year I am teaching 3rd grade at Maxwell. I started using 21st Century Learning Practices about 3 years ago. I was lucky enough to be given a room to turn into a STEM lab, which gave me the opportunity to implement 21st Century Practices.

*How have the 21st Century Learning Practices guided the setup of your classroom environment to make it more student-centered and a 21st Century learning environment?*

I knew that going back into the classroom I wanted my room to be more student centered. I wanted students to feel comfortable and engaged in their learning. For that reason, I do not have desks (not even for myself) I want students to move around the room, to various locations for better learning. I have all students in groups at all times. The learning structure is working with teams, a skill that is necessary for them when they enter the job force.

## Practitioners in the Spotlight *cont. from Page 2*

*Interview with Ms. Smith continues:  How has implementing the 21st Century Learning Practices transformed your instruction?*

I look for students to discuss, explore and lead their learning. I try to be more of a facilitator and focus more on providing questions and opportunities for students to develop problem solving skills.

***How has implementing the 21st Century Learning Practices transformed your students' learning and their achievement? ?***
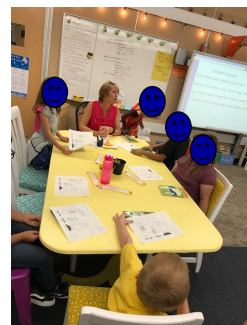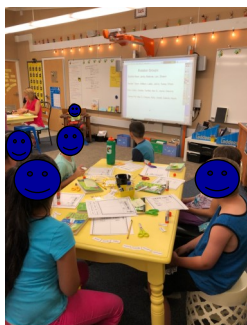
Still in the beginning stages – they are starting to talk and work together when asked to solve problems. It takes a change of thinking on my part, I have to make sure that I not only plan my lessons, but also plan for misconceptions.

***In thinking about planning with, and implementing, the 21st Century Learning Practices and student-centered learning, what advice would you give to someone who is new to 21st Century Learning?***

Start small with routines around student centered discussions. Make sure you constantly promote growth mindset dialog. Do not get discouraged, at first students are not sure how to respond. Some students are so used to teacher led discussions that the room is silent and the waiting can be brutal. If you continue to provide student centered discussion techniques they will engage and the discussions will be more powerful than ever.

***A picture says a million words… Tell us about your classroom and students.***

Students were working on gaining a better understanding of how to work in groups. In these groups, students were participating in small group reading activities. I have a library center set up with "whisper phones" where students can read to themselves and can hear themselves reading, there is a word work center for groups to collaborate with their words, there is a non-fiction reading center where students are learning about the types of animals we are studying and categorizing living and non-living things, then there is a center to work with the teacher.



## Creating a 21st Century Learning Environment *cont. from Page 1*

For them, traditional school quickly becomes a game of "me vs. the teacher." For their sake, we must find ways to dissolve this mindset, replacing it with the real reason why we're all at school --  genuine learning and growth."

*Edutopia* also has another article about flexible classrooms: **7 Outstanding K-8 Flexible Classrooms.** Educators across the country discuss how they transformed their classrooms.

This is what *Tech4Learning* has to say about **Building a 21st Century Classroom:** "Today's elementary students have spent their entire lives surrounded by information in a variety of mediums. Studies have shown a positive impact on learning when students are required to engage in inquiry, analyze content, construct knowledge, and effectively communicate their learning. To build your 21st century classroom: take a multi-media approach to learning core content, promote essential learning and innovation skills, build information, media, and technology skills in context and, advance life and career skills." In the article is a handy guide to "Creating a 21st Century Classroom".

In this article from *Envision Experience*, authors describe **Six Key Elements of 21st Century Classroom Design**: Flexibility of furniture and space; Areas for collaborative learning and independent study; Facilitation of movement; Fostering of inspiration and creativity; Technology; and Light and bright colors. "In the past century, we as educators have learned a great deal about the process of learning. And yet, our classrooms look much the same as they did back when we were school kids. It is only within the last few years that educators and administrators have started seriously considering a new classroom design: one that could better accommodate our growing knowledge of effective education methods. This redesigned classroom would facilitate learning experiences and support the movement toward student-directed learning. In addition, it would successfully foster 21st century skills, such as communication, collaboration, problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity, and leadership."
This article also provides several resources for creating and designing your 21st Century learning environment.

This article from *The Learning Mind,* **How to Redesign Your Classroom for the 21st Century***,* states, "We are stepping away from teacher-centered classrooms and moving toward student-directed learning. This requires us to make a space that is amicable to student interaction and **Project Based Learning**."

**Student-Facing 21st Century Learning Competencies are here!!!**

**We've now designed One-Pagers that include all Dimension for each grade-band!**

See the 21st Century Learning Department's webpage for **Student-Facing 21st Century Competencies** for more information and on how to print these in poster-size.

**WANTED: 21st Century Exemplar Classrooms!** We are looking for 21st Century Exemplar Classrooms within Washoe County School District to exhibit the positive student impacts achieved through 21st Century Learning Practices. Click here to submit an **application** to highlight your work and how it enhances students' learning. If chosen as an Exemplar Classroom teacher, your practice will be showcased for your peers, leaders within the district, and professional learning communities beyond Washoe County Schools.

**Helpful Tips**

- ♦ 50 Awesome Apps that Integrate with Google Classroom
- ♦ Using FlipGrid for Book Clubs
- ♦ 5 Ways to Use FlipGrid in the Elementary Classroom
- ♦ Quizlet for Spanish Class
- ♦ Creating Auto-Sizing Student Response Boxes in Google Docs
- ♦ Tips for Creating Strong Passwords video

**Want to see what 21st Century Learning looks like in our District?** Click here for videos.

Are **YOU** doing amazing things in your classroom with 21st Century Learning Practices? Would you be willing to share these great things with others? We would love to come in and video your students showcasing the 21st Century Learning Practices! **These also make great artifacts for evaluations!** Please email Shari Dunn at skdunn@washoeschools.net to schedule.

**Have great examples you can share**? Submit them to our **Student Exemplar Padlet**! There are already examples to see!
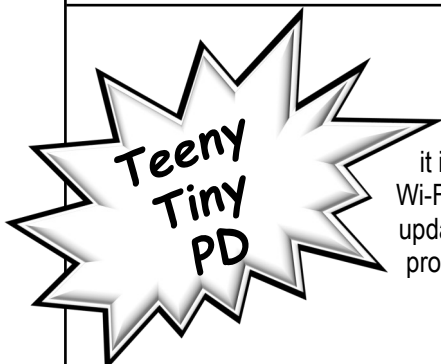
This month's **Teeny Tiny PD** is brought to you by **Mark Skoff!**

**Teeny Tiny PD**

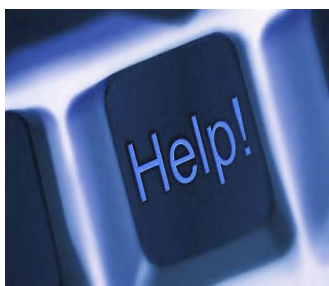<< **Using the Software Center to Update Your Laptop** >>

In order to ensure that your district laptop is updated with the most current security and features, it is crucial that it is updated every time that I.T. schedules an update. If you use your laptop with the Wi-Fi, however, those updates will not occur automatically. Using your device without the most current updates can result in viruses and malware being allowed to access your device and cause all sorts of problems! Here are the instructions on manually downloading and installing the updates for your Wi-Fi enabled laptop. Note: These directions are for devices NOT currently with InTune.

**Video: Manually Updating Your Laptop** * Link to **Transcript** of Video

# What the Tech? and other Tools

**IT'S HERE!!** Have a **question** related to **technology**? The 21st Century Learning Department and I.T. have collaborated to create a Question and Answer Forum for your technology related questions. You can browse a wide variety of categories and search for answers to your questions.

Click here for: **What the Tech**? **What the Tech?** is a SharePoint site so be sure to click on **"Follow"** so it's easy for you to find when you need it! Categories range from basic tech questions to more advanced questions about Microsoft Teams, OneNote, Google or Infinite Campus.

**20 Steps to Get Started with the New Google Classroom** from *Teacher Tech with Alice Keeler*

*Design Matters-Top 10 Tips to Create the Perfect Learning Space* article from *Tech & Learning*

*Project Based Learning is Just the Beginning* article from *Tech & Learning*

*11 Websites and Apps for Social Studies Reading Passages* from *ClassTechTips.com*

*Tips and Tools for Tech Savvy Teachers (or Those Who Want to Be)* article from *Simple K12*

*Google Classroom 2018 Student Work Flow* blog from *English Slides Yearbook*

*5 Shifts in a Math Teacher's Role* article from *Corwin Connect*

*How to Challenge the Cruisers in Your Classroom* from *Corwin Connect*

*Tips, Tricks and Tools to Build Your Inclusive Classroom Through UDL* from *EdSurge*

*New Updates to Microsoft Teams* video from *Microsoft*

**Cool Tools and Resources!**

# News from the Office of Information Technology

## Security
**With Alan Cunningham**

## Creating a Secure Password

Sometimes there's only one thing standing between your personal information and fraudsters: **YOUR PASSWORD**. If fraudsters guess your password, they will have all of this personal information at their fingertips. And what's worse—they're very good at guessing passwords, and can even use software that allows them to input millions of guesses until one of them is right. Your job as a consumer is to make your password very hard to guess.

Remember, Your Username + Your Password = I AM YOU

Your password should not include information about YOU that is easily accessible to fraudsters—like your birthday, phone number, family members or pets. Instead, try creating a passphrase from a news headline, title of a book or even a song. Something that is memorable ONLY to you. Let's try turning a nursery rhyme that's easy to remember and tough to guess into a personal password.

For example:     **B**irds **o**f **a** **F**eather **F**lock **T**ogether

Take the first letter of each word:          boafft

You should add **uppercase letters**, **numbers and special characters** to make your password, of **at least 8 characters**, even stronger like:

**BoaFft3!**

Be aware that only **YOU** should know your password. Writing it on a sticky note or sharing it with others is risky. If you're having trouble remembering your password, there are password manager mobile apps you can use to safely store multiple passwords.

## The Many Faces of I.T.



This segment will feature a new Face of I.T. each month. This month we are featuring two I.T. Superstars who are working tirelessly with Traner Middle School to make the 1:1 Program successful. Brian Salazar and Michael Coyan. Brian is the 1:1 Technician that has been assigned to Traner MS in order to assist them with the implementation of the 1:1 Program (students receive laptops to use at school and at home) to support teachers and students. Michael is the Technology and Software Technician assigned to support a variety of schools in the area and is the "level 2 support" for Brian.

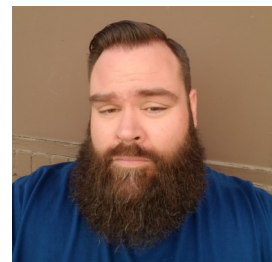### Introducing Brian Salazar, the 1:1 Technician at Traner MS for this school year

**1. How long have you been working with technology?** I have been working with technology for about 2 years but outside of work I have worked with technology almost my entire life since elementary school.

**2. What are you most excited about for this year working with the 1:1 Program?** I'm most excited about working with the students and staff at Traner and helping them become more familiar with technology. I'm also looking forward to the challenge of the new 1:1 program since this is the first school implementing this program in the school district.

**3. What are the important skills that you need for your job?** I feel like the most important skills required for this job are good customer service skills/people skills and a desire to learn new skills. I feel like having good people skills are the most important skill in any job regardless of where you work but especially in a position where you are asked to assist other people. I also feel like having a desire to learn new skills are important for this position because this is the first school to implement this program and technology is always changing so there is always something new to learn.

**4. What's the biggest piece of advice you can give teachers who are working with technology?** The biggest piece of advice I can give to teachers is that technology is created to make our lives easier and although it may be challenging at first, ultimately technology is aimed to help us move forward.

### Introducing Michael Coyan, I.T. Systems Specialist

Michael was just recently promoted to I.T. Systems Specialist. He will start his new position on Monday, Aug. 27th. He will now be working with Area 3. He had been working with Clayton MS, Duncan ES, Towles ES and Traner MS and has been with the district for 2 years now.

**1. How long have you been working with technology?** I have been working with technology at different levels for over 15 years.

**2. What are you most excited about for this year working with the 1:1 Program?** It is exciting that every student now has access to technology inside and outside of school, learning no longer has to end when some students walk through the doors at the end of the day.

**3. What are the important skills that you need for your job?** I feel like the most important skills required for this job are Critical thinking and Social Skills.

**4. What's the biggest piece of advice you can give teachers who are working with technology?** Always keep important data in more than one location!! The best advice I can give is to not be afraid to try new things, people are always so afraid that they will mess something up but that is exactly how most of us learned.

### The 21st Century Educator
July/August 2018

*Please encourage colleagues at your site to take the Practitioner Badge course!*

## 21st Century Practitioner Badge Courses

**Fall Classes:** Oct. 9 - Nov. 19, 2018 from 4:15 - 6:15pm
**Section 1: Brown Center Training Room**
Facilitators: Misha Miller-Hornbuckle & Terra Graves
Link to Register—**FULL**

**Section 2: Matley Lane; Sierra Room**
Facilitators: Shari Dunn and Jess Stepaniak
Link to Register

**Spring Classes:** Jan. 24 - Mar. 7, 2019 from 4:15 - 6:15pm
**Section 1: Brown Center Training Room**
Facilitators: Tina Holland and Jess Stepaniak
Link to Register

## 21st Century Leader Badge Courses

*Prerequisite: Must have successfully completed Practitioner Badge*

**Fall Classes:** Oct. 11 - Nov. 21, 2018 from 4:15 - 6:15pm
**Section 1: Matley Lane; Sierra Room**
Facilitators: Misha Miller-Hornbuckle & Terra Graves
Link to Register

**Spring Classes:** Jan. 15 - Mar. 12, 2019 from 4:15 - 6:15pm
**Section 1: Brown Center Training Room**
Facilitators: Tina Holland and Jess Stepaniak
Link to Register

This monthly newsletter brought to you by The 21st Century Learning Division

Contact us through our website, www.wcsd21.com with Questions, Concerns, or Suggestions

Mail Stop: 21CLD/I.T., Admin Building C

Editor: Dr. Jessica Stepaniak

Check out our webpage frequently for new updates and resources.

## EdTech Courses

**Explorer Badge - CAMP 21 Online Course - 1.0 credit**
**Did you know...** You can take Camp 21 more than once to earn credit. There are many options to choose from, so you'll be able to pick something new to learn about and explore! We are always adding more! Click on the links below to register for your desired class.

| August, 2018 | November, 2018 |
|---|---|
| January, 2019 | April, 2019 |

## Other Free Webinars, Videos & Articles

**How to Implement Choice-Based Learning in your Blended Classroom** article *from Schoology*

**How to Use Oral Presentations to Help English Language Learners Succeed** article from *MindShift*

**Marzano-Validated Best Practices for Online Practice** article from *edmentum blog*

**10 Strategies to Make Learning Feel More Like a Game** article from *TeachThought*

**How to Find Success in Your Co-Teaching Partnership** article from *Monica Burns, ClassTechTips.com*

**Authors Who Skype with Classes and Book Clubs (For Free)** post by *Kate Messner*

*Education Cargo Cults Must Die* whitepaper from *John Hattie*

**15 Collaborative Tools for Your Classroom That Are NOT Google** article from *ShakeUpLearning.com*

**5 Ways to Display YouTube in Class Without "Related" Content** article from *Free Technology For Teachers*

**Free & Easy Green Screen Editing – How to Make Transparent Backgrounds** article from *Mrs. Geek Chic*

**Shifting Our Thinking About Educational Technology: How to Place Tasks Before Apps** webinar from *Monica Burns*

**Building Students' Problem-Solving Skills Through Complex Challenges** webinar from *ASCD - Thursday, 9/20 @ 12pm*

**Free** *Webinars* from *SimpleK12*. Click **here** for an upcoming list of these free educational webinars.

**Free** *Webinars* from *edWeb.net*. Click **here** for an upcoming list of these free educational webinars.