

Focus on Learning

A new webpage? Why? Our website hosting company, Blackboard, acquired a company called Schoolwires. While Blackboard has been focused more on delivering content, the focus of Schoolwires has always been on creating good-looking school webpages. Blackboard has decided that over the course of the next year all of their schools will migrate over to the Schoolwires format. Park Rapids opted to begin that process at the end of July, so all of the content in our current page has been copied and reformatted over the last several weeks.

Websites of all types have been moving to a format that is much more interactive, including utilizing a multitude of images, headlines, calendar events, surveys, and feeds from social networks, rather than websites that just store content in a more static, unchanging way.

Consequently, our Schoolwires website affords us huge opportunities to engage and interact with our community. I am excited to share it with you and see what we can do with it!

Initially you will be required to log into the site, update your contact information, add any other information you'd like, and add your schedule. If you're interested, you can add photo slideshows, Twitter feeds, video players, links, additional pages, and more!

I am meeting with many of you this week, with a goal of meeting with EVERYONE by Oct 13, as our new website will be announced to the public on Monday, Oct 17th!

My Upcoming Schedule:

I will be in Park Rapids Schools Tuesday – Friday, Oct 3-7. Please feel free to contact me at any time via my cell phone (320-241-6150), my home email (lconzemius@gmail.com) or my Park Rapids email (lconzemius@parkrapids.k12.mn.us). This week I am really focusing on completing the update of the school web page, as well as beginning to train teachers and staff to use it. I am so excited to share it with you!! I think you will find it easy to work with!

Scheduled Classes:

There is a two-hour technology class scheduled Tuesday in Park Rapids from 3:30 – 5:30 in the Century Elementary computer lab. We will be looking at a variety of ways that technology tools can assist you in managing student behaviors, as well as tools that you can use to deliver your instruction through technology that keeps their focus. Here's the full description:

Using Technology to Improve Classroom Behavior

Managing a 21st Century Classroom can be a tall order. Find out ways of Improving your overall classroom behaviors by using technology to increase the frequency and consistency of positive feedback, manage behavior interventions, and keep easier records for goal setting.

Google Tip:

Using Google Chrome for the first time this year? Here are Alice Keeler's 6 Tips for taking advantage of all that Classroom can do. For more from Alice, see: <http://www.alicekeeler.com/> (My go-to for Google answers!)

1. All directions in Google Classroom – Type directions into the description. Stop giving directions/stop repeating yourself. More time to work with kids! Bonus: special ed staff have all specific directions, documents and due dates.
2. Go paperless – Create an assignment, students open it and add their work.
3. Use collaborative Slides – Create one slide and share. Each student adds an additional slide.
4. Use collaborative Sheets – Students input information into cells, or each add a tab.
5. Use Google text Docs – Give students feedback before the assignment is due to increase the quality of work handed in.
6. Use Google Classroom for everything – Push documents out and collect student work. Classroom is your workflow homebase. Every comment, edit, and feedback is recorded and dated (and no more clogged email boxes!)

Educreations: Draft Syncing!!

The biggest thing since sliced bread has come to Educreations – and I am excited about it! When sharing iPads and using Educreations, the most frustrating has been the fact that you really need to complete the Educreations project in one sitting, because it was not possible to save a draft. Recently, Educreations at least allowed draft saving – but only as long as the user went back to the same iPad. Finally it has arrived!! Now your students can begin creating an Educreations project on one iPad, and finish that project on any other iPad – as long as they log into their account. Draft syncing makes it possible – and now it is finally realistic for students to use Educreations for multiple projects. There is no more worrying about other students accidentally deleting their drafts. This is a huge update! If you haven't tried Educreations let me know, and let's use it in your curriculum soon! I am happy to be there to help support you and your students.

What is ck-12.org?

Are you looking for additional practice for your students? Are you searching for games and simulations that will help make your curricular content more clear? Trying to locate material that will challenge your gifted learners? Look no further than ck12! Originally built for high school, ck12 now includes content for K-12 in math, and includes the sciences (earth science, life science, physical science, biology, chemistry & physics), English (writing & spelling), and includes engineering, technology, astronomy, history and health.

As a teacher you can add your students to ck12 and follow their progress as they work their way through lessons and simulations, and are tested through practice activities. Ck12 offers skill builders, extra credit activities, and ways to differentiate for your students. Ck12 is totally free, the activities work on all devices, and all activities can be integrated into Google Classroom. <http://ck12.org/>

Links:

The coolest thing I've seen lately? **Google Expeditions**. Learn more here: <https://www.google.com/edu/expeditions/> You'll need to download the app – and then you "guide" the class on a virtual field trip. Try it out with a friend...and then with your entire class. It is amazing!! I'd love to help you lead your class on a virtual adventure!

Fall Technology Sessions 2016: PARK RAPIDS SCHOOLS

All sessions held in Century Elementary Computer Lab (unless otherwise noted)

Park Rapids	Topic
Wednesday, Sept 28 3:30 – 5:30 PM	Questions & Work Time Trying out Google Classroom and need some questions answered? Can't remember what you learned last summer in a tech class? Need some time to set up some classroom technology? This class is for you! There will not be a formal presentation, but instead Laurie will be there to answer questions and provide assistance.
Tuesday, Oct 4 3:30 – 5:30 PM	Using Technology to Improve Classroom Behavior Managing a 21st Century Classroom can be a tall order. Find out ways of Improving your overall classroom behaviors by using technology to increase the frequency and consistency of positive feedback, manage behavior interventions, and keep easier records for goal setting.
Monday, Oct 10 3:30 – 5:30 PM	Seesaw Student Portfolios Seesaw allows students and teachers to easily post items into a student portfolio, which can also be shared with families. Children as young as preschool can learn how to scan a QR code to add an image or document, and teachers have full control of everything posted. Seesaw is a powerful tool, yet is easy to use...and free!
Thursday, Nov 3 3:30 – 5:30 PM	Make Data Easier with Google Forms Parent Surveys, Student Quizzes, Data Collection, all can be gathered and organized efficiently with Google Forms. Forms allows you to create surveys and quizzes and will automatically bounce the information to a connected spreadsheet. Display survey data or using add-ons, like flubaroo, you can grade quizzes and tests, making your formative or summative assessment much more efficient. Bring materials to create
Wednesday, Nov 9 3:30 – 5:30 PM	Blogging 101 Looking for a way to engage parents? How about a venue for your students to share their work? Maybe a place to post items for your class? Or even a spot where you can discuss topics and/or share your knowledge? We will create blogs using Blogger (included free in the Google Apps suite), where you'll learn to personalize your blog, create links, embed content and media, and share it with others.
Wednesday, Nov 30 3:30 – 5:30 PM	Exploring Educreations Educreations has some great updates that make it the perfect tool for every classroom. We will start with an Educreations how-to and then give you time to plan a few projects within your curriculum and determine how you could use them. Finish off by sharing your ideas with the group and posting them to your own Educreations classroom account. You will also hear about similar apps and the different features that make them unique.
Tuesday, Dec 6 3:30 – 5:30 PM	Formative Assessments with Quizizz & Kahoot Quizizz and Kahoot are two free game-based learning platforms that make it fun to review and learn. Both have their own special features, and work in any subject, in any language, on any device – for all ages! Learn to use them, find teacher-created activities, and learn to create your own. You will have time to create: bring a quiz or review activity.
Thursday, Dec 15 3:30 – 5:30 PM	Virtual Reality with Google Cardboard You've heard about it, now come and try it out! Explore Virtual Reality apps and their usefulness in the classroom during this hands-on workshop. Bring either your Android or Apple phone, the Cardboard viewers will be provided for session use. Walk away with lesson plan ideas, as well as adaptations for use with or without a viewer.