IN THE MIDDLE:
Technology Helpful at Krueger

By Lauren Goolsby

How many times have you encountered technology today? Whether you are waiting in line to use the ATM or signing your name digitally to receive a package from UPS, you're interacting with technology almost constantly. Students in our schools will face that technology and much much more when they leave the Michigan City Area Schools district.

Not only have computers helped students with organization, but they also help us with our homework and grades. Braden Tepper, a seventh grade student at KMS, claims that being able to log in to the online gradebook called RDS and look at his grades helps students know what they need to improve on and turn in. Without RDS and other similar online gradebooks, students would really have to try hard and hope for the best about their grades. Now that teachers post their grades online, parents and students can keep well-informed about their progress in school.

We also use technology to help with the environmental theme of Krueger Middle School.

"We can use our computer resources to find new and innovative ways to help our environment," suggests Carey-Rose Tharp, a seventh-grade student at Krueger.

Marissa Selke, a seventh-grade student, says, "Our school has changed for the better thanks to the technology we use."

I personally really appreciate the use of computers in the classrooms. I can always steer away from hand-writing, and learn some common knowledge skills about uploading documents, modifying word documents and using the internet appropriately on the way. Basic computer knowledge can be the line between a job and becoming an unemployed citizen. That's why it really does matter whether or not the young people enrolled in MCAS know how to access the internet responsibly, research topics appropriately, and modify the various documents required in today's modern world.

The modern resources we use not only help the students, but they really make life easier for the teachers when instructing and giving notes.

"The big-screen television allows for all students to see short videos clips. This is extremely helpful when watching cell division, the formation of clouds, just science content in general. Abstract concepts are hard to conceptualize, but the technology brings these images to life to assist student comprehension," says Ms. Samelson, eighth-grade Science and Biology teacher.

Ms. White, eight-grade Pre-Algebra and Algebra I teacher, shared the opinion of many on the KMS staff when she expressed that sharing notes on the television screen through a computer or ELMO projector allows teachers to avoid turning their backs on their students. These tidy, legible notes throw the struggle to read teacher handwriting out the window. Also, if a teacher chooses to hand write notes, he/she can project those notes onto the television through the ELMO and teach good note-taking skills through modeling.

According to Ms. Good, eighth grade Language Arts and 7/8 Humanities teacher, "My classroom is nearly paperless, a goal that is dear to our environmentally-focused campus. Using web-based resources such as Moodle and Edmodo, I can

upload documents, notes, and assignments, and students can submit all of their work to me by uploading it to those websites right at their computer desk in my classroom. No work can be lost, and every assignment records the date of the last submission. I'm allowed to comment on their assignments, and they can comment back. If I am out of the classroom for professional development, students can post questions for me to answer, and I can even respond immediately through the Edmodo app on my phone."

We intellectuals (students like me included) need to embrace the world we are living in and know that advancement is OK; even though things have progressed, it's for the our education and future.

"Technology has taken a back seat to many priorities over the past several years. Unfortunately the need for technology or the demand for technology has increased drastically in the same time period. As we continue to build solutions for our students and develop environments for our teachers, we need to stop thinking about the classrooms that we learned in and think more about the world our students will meet upon graduation." said Kevin McGuire, Director of Technology in Michigan City Area Schools.

As a student who looks forward to the new technology that I will experience in my adult life, my hope is that everyone in our community will embrace a push toward advanced technology so that I and all of my peers can be competitive as we step out into the adult world.

I agree with my teacher Ms. Good when she stated, "The most important fact to remember is that today's students are visual and creative. Their brains have been developing since they were babies right alongside technology such as laptops, tablets and cell phones. This is the world that they will inherit from us. This is the world of YouTube, I-everything, and apps that help them organize, learn and play. This is the world of technology."

Lauren Goolsby is a student at Krueger Middle School. In the Middle is a regular column produced by middle school students in the Michigan City Area Schools.