

## Databases Arm Students with 21st Century Skills

Dawn Davidson, Language Arts Instructor for grades 10-12 at Udall USD 463, first gained knowledge of the Kan-ed sponsored databases through attendance at several Mid-America Association for Computers in Education (MACE) conferences. Davidson then shared her knowledge of the databases with other teachers in her school through in-services. The Kan-ed databases are used at Udall by teachers in several subjects including English, math, political science, and history.

Davidson reported that access to the Kan-ed databases is preparing Udall high school students for an easier transition to college. "Access to the databases gives students twenty-first century skills in being able to do research. It helps them learn how to narrow a research focus. The databases take the research process from the twentieth century with the old reader's periodical guide into the twenty-first century with online databases and learning to access that information. I think this knowledge is useful to them when many of them go on to college," she said. Davidson, who also teaches for Cowley County Community College, located in Arkansas City, Kansas, shared that when students have used the research databases in high school, "it's such a smooth transition to having to use them in college. They don't have to have extra instruction on it. It's great."

Davidson described an added "green" benefit of using the Kan-ed databases and Empowered Desktop. "Everything we do is digital. There is no paper involved. The students research and download the information to the Desktop. I have them create a digital note card system, which they upload to the Backpack feature on the Empowered Desktop for me to review. Then they use the information to write their essays in Word. They also do peer review, but we use the highlighter and insert comment functions. Then they revise and digitally upload it back to the Backpack and I download it, grade on the computer, and upload again to graded assignments. There's no paper involved. This allows them to embrace twenty-first century classroom skills."

Davidson conveyed that the students and teachers "just love that the databases and Empowered Desktop are there and don't want them to go away. If the state of Kansas is really serious about empowering students with twenty-first century skills and making them competitive for the workforce, they need to keep funding Kan-ed and the databases and Empowered Desktop. Otherwise, we're not putting our money where our mouth is."



*Kan-ed -- Where Kansans Access the Information Age*

**Udall USD 463**  
**Serves: 400+ students,**  
**30+ educators**  
**Kan-ed member since:**  
**September 4, 2002**

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