

DESKTOP PROVIDES RESEARCH, EMAIL, AND OTHER LEARNING TOOLS

Kan-ed -- Where Kansans Access the Information Age

Students at Wellington USD 353 have many uses for the Kan-ed Empowered Desktop, including research projects, connecting with colleges, and accessing learning tools in the classroom. Kay Tibbs, Technology Director at Wellington USD 353, explained that at the high school, the counselor's office uses ePALS for the seniors to communicate with potential colleges. ePALS is an Internet-based email solution designed specifically for the education environment.

As Tibbs explained further, "The students who were college bound had the opportunity to use their ePALS account to email colleges like KU, Wichita State, K-State, Emporia State, and some out of state colleges. The nice thing was the counselors also had access to those students' accounts, which allowed them to keep the students on their toes as far as replying back to the colleges with the information they requested. I thought that was absolutely wonderful." Students were able to ask questions about what programs were offered and transferring concurrent credits.

"Using ePALS to connect with colleges was the high school librarian's idea. The counselors asked if the seniors could get access to their Hotmail and Google email accounts. And as the Technology Director, I had to say 'No, I can't just open up Hotmail and Google for one set of students. I would have to open them up for the whole district and that's just too dangerous.' The high school librarian suggested using ePALS on the Empowered Desktop. She set up all of the seniors with an ePALS account and then showed the counselors how to get in and help the students with their ePALS account and getting information from colleges."



Fourth grade teacher, Jerri Ann Fike, starts each year with a review of what is available on the Desktop. Using a Smart Board and laptops, Fike guides the students through the Desktop and shows them what is there. Fike says that the applications used most frequently in her classroom are

Typing Pals, Financial Foundations for Kansas Kids, and the online references such as Searchasaurus.

"The impact of the Kan-ed Desktop has been great. At first it was the access to the Test Builder to make reviews for the state assessments for the teachers. It is also a safe place to send my students to as they grow and learn about computer research. As a parent, I have enjoyed the Desktop for my high school student. He uses the Backpack feature to transfer work from school to home and back again. The Desktop has been a lifesaver many times for him and his friends as they work on projects together. I feel that Kan-ed provides positive opportunities for Kansas kids. Prior to the Desktop, I did not have access to a Test Builder type of program that directly corresponds to the state assessments I am required to give. It was a great relief to have something so handy to help me prepare my students. I also enjoyed the programs and search engines that are available," Fike said.

Kan-ed

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Wellington USD 353

Serves:

**1,750+ students,
150+ educators**

**Kan-ed member since:
November 22, 2002**