An Expedition Across the World...

In early March, Google visited our campus and brought along a one-of-a-kind virtual reality experience. Our students took virtual field trips to places like Mayan Ruins, The Great Wall of China, Maccu Picchu, and even the Moon!

Students and teachers alike were absorbed into the fun. Our Media Center is trying to arrange for a purchase of a set of 30 "Google Cardboard" goggles that could be used with BYOD devices to take part in virtual reality experinces like "Expeditions." Here are some visual highlights from the fun...
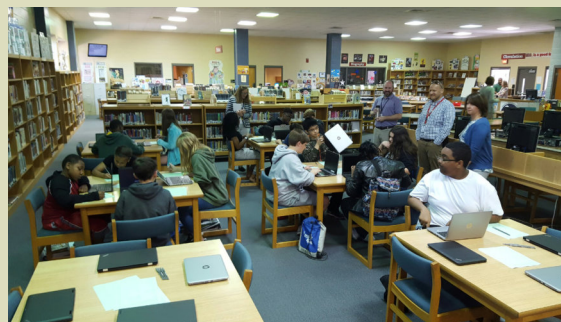
Technology News from WCPSS

WCPSS will soon be rolling out a new collaboration tool for teachers - "LearnTrials.com." It's a place where you can see what other tech tools teachers across the county are using - and more importantly - finding success with. You'll also be able to share your own experiences and suggestions. Look for more information soon.

Don't forget that the county's subscription to the Blackboard service will be ending in June. If you haven't transitioned your Blackboard material to a different service, you need to NOW!

Technology News at LRMS

While it's not very flashy - much of our wireless network hardware was upgraded and replaced in early April. This is one of the benefits from the 2013 Technology Bond. We should all notice a more reliable wireless network throughout campus.

We're currently crossing our fingers that the hundreds of promised student laptops from the 2013 Technology Bond will finally make their way to our campus by this fall.

Students Review Laptops for WCPSS

On April 18th, selected LRMS students worked with WCPSS ITLMS staff to help make big decisions for the district! Students tested laptop computers and provided feedback to help district leaders decide what brand/model of laptop to buy for the long-awaited Tech Bond student devices.
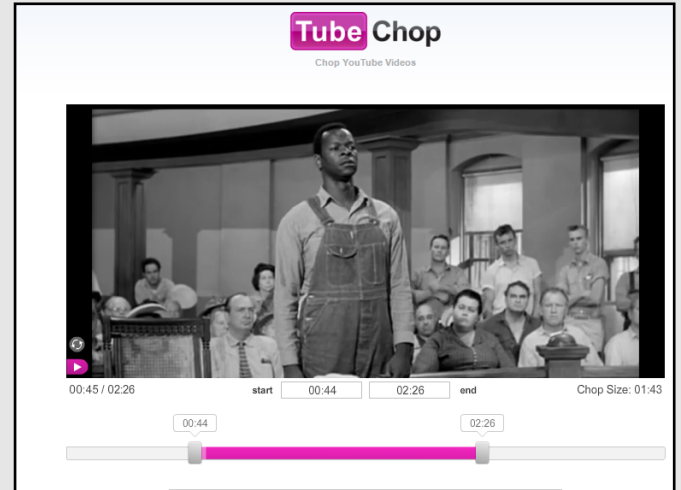
Chop It Up!   www.tubechop.com

Sometimes you want your students to view just a segment of a YouTube video. TubeChop can help you accomplish that quickly and easily. Simply find a YouTube video, copy the address, and paste it into TubeChop.

Next, you specify the segment of the video you want to use. TubeChop then creates an address you can share with others, which will only show them the segment of the video you want to use.

There's also a handy embed code option that permits you to embed your "chopped" YouTube videos into other places on the 'net (such as your teacher website or Canvas class). Try it out - it's super easy and helpful!

Note it seems to work best in the Chrome browser.

Selecting a segment of To Kill a Mockingbird

Old News

Who says newspapers are dead? Google has an online newspaper archive, dating back decade after decade. While online research certainly is the trend in today's world, there's something special about actually looking at the actual newspaper page compared to a text-only recreation of an article. Even newspaper ads often shed light about the life and times of a particular era.

You can search by topic, newspaper title, or by terms featured in an article's headline. Newspaper scans are collected from around the world.

You can access it at:
https://news.google.com/newspapers

FUN FACT

More than 99% of the world's smart phones use American operating systems (iOS, Android, or Windows).

Learn more facts about mobile device and wireless usage here.

TECH THURSDAYS

Short sessions to get you moving with technology.

This year's sessions have already started! Join us for topics that interest you!

Date	Session
Apr. 21	**Chatterpix on iPad**
	Make a photo of a person, pet - really anything - talk! Learn about this fun multimedia tool and get chatting!

Thanks to teachers who attended this year's "Tech Thursday" sessions. Join us for more professional tech learning fun next year! Topics will include Canvas, Google Classroom, and more!

Media Center News

- May 10 – 12 Scholastic BOGO
- May 26th – Barnes & Noble in store with Author Rick Yancey (5th Wave) I will have a code that all purchases that day at <u>any</u> B&N with our code we will get %
- Devices – you should have already made sure you have what is checked out to you. Remember to report discrepancies to Lisa ASAP! Her inventory is due by end of April.
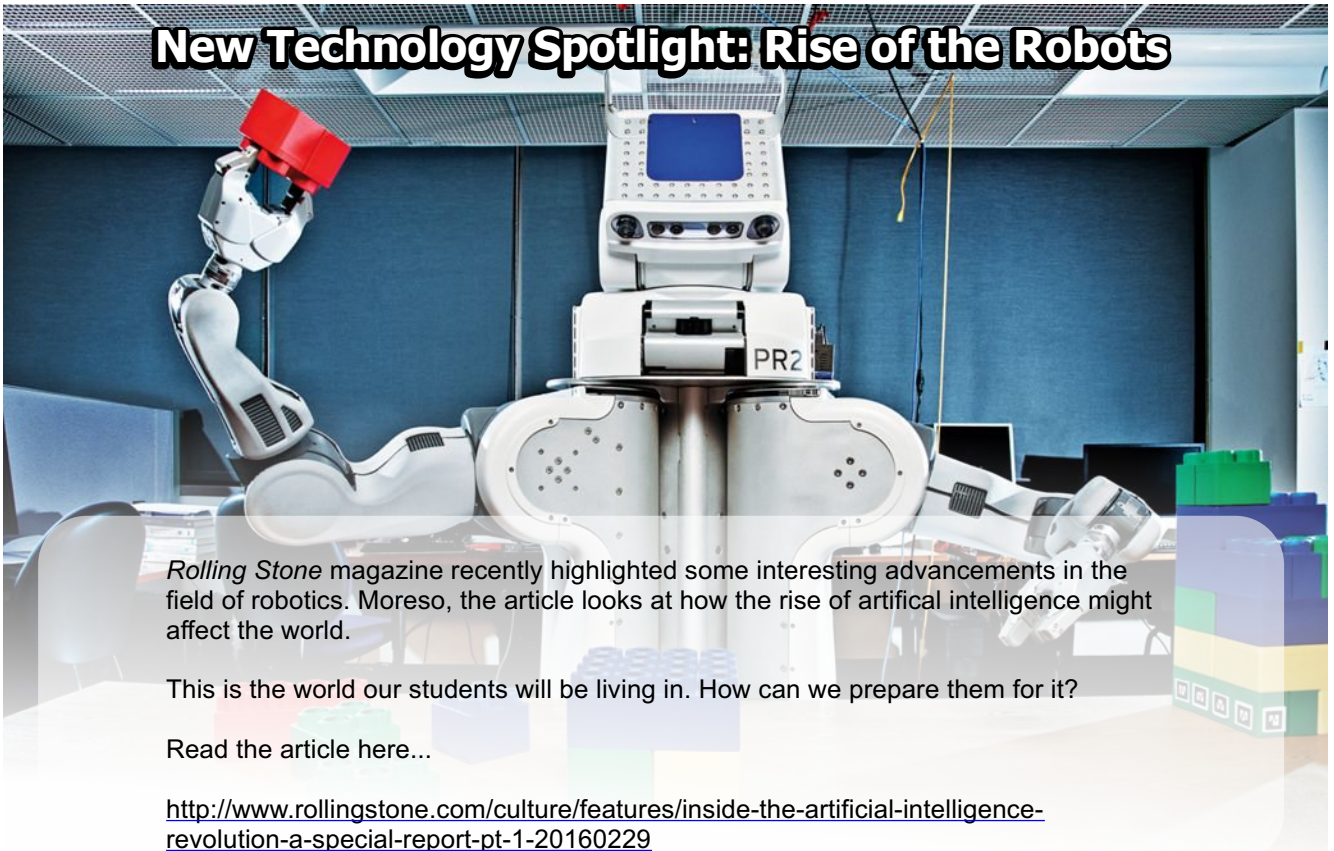- All student books are due on May 27th

New Technology Spotlight: Rise of the Robots

Rolling Stone magazine recently highlighted some interesting advancements in the field of robotics. Moreso, the article looks at how the rise of artifical intelligence might affect the world.

This is the world our students will be living in. How can we prepare them for it?

Read the article here...

http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/features/inside-the-artificial-intelligence-revolution-a-special-report-pt-1-20160229
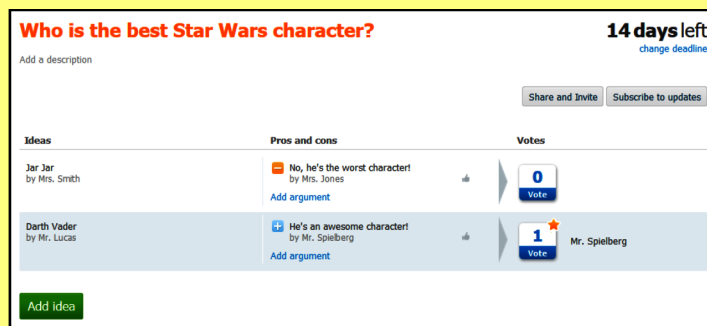
Helpful Links For Your Classroom
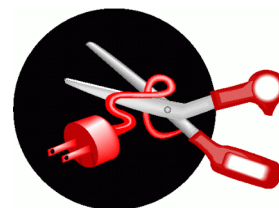
Tricider

www.tricider.com

This free collaboration tool requires no account creation! Simply type in a question, share the link, and anyone can respond. Visitors can respond to a question, add pro/con comments to other responses, and vote for the best answer. A great tool for formative assessment.

Unplugged   by Brian Martin

A recent article in Education Week raised my brow. It discussed the fact that teachers sit through plenty of professional development, but never have time to actually learn, expirement, and try-out many of the tips and ideas we pick up in PD sessions. The author suggests administrators cancel any planned formal PD sessions next year. Instead, give that time to teachers to dust off the notes from previous PD and try to actually learn what it means and figure out a way to implement it. That's what we do for our students - why shouldn't those same rules apply to us?

While I don't think WCPSS leaders will buy into that idea, it's an intriguing one. I argue that since our district gives us very little time to really understand and figure out how to use new techniques (so many PLTs focus on creating common assessments these days), you have to make time. Yes, the stack of papers 4 feet high on your desk needs to be graded. Yes, you have duty to work. Yes, you have more work to do than you could possibly accomplish in a school year. But, somehow - someway - it's necessary to create time for yourself to absorb new ideas to be a true life-long learner. Whether it's reflecting on a new strategy to use to build literacy - or time spent with me learning a new tech tool - you have to be pro-active about your own learning.

You may have to set your alarm clock 30 minutes early once a month. You might have to skip an athletic game you had planned to attend once a year. It takes some creative thinking to find small chunks of time that you can use to really figure out how to apply new ideas into your teaching. It requires self-discipline and a true teacher mindset of "I have to do this for my students." In the end, time spent actually learning what you've picked up in professional development might save you time in the long-run.

Remember, you can access lots of additional content and guides to technology online at:

http://www.wcpss.net/lrmstech

Contact our school Instructional Technology Facilitator, Brian Martin, or Media Specialist Lisa Nelson, if you're interested in collaborating on a lesson implementing technology.