

## Technology usage is increasing

**BY LESLIE BIXLER** • Staff writer • February 23, 2010

FREMONT -- Last spring the city's school district was on the verge of having teachers learn how to use new technology to help students.

During that time last year, with less than 1 percent of classrooms having Smartboards, the school district developed a technology plan called Learn to Earn. The plan has been to help teachers who receive a Smartboard to develop expertise in its use. This plan also required the cohort of teachers to share that expertise with all teachers and staff members.

The vision of the school district is to place interactive whiteboards in every classroom with projection systems and a computer for Smartboard use, provide wireless mobile carts to bring technology to students' desks and add portable tools and research devices.

Susann Engle, a sixth-grade math teacher at Stamm Elementary, showed school board members a lesson on dividing fractions, which she uses for her students.

"They absolutely love coming up to the Smartboard," Engle said.

She said she teaches two classes with a total of 50 children, and all but three received 100 percent on a quiz. She credits a good part of that success to the Smartboard.

Ross High School teacher Scott Havice showed examples of science lessons he teaches. He is nothing but impressed with the Smartboard technology.

"It's going to be a great tool," he said. "I feel like we've only hit the tip of the iceberg."

The eLearning team is made up of 12 teachers, one at each elementary, two at the middle school and three at the high school. Each member has had a minimum of 20 hours of planned professional

development. In just a few months, it increased the classrooms with Smartboards up to six percent.

The training for teachers will continue as a new cohort of 65 teachers will be established this spring. During the 2009-10 school year, the increase in the technology is climbing from less than 1 percent to 31 percent of the classrooms becoming interactive.

In other news, the board approved the revised campus wear policy after its second reading. The campus wear policy will be in place for kindergarten through grade 12 beginning next school year. However, seniors graduating in 2011 will be excluded from this policy and must follow the alternate dress code policy in the student handbook.

Some of the changes include: students with identified medical or special needs requiring accommodations to campus wear need to be approved by administration; no headgear or sunglasses can be worn inside during school hours and no heavy metal chains, spiked accessories or other hardware are allowed. Belts are also optional now, along with neckties and bowties.

Also, for grades seven through 12, physical education attire must be different from the clothes worn to school except for shoes and socks. Students can wear shorts or sweatpants, and as for shirts, they need sleeves and can not show the midriff. Discipline procedures are in place for first, second and third offenses.