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Instructional Technology News

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Catch the Weather Bug

by Jay Mirus

Get out of the textbooks and go online with an interactive tool delivering lessons to teach math, science and geography, pulling in live data from our local WeatherBug weather network. Thanks to the efforts of Jim Halsell, FPS School Board Member, Wal-Mart Home Office donated the equipment and installation of live digital weather stations at Asbell, Root, Washington, Leverett, Holcomb, Owl Creek, Holt, and McNair.

WeatherBug is a unique program that combines a fully automated Weather Tracking Station with online, standards-based learning to deliver a fascinating educational experience for all K-12. It enables teachers to share the thrill of discovery and engage all students with interactive lessons that bring the excitement of real world learning into the classroom. In addition to boosting test scores, WeatherBug's



affiliation with nearly 100 television stations means increased community awareness of our schools. Look for your school to be featured on the weather telecasts of KNWA and FOX24.

All students have an interest in weather; it affects their day as well as recess, baseball games, etc. With WeatherBug's online learning environment "Achieve" students can simultaneously view weather data from any of the thousands of WeatherBug stations across the country for free with no software to install.

The WeatherBug stations provide more than local temperature and weather conditions. The system also allows students across the district to login to each station and access real-time weather readings, which can be downloaded and used for data analysis.



WeatherBug "Achieve" contains lesson plans, ideas, labs, activities, and other curricular information related to weather. Students and teachers can also access records of daily weather conditions as recorded and monitored via the WeatherBug stations located at eight of our schools.

The best way to discover what's out there is to explore. In order to access these resources teachers must register. Student can access the site without registration. WeatherBug's "Achieve" learning environment can be found at achieve.weatherbug.com.

Gizmos! by Mike Hill

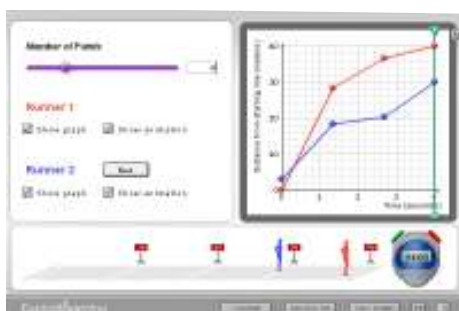
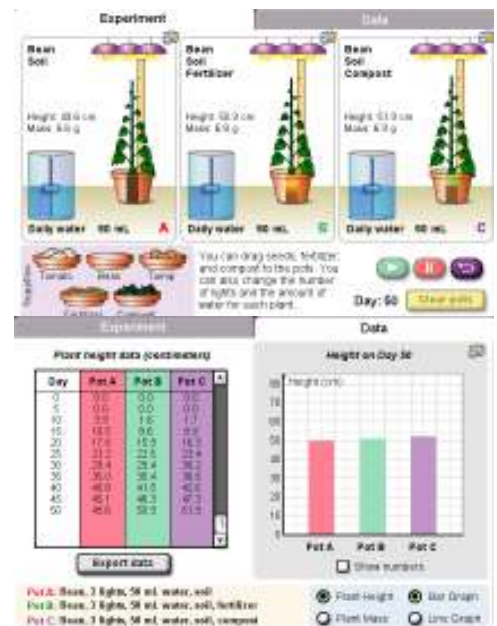
The Arkansas Department of Education has provided an Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) grant award for the purchase of a one-year subscription to ExploreLearning.com's award-winning library of online simulations for math and science, called Gizmos. Access to Gizmos is available to math and science teachers in grades six, seven and, eight.



Why are teachers excited about using this new resource?

The Gizmos subscription provides access to over 450 highly interactive online simulations called Gizmos that foster a deep understanding of challenging concepts through inquiry and exploration.

Gizmos are fun and easy to use! Technology Integration Specialists began initial training just weeks after the grant award was announced in January and will continue to provide support and ongoing training for this new district resource. They have seen how much teachers enjoy "test-driving" the various Gizmos. Students have fun using Gizmos too. Gizmos' interactivity makes it seem like they're playing a game, while learning important concepts at the same time.



Gizmos are research-based simulations used by teachers in all 50 states in a wide variety of ways. Gizmos are ideal for small group work, individual exploration, and whole class instruction using an LCD projector or interactive whiteboard.

Gizmos are designed to supplement existing curriculum and are correlated to state curriculum standards and over 200 textbooks, making them easy to integrate into instructional programs.

Web Resource

Sense and Dollars - (<http://senseanddollars.thinkport.org/>)

Sense and Dollars is a site for Sense & Dollars middle, junior high, and high school students to "practice many effective ways of earning, spending, saving, and investing money in a safe interactive environment"



Applications for the Fayetteville Public Education Foundation 2010-2011 Grants Are Due March 4!

Applications can be downloaded from the Foundation website at http://www.fayar.net/imagesFoundation/2010-2011_FPEF_Grant_App.doc. You may also contact Treva Hamilton, the Executive Director of the Fayetteville Public Education Foundation. The Foundation area of the www.fayar.net web site has additional information in the Grants section.

GRANT FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR SPECIAL AREAS INCLUDE:

- \$1,000 For Economics from Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce
- \$1,250 For Economics from the E.J. Ball Grant for Economics
- \$1,000 for FHS Band
- \$1,500 for Handicapped/ Special Education
- \$1,200 for At Risk Children
- \$1,250 FHS Math Grant



Applications must be completed and mailed to Treva Hamilton at PO Box 571, Fayetteville, AR 72702, or delivered to the foundation office, located at 877 California Drive, by **4:00 pm March 4, 2010**. Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.

Here are the instructions for submission:

- SIX SIGNED copies for each grant must be submitted (one original and five copies)
- No faxed or emailed applications will be accepted.
- Principal's signature is required for all applications.
- Technology specialist's signature is required for technology items
- Shipping and handling and sales tax must be included or application will be denied.

Remember that any cost overrun associated with shipping, handling, and tax will be the responsibility of the teacher's school.

Submit an application for every good idea that you think will benefit our students in the classroom; there is no limit to the number of grant proposals for a school. More information on the grant selection criteria, answers to frequently asked questions, prior winners, and the grant application are all available on the Foundation website. This can be reached from the Foundation link on www.fayar.net. You can also call Treva or Winnie at the Fayetteville Public Education Foundation at 527-3655 or email Treva at treva.hamilton@fayar.net.

The Final Grant Report form to be completed by last year's winners is also on the Foundation website. Any remaining funds and all receipts are to be returned with this form by **March 12, 2010**.

Good luck!