

Research and Development Leads the Way



Last spring Fremont's voters gave the school district a mandate to provide the best education for our kids. Much of the attention from the approved bond votes has centered on the new high school. That's understandable, and all of us who work with the community's children are very grateful.

But while the new high school is a unique opportunity for Fremont, allowing us to shape the spaces where our children will learn new 21st Century skills, it is important to keep in mind the second bond that was approved.

The technology package is a significant opportunity to impact every child in every facility in the school district. Now it is our responsibility to ensure that we know how to use the technology to its full potential.

Until now we haven't had the resources to acquire state of the art technology, or even to keep up. Most of our technology is 15 to 20 years old, which means we are three generations of technology behind the times.

Technology moves at the speed of light - we will always be trying to catch up to it - so what we pursue must truly be with the future in mind. We must be careful and forward-thinking as we decide how to spend our technology dollars, and not acquire technology just because someone else has it.

At the same time, we must have teachers who are trained in, and can model to the rest of our staff, the professional development tools that demonstrate best practices of teaching.

For some time now we have been studying what other schools are doing for best practices. More than 50 of our teachers have participated in research-supported instructional strategies, giving their time during the summer to attend training sessions.

Several of our teachers have begun to work with development plans and are now "test driving" various technologies for learning labs to see how they best enhance learning for kids. We have classroom models in the high school and in Quest, and hope to set up another in the middle school next year.

It is in this research and development that we are exploring the best thinking to create innovative learning programs that will prepare our children for a 21st Century world.

Jim Hieftje
Interim Superintendent
