

Kick Off The School Year With SD's Largest Classroom

HURON — Teachers, kick off your school year with South Dakota's Largest Classroom. The South Dakota State Fair is inviting teachers and students from across the state to participate in South Dakota's Largest Classroom on Thursday, Aug. 28, and Friday, Aug. 29.

This educational program gives students an opportunity to experience things they may not otherwise have a chance to see in a regular classroom environment.

While attending, students will be able to see the thrill show, Royal White Tiger Discovery Show

sponsored by American Bank and Trust, Kidz Science Safari, Value Added Ag activities, IronWill Dogsledding Exhibition and other activities such as the FFA Animal Nursery, a one-room schoolhouse, the Dakotaland Museum and 4-H and open class exhibits.

Schools are encouraged to register as soon as possible. Students that are homeschooled are also encouraged to register. Last year, nearly 1,000 students and teachers attended. The program is free to students, teachers and chaperones. Lunch and parking will also be provided. The registration

form can be obtained by calling (605) 353-7354.

South Dakota's Largest Classroom is sponsored by Wells Fargo and the South Dakota Education Association.

The 2014 South Dakota State Fair will run from Thursday, Aug. 28, through Monday, Sept. 1. Channel Seeds preview night will be Wednesday, Aug. 27. This year's theme is "What Does The Fair Say?" For more information on State Fair events, contact the Fair office at 800-529-0900, visit www.sdstate-fair.com or find them Facebook and Twitter.

Support The Yankton Boys And Girls Club

Yankton can help support the Boys & Girls Club of Yankton on Aug. 23 with a fun night of live music, casino games, craft beer tasting and more. Money raised from this event will help support both the Traditional and Academy Units of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Yankton. The night will feature entertainment from the Bridge City Jazz Quintet, a variety of casino games such as Roulette, Texas Hold'em, Blackjack and Bingo, craft beer tasting provided by John A. Conkling Distributing and Dakota Beverage, as well as a silent and live auction items and hors d'oeuvres.

The event will be hosted at Minerva's from 7-10 p.m. General admission tickets and VIP tickets are available. VIP tickets are limited in quantity and include a five-course meal paired with specialty brews. Tickets can be purchased at the following locations: Boys & Girls Club Academy Traditional sites, both First Dakota National Bank locations, Czeckers and Minerva's Bar & Grill. Call 605-668-9710 or online at www.greatfuturedd.org.

Sponsors of Rhythm & Brews include, First Dakota National Bank, JMMWH (Johnson, Miner, Marlow, Woodward & Huff, Prof. LLC), Northwestern Energy, Bartlett & West, First National Bank, Jon C. Bauermann, John A. Conkling Distributing and Dakota Beverage.

For information on the event or tickets, contact Paluch at 605-692-3333.

Technology

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"At Beadle (this school year), we have two Chromebook labs for the fourth-grade (65 units) and three Chromebook labs (90 units) available for our third- and fifth-grade students," said Mitzel. "There will be two iPad labs (60 units) for the first- and second-graders at Beadle."

Mitzel explained that during the 2013-2014 school year, the fourth-grade class was used to test the Smarter Balance standardized statewide testing that was piloted last spring.

"We had very good results last school year," Mitzel said. "This year, the teachers are looking forward to finding all the different ways that they incorporate the labs into the classroom."

Each mobile lab consists of 30 units in a mobile cart that can be moved from room to room.

Klimisch said a typical elementary classroom in YSD has 23-28 students, so just in case a unit doesn't get recharged or if one is not working for some reason,

there are extras in each lab.

In total, the district's investment in the programs is expected to be near \$75,000 for the Chromebooks and near \$132,000 for the iPads this fiscal year.

"(District constituents) also need to understand that this technology was paid for out of the capital outlay fund of the school district, not the general fund," said Mitzel.

Much like the Chromebooks were tested last year, the iPads are being piloted this school year. While the iPads have been received by the district, the labs have not been set up in the schools yet. Mitzel said he hoped they would be ready to go in just a few weeks.

Klimisch said the district wanted to get students access to iPads for several reasons.

"Kids are going to be working with different platforms in the real world, so it was important to give them access to both Apple- and Windows-based platforms in the school system," he said. "iPads have been a leader in educational apps. They have a lot of good tools."

"What is nice with these systems is that if a student uses Chromebook or iPad number 10 one day and num-

ber 15 the next, all of their work is stored on the network and nothing is stored on the individual units. This makes start-up time so much quicker."

He noted that start-up times in the existing computer labs average 5-7 minutes, if not more. With the Chromebooks and iPads, the average start-up time is closer to 20 seconds, saving educational time for the students.

Mitzel said one of the reasons the district went with iPads for the younger students was the ease of use.

"We had a technology committee that toured other schools (Fort Calhoun, Neb., and Council Bluffs, Iowa) to see how they are using the technology, and it was determined that the iPads were more user friendly for the younger students because they don't require the use of a keyboard," he said. "The iPads allow the students to use the fingers to touch and swipe across to use the device. There are also a lot of educational applications for the younger ages that we will be able to access because we are using the iPads."

Klimisch stressed that the new technology is just one more tool in the

teacher's classroom.

"Keep in mind that at all times these are just tools, they don't replace the teacher," he said. "A good teacher can use the iPads as a tool but the tool doesn't replace a good teacher. If we find that the iPads work out as a good tool the district will look at adding more labs next year."

Stewart Elementary is piloting the iPads within their second-grade classrooms.

"We are going to use them to compare and focus different apps, trying different things," Klimisch said. "Add to that, many of the students have access to them at home. It is going to be a great teaching tool."

While the roll-out of the new programs has gone smoothly, Klimisch and Mitzel both noted that it has offered challenges for the network system.

"(YSD was) concerned if the district's network would be able to handle all the added user and data demands with the additional units accessing the network at the same time," Klimisch said. "Every time you add new technology, you have to build the network up to handle it. It is going to be a challenge for (YSD IT Technology

supervisor) Warren Brenner to keep the network running and able to be accessed by both platforms at all times."

The second challenge was getting all the teachers trained on all the opportunities the new devices add in the classroom, Mitzel noted. He added that last Thursday the district offered school-wide training for all the educators in the district.

"The use of this technology is really just a work in progress," Mitzel said. "The more we use them in the classroom, the more we are going to be able develop new ideas on how to utilize the technology. Many times, it is even going to be the students finding the new ways to use them, finding the new apps out there that will be able to help other students through cooperative learning. It is very exciting opportunities that I think both the teachers and students alike are going to really enjoy using."

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