

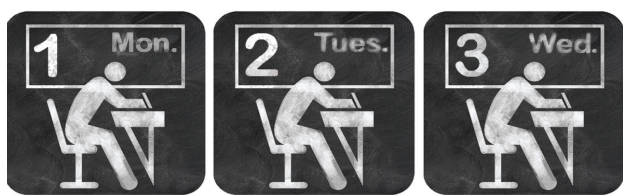
# Heritage

Education: Past, Present & Future



KELLY HERTZ/P&D  
Warren Brenner serves as the information technology (IT) supervisor for the Yankton School District. The jobs keeps him racing to keep up on the latest technological advances. "That is just the way technology is — for me, that is fun," he said.

Education Trends



Four-Day Weeks Provide Advantages For Some Area School Districts

## A Sign Of Four

BY ROB NIELSEN  
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A number of school districts in the region have opted to take a different approach to the traditional school week. Instead of sending kids to school Monday through Friday, some have chosen to cut one day off the school week completely.

One such school is the Wynot Public School in Wynot, Nebraska. That district has had a four-day school week for 28 years.

Wynot principal Rich Higgins, who was a part of the transition, said the decision to go to a four-day schedule stemmed from issues beyond the school's control, and they've kept with it ever since.

"We started it back during the farm crisis in 1986," Higgins said. "Back when Gur-

ney's was still open, a lot of our kids would get jobs and (work) that day off. Traditionally, in a rural setting, you'd have a day off so you could go home and help your parents, but a lot of that has changed with the economy."

Other districts in the area have taken up the option in the last decade.

The Bon Homme school district started the practice with a two-year test period during the 2006-2007 school year, according to Bon Homme superintendent Bryce Knudson.

"The (school) board asked me to do a

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# Tech Talk

Technology Is Changing The Face Of YSD

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE  
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Typewriters, desktop computers, the Internet, laptops, personal computing devices and the cloud: each has been a revolutionary technological change in its time.

Where technology goes next is hard to determine, but one thing is certain: it will affect the education that the children enrolled in the Yankton School District (YSD) receive far into the future.

"There have been a lot of changes in the little more than 10 years I have been here, that's for sure," said YSD information technology (IT) supervisor Warren Brenner as he rattled off at least nine major changes that have occurred in that relatively short time frame.

He noted that the recent change transitioning to a server-client based system, allowing the district to move away from desktops and toward personal mobile devices, has impacted technology in the district more than any past change — other than perhaps the creation of the Internet.

"We used to have a lot of desktops and not much wireless Internet access," Brenner said. "Think about even 6-7 years ago, a lot of kids, and even adults, didn't have cell phones. Now, it is more uncommon to not have one. Desktops are now mobile devices like Chromebooks and iPads. On school premises, it has forced us to go from hard cable to wireless technology."

He added personal devices have brought a lot of complications, but at the same time they have allowed students, parents and teachers to interact and share information quickly.

Another major change is how districts used to be forced to choose one platform or another — Apple or Windows-based operating systems.

"Today the options are unlimited," said Brenner. "We are teaching concepts rather than platforms. More, we are teaching cross-platforming with the use of the cloud."

By definition, cloud computing is a model for delivering information technology services where resources are retrieved from the Internet through web-based tools and applications, rather than a direct connection to a server. As long as students and teachers have access to the Internet, they have access to information stored on the web.

"The cloud has been the fastest growing change we have seen," Brenner said. "We can't live without it. It has made security more difficult to maintain and secure, however."

Because the school district stores so much personalized information on students and employees, security is a main focus of Brenner's job duties.

"Student's may not realize that they have been compromised until they are 18 and go for a loan and realize they have bad credit," he said. "It is a huge problem. Many people don't think of hacking as theft. But it is a much bigger concern than in the past."

Brenner said, by nature, institutions such as banks or hospitals that