



T-bird Academy - Virtual K-5 School

Northeast School Corporation (NESC) knew that at home learning last spring wasn't an ideal solution to the bigger problem when schools were shut-down due to covid-19 and Principal, Dawn McKillop, of North Elementary and Sarah Hannon of East Elementary worked together to create a viable option for students in grades K-5 through the T-bird Academy, a virtual elementary school.

Led by Gretchen Brown, the T-bird Academy truly takes online learning to the next level, giving students a safe place to learn online while staying on track with our elementary schools and the Indiana academic standards, making transitions between the classroom and the online school more streamlined.

"Paper and pencil packets and e-learning last spring was not an ideal situation and it wasn't fair to students, parents, or teachers," McKillop said.

With that in mind, McKillop spent many hours training herself on the new devices her students would be equipped with and through trial and error creating the content and opportunities where students would be offered another choice for learning at Northeast School Corporation.

McKillop and Hannon presented a sample of a day in kindergarten as both a virtual student and a traditional student at the July board meeting and truly captivated their audience. The thought and planning that went in to creating a online classroom geared toward each student's grade level was remarkable. Throughout the coming weeks the program was tweaked until the corporation truly had a program where students could learn online successfully.

The T-bird academy currently has three instructors teaching virtual students. Students are continually connected to their school community, by participating in "google meetups" with their homeroom class at the school they would regularly attend and then again three times per day where they meet up with their T-bird Academy instructor to go over the lesson, work through problems together, and have a chance to engage with their teacher and other students. Virtual teachers are available throughout the school day to answer questions and provide additional instruction as needed.





"IDK, Google it!" Summer Teacher training & workshop

NESC administrators did not take the time at home due to Covid-19 for granted. They knew that they wanted and needed a more viable and valuable option for families in the event that remote learning would need to happen again school-wide. Northeast School Corporation wanted a plan.

Throughout the summer teachers participated in many trainings and professional development opportunities. The latest staff training event, "I don't know (IDK), Google it," took place during the month of July at the Wonder Lab. Elementary teachers were trained in preparation for the new T-bird Academy option as well as creating their online classrooms in the event that e-learning would need to take place during the school year due to state mandates.

"Paper and pencil packets will not cut it anymore and in order to make successful changes you cannot just keep doing what you've always done, so our administrators and staff worked and trained diligently planning for worst-case scenarios," said Superintendent, Dr. Mark Baker.

Northeast School Corporation planned early, placing orders to upgrade to new technology for a 1:1 student/device ratio and wanted teachers to be trained on the new software and devices well before students would be expected to use it. So, led by staff, the "IDK, Google it" training sessions were implemented to prepare for the Google Chromebooks and to equip our teachers with the technology and applications to make future remote learning opportunities successful.

Teachers learned how to create Google classrooms for their students which will help them feel more at "home" even online. Teachers can design and decorate their Google classrooms just as they would in the school building.

While learning new technology and software isn't always easy and technology is always evolving, NESC teachers worked diligently to learn, create and innovate their approach because as we learned last spring, learning can and will happen anywhere! Our parents and families can rest easy knowing their classroom teachers are equipped, trained and ready to continue offering a quality education even if the school building is closed.





Formal Commencement Honors North Central Graduates

NESC held a formal commencement on Saturday, July 11, 2020, to honor graduates. Students were officially graduated back in May during the school's first-ever virtual graduation, but the administrator's believed these hard-working seniors deserved a traditional ceremony.

Tickets were distributed to students for a limited number of friends and family to attend the program in an effort to keep attendees safe, properly social distanced, and to meet the Governor's guideline according to the Indiana plan. The ceremony was also broadcasted live on Facebook for those unable to attend. A recording of the event can be viewed by searching on the corporation's Facebook page.

The North Central High School graduating class of 2020 was thrilled to have been given the opportunity to walk the stage, turn their tassel, and celebrate their accomplishments with their peers, school staff, and their family/friends.



NESC Upcoming Dates

Monday September 7th

Labor Day - No School

Friday, October 9th

End of 1st grading period

Monday, October 12th - Friday,

October 16th

Fall Break - No School

Wednesday, November 25th -

November 27th

Thanksgiving Break - No School

Measuring what matters

NESC is currently wrapping up NWEA testing in grades K-10. The NWEA assessment was created to measure an individual student's academic level and growth. The resulting data is used as a transformational teaching tool. Students are tested and assessed three times during the school year (beginning of the year, middle of the year and end of the year) as benchmark exams so teachers and students can set goals for their academic progress and create individualized curriculum plans based on the academic needs of each student. The goal of the NWEA assessment is to help advance all students along their optimal learning paths.

NWEA test results are studied by teachers and administrators during "data week." At Northeast North Elementary School, Principal McKillop meets with her teachers and goes over the results of each student. Together, they come up with a plan on how they can best serve each of their students, sometimes through intervention groups and/or enrichment programs.

During parent teacher conferences, parents of elementary students go over the goals set by both their child and their child's teacher. They are shown how their child will use programs like ALEKS Math, Fast ForWord language and reading intervention, and our new IXL program to reach their full potential.



Pictured above: a student in Ms. Siscoe's class works on a density lab paired with a virtual T-bird academy student.

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HOURS:

- Administration Office....M-F 7:45 am - 3:30 pm
- North CentralM-F 7:45 am - 3:30 pm
- North Elementary.....M-F 7:45 am - 3:30 pm
- East Elementary.....M-F 7:45 am - 3:30 pm

