

Tech Tips

Submitted by the RBSD Technology Committee

RBSD Technology Department Response

It started with an unsuspected chat message on March 12th from our technology coordinator to our library media specialists. *Do all of your teachers have a way to teach online? And do the students know how to access it?* This sent the district's three library media specialists to each classroom to ask that question and record responses for the tech coordinator. It also initiated a collaboration between the three of how to get those who weren't ready for that, ready.

That question was quickly followed by *How are we coming on the Broadband survey results?* Back in February, the tech department had started to collect data about student Internet access for a completely different, but yet related, reason. They were moving toward equity for all in the district's technology plan. That survey looked like it was now going to be necessary to give us a picture of what the tech department was going to have to surmount in the weeks to come. Rapidly, the district's administrative assistants were asked to send out the survey to all parent emails in hopes of getting a better picture.

Soon to follow was *Do we have enough computers to provide one to each student and teacher?* Laconia was set, already being one-to-one for students and teachers, but preK-8 needed to do some quick math and shuffling to make things work. On March 13, Chromebook carts were opened up so that each student and teacher could be given a Chromebook and charger to take home for the weekend. Later that evening, the health department made the declaration that all schools in Wisconsin would need to be closed by Wednesday, March 18th.

That weekend, the library media specialists began creating tutorials for using online resources like Google Meet and Zoom, along with curating digital resources that teachers could potentially use to teach online, keeping our children's safety at the forefront. They also started sorting the Broadband survey data to figure out which families might need assistance. Our tech coordinator began looking for mifi solutions as it was clear the ones we had would not be enough. He also restructured our district's wifi to provide service outside of the buildings and looked for alternative Internet hubs that families could access.

On Monday, the library media specialists and their assistants checked out hundreds of books to students and staff. Currently, our district libraries have 4,168 items checked out that are hopefully keeping our students actively reading during the pandemic.

After meeting to develop a plan, the administrators held staff meetings in each building after school on Monday. Staff were instructed to keep things as normal as possible on Tuesday, but to make sure that students left with whatever they needed to work online. Eerily as the meetings ended, they received the automated call that students would indeed not be returning to school on Tuesday.

In preparation, the technology team worked well into the night with teachers to help them solidify their online presence. They were back on Tuesday to do the same. Wednesday saw them training their staff in the computer labs. Thursday, online instruction began and so did remote troubleshooting for our library media specialists and technology support person. Friday, they held their first tech meeting, discussing inequities, which soon turned into how do we get mifis to families that need them. Twenty-eight mifis were delivered that Friday afternoon by three members of the technology department. It was all they had, but it was also all they thought they needed. Until Monday...

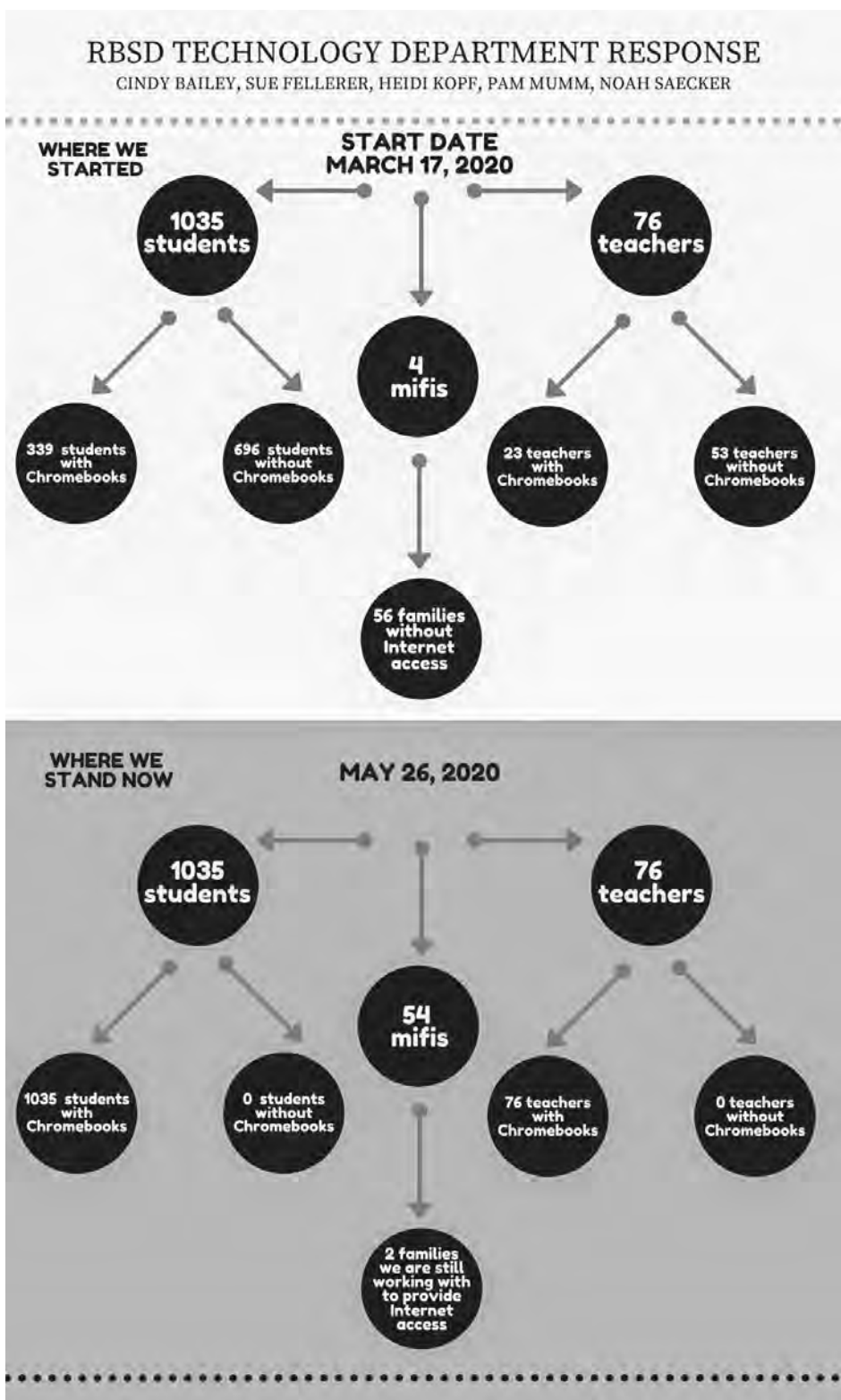
Looking back, it has been a roller coaster ride of emotions through these past few months. Some days, as a technology person, you feel so accomplished. You hear about great things happening with siblings helping each other and families bonding over homework. You learn that students are being so creative with their learning. You know that your teachers are growing so much in their tech abilities. It makes you so proud. And then other days, you learn that a family is struggling to maintain Internet connection. You find out that your student's Chromebook is acting up, causing them great stress. You hear that one of your teachers is having a difficult time finding a way to make digital learning work for their objective. And it deflates all those accomplishments!

But we are a strong team and we will keep moving forward despite some setbacks. We have built a Google Classroom and Destiny Collection of resources and tutorials that our staff is able to use. We have remotely problem-solved hundreds of technology issues, delivering new devices when necessary. We have continued to teach our classes

and support teachers in their Classrooms. We are working with the public libraries to get our students library cards if they want them, so they can access all that our public libraries have to offer as well. We have and continue to strategize ways to streamline online learning.

We also have great plans in the works for the future. We will be purchasing, through Common School Funds, an online book app, Sora, that will give our students access to e-books and audiobooks from their Chromebooks. We will be purchasing more equipment, such as document cameras and noise-cancelling microphone headsets, for our staff to use to make teaching from home easier for them. We will continue to research and incorporate ways to help those families that we have not been successful in getting Internet access, as well as those whose access is unreliable.

We thank everyone in the community for your patience and understanding as we adapted to ever changing conditions. We are proud of what we have been able to accomplish with your support. Check out the infographic of where we started versus where we stand now to see just one piece of our puzzle.



Recognition Banquet - Change of Plans

Submitted by Jill Englund

The world has been handed a multitude of cancellations and/or postponements this year, and the Rosendale-Brandon School Board's Annual Recognition Banquet is no exception to that long list of disappointments. Fear not! Our honorees will receive their due celebration!

As of this writing, we are still in an ongoing state of uncertainty; therefore, the School Board has determined it best that we not hold an event this year. We ask that you please mark your calendars for next year's event (tentatively planned for April 11, 2021), where the celebration will include this year's honorees listed below, as well as those being recognized for 2021. Combining these two celebrations into one will certainly make this a grand celebration!!

Our 2020 honorees who will be celebrated next year are

Retirees - Mary Gillett, First Grade Teacher 25 years; Mary Henning, Head Custodian 32 years; Kim Sheskey Night Custodian 16 years

30 Year Staff - Anita Holdridge, Spanish Teacher; Michael White, Phy Ed Teacher

20 Year Staff - Jennifer Boardman, Special Education Teacher; Sarah Hartgerink, First Grade Teacher; Noah Saecker, Technology Coordinator; Linda Sattler, Agriculture Teacher; Lisa Thorpe, Speech/Language Pathologist; Wendy Switzler, Support Staff

10 Year Staff - Kevin Engel, Fifth Grade Teacher; Pam Mumm, Media Specialist; Tammy Radavich, Media Assistant; Jennifer Riedeman, School Board Member; Margaret Wiese, Food Service

3 Year Staff - Amy Blashe, Language Arts Teacher; Stephanie Hansen, Food Service; Beth Kwakkel, Business Education Teacher; Deborah Lange, Literacy Support Teacher; Tom Merkel, Food Service; George Mikota, Special Education Teacher; Beth Redeker, School Board Member; Kim Schuenemann, English Teacher; Nate Vandenberg, Fourth Grade Teacher; Angela Wiese, Media Assistant