

The National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) - What We Should Know and Be Able To Do With Technology: Article 5 of 8 in Series

Mind your P's and Q's! While many people may have heard or may have used this phrase, its origin may not be so common. A quick Wikipedia search revealed several possible origins, one of which was in English pubs and taverns in the Seventeenth Century. Often, rowdy patrons were reminded pointedly to mind how much they had imbibed. Pints or Quarts were respectively abbreviated as P's and Q's! Ironically, this phrase somehow became commonplace in a world that widely operates on a metric system. Apparently it was catchy! The topic of this week's article has similar congruence.

The *International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)* is the premier worldwide membership association for educators and educational leaders engaged in improving learning and teaching. ISTE is dedicated to advancing the effective use of technology in PK-12. ISTE has developed the *National Educational Technology Standards (NETS)* which are the standards for learning, teaching, and leading in the digital age. These *national* standards have become widely recognized and adopted *worldwide*. The family of NETS standards are: NETS for Students (NETS-S), NETS for Teachers (NETS-T), NETS for Administrators (NETS-A), NETS for Coaches (NETS-C), and NETS for Computer Science Teachers (NETS-CSE). Together, these standards serve to guide digital age learning. Despite the labeling paradox, the NETS are the go to standards in our nation and around the world. So, when it comes to 21st Century learning, it is important that all educators mind their NETS!

As mentioned in previous articles in this series, the Common Core Era calls for students to test digitally beginning in Grade Three by Spring of 2014. Technology is no longer an option for students and teachers: technology competency is required. The NETS standards define what teachers, students, and others should know and be able to do in the area of technology. The NETS-S integrate six goals: digital citizenship, critical thinking, research and information, communication and collaboration, creativity and innovation, and technology operations. Congruently, the NETS-T encompass five goals: digital citizenship, digital age work, digital age learning, student learning, and professional growth. NETS-A incorporate five topics: digital citizenship, visionary leadership, systemic improvement, professional practice, and digital age learning. Clearly, the roles of each group have common themes, but the core competencies vary with responsibility. Ultimately, the goal of NETS is to provide a standardized set of expectations of what the use of technology should look like in each classroom and throughout the school, with the end result being the development of students who are prepared for success in college, career, and life in the 21st Century.

To lead our West Platte efforts, 10 teachers committed, in August, 2012, to a two-year long, 250 hour in-depth training in a technology program called eMINTS. Born in Missouri and now a nationwide program, eMINTS was the first program officially aligned with the ISTE NETS. The eMINTS Comprehensive Professional Development Program has been awarded the ISTE Seal of Alignment demonstrating full configuration with all 23 ISTE National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers. eMINTS is the first professional development program in the world to achieve this degree of full alignment. Collectively, this group of teachers will serve as the leadership team for the integration of the NETS throughout West Platte Schools. These competencies will expand to all West Platte teachers in the near future.

You've heard about P's and Q's in a metric world. You've heard about national standards in an international organization. For fun, I'll go ahead and throw in the "jumbo shrimp" conundrum, just to keep you thinking! Jokes aside, no matter their questionable origins, these three misnomers will likely all stand the test of time. All will likely have their place in local internet cafés across the street, or in one you may visit on the other side of the globe. While I cannot guarantee West Platte students will be able to explain much about jumbo shrimp or P's and Q's, they will soon be able to explain and demonstrate plenty about NETS!

An interactive “anchor” presentation which covers the ISTE NETS and all topics addressed in this article series may be accessed on the all new West Platte website: wpsd.net. This anchor slideshow will connect you with a variety of multimedia and in-depth details on this movement. On behalf of our students and teachers, thank you for your time to investigate this initiative. I encourage you to seek out these articles and additional information over the next few weeks. We look forward to partnering for progress with you in the Common Core Era!

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Jerrod Wheeler, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools