



Iowa Science Teachers Section Iowa Academy of Science

November 15, 2007

Nadine Weirather, Editor

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It's the Gift-Giving Season!—Give Gift of Membership in ISTS!

With the holidays approaching, now is the time to give the gift of resources that will help the Iowa science educators in your life be the best they can be—gift membership in the Iowa Academy of Science. Go to <http://ists.pls.uni.edu/join.html> for the online application.

Your generous gift of an IAS membership is an investment in the professional growth of your favorite science educator. In registering for membership you will assign the new member an AEA and he/she will become part of the ISTS! You may then select appropriate section choices (chemistry, earth science, elementary education, or science teaching) for the new member. These selections may be changed at a later date if desired. Cost is \$50.00 for a completely new member

and the 'givee' (you!) would get \$10.00 off next year's membership!
The cost is \$60.00 to renew a membership for someone.

Why should your friend/relative be an ISTS member?

- * Be a part of the Iowa Academy of Science. Be counted as one of the supporters of science education in Iowa.
- * Be part of an organization that helps advance public understanding of science.
- * All professional memberships are tax deductible, including ISTS/IAS.
- * You get a discount on the fall conference.
- * Opportunities for grants and scholarships
- * Have a chance to share your expertise with other science teachers. Network with other teachers, researchers and scientists.
- * You have the opportunity to help plan and organize the fall conference. Let your ideas have a chance to be known!
- * Help recognize excellence in science teaching.
- * Help spread the word about science in Iowa's parks and natural areas.

Consider these amazing opportunities as you give a gift this year, check out the website (<http://ists.pls.uni.edu/join.html>), and *Happy Holidays!*

A Message From Your ISTS Chair, Traci Maxted:

**Notes on the ISTS Fall Conference
from next year's conference chair**

It takes a LOT of work by MANY people to put on a conference! There is no truly adequate way to thank all of the folks involved. I hope everyone takes time to thank Gale Vermeulen for pulling all of this together and to thank the many people that pitched in to help. THANK-YOU!

Special thanks to the conference committee:

(listed alphabetically by last name)

Carol Cassells (Elementary Breakfast Coordinator)

Sara Coleman (Chemistry Breakfast Coordinator)

Allison Donaldson (Facilities Coordinator)

Tom Ervin (Awards Coordinator and Conference Photographer)

Barb Jacobsen (Exhibit Hall Coordinator)

Kathy Lockard (ISTS Secretary)

Traci Maxted (ISTS Chair and Program Coordinator)

Morgan Masters (ISTS Vice Chair and Publicity)

Jeanne Rogis (ISTS Treasurer)
Alicia Schiller (Life Science Breakfast Coordinator)
Ernie and Cheryl Schiller (Decorations)
Aaron Spurr (Registration Coordinator)
De Anna Tibben (Earth Science Breakfast Coordinator)
Gale Vermeulen (ISTS Past President and Fall Conference Chair)
Rick Wells (Corporate Sponsor Coordinator)

The speaker was spectacular and extremely personable. I had the opportunity to have Andy Chaikin come and speak at our high school the following day. He was extremely gracious, answered teenager questions with clarity and patience, and was great fun at lunch. I want to encourage folks to purchase his book. It is fascinating for those of us who remember the "space race". By the way, ISTS still has some copies of *A Man on the Moon*.



Mr. Andrew Chaikin (Cool Astro-Tie!)

Thank-you to all of you that took the time to give us your feed back. It is helpful in planning future conferences. Tom Ervin compiled the luncheon surveys. Thank-you very much!

Some survey results:

Thanks for the suggestions.

As soon as we have a menu, it will be added to the pre-conference site. Directions to parking as well as the conference site will be included as well.

Evening workshops were added back to the program this year. Folks that attended really enjoyed them. Sadly some did not have enough attendees to continue and the bad weather was a problem for field trips. It was difficult to

contact everyone about the cancellations. We'll try this again, but with an earlier cut-off date, so that we have enough time to let people make reservations.

It is always a trade-off to let as many participate as possible, but have deadlines that allow for the planning to be done. This is true for presenters and exhibitors as well as the pre-conference classes.

Who pays? Eighty participants paid out of pocket, 102 registrations were paid by their school and 150 registrations were paid by another source such as a grant or Eisenhower funds.

Why weren't the exhibitors/ type of exhibitors I wanted to see included? Good question! Please write or email them and ask! They will be there if they think it is a good use of their time. Let them know they were missed and they shouldn't miss this invitation again.

...door prizes? The door prizes are generously donated by the exhibitors. They also pay for the privilege of talking to you. It is reasonable to ask you to take some time to talk with them. Sending a thank-you would be appreciated as well. Let them know you are here.

Location, Location, Location

- It would be nice if we could hold the conference next door to everyone. That would be great and no one would have to deal with driving. Unfortunately, our time portal is not yet working so it really isn't possible. The Crowne Plaza in Cedar Rapids is crowded and the elevators are a problem. We are indeed looking at other possibilities.
- *Why weren't we at the Polk County Convention Center?* I agree that it is a pretty nice facility with a good set up. Parking is a problem, but everywhere has that problem. The main reason for the move is COST. That facility was several thousand dollars more than other sites. That doesn't mean we won't ever be there again.
- *Why don't we hold the conference on the far western side of the state?* We are really striving to make the conference as easy for people to attend as possible. See the first bullet. It is the same reason we aren't in Dubuque or Davenport, although we have had some pretty good deals offered. There are not as many facilities as you may expect that have enough rooms for break-out sessions, a nearby affordable hotel, banquet and exhibitor spaces.

| Traci Maxted
|

You are invited to a birthday celebration
for

Charles Darwin

2008 will be the 200th year of his birth.

This renowned author and scientist will be our
guest speaker at the ISTS 2008 Fall Conference.
(Well, maybe a close likeness, instead)

The October 2008 fall conference theme will be
Science: Our Past and Our Future
We hope to see you there!

A Memo from the ISTS Fall Conference Chair, Gale Vermeulen:

THANKS FOR YOUR PART IN THE CONFERENCE

I want to offer my sincere thank you to each person who was involved with our 2007 ISTS Fall Conference, whether you helped plan the conference, were involved in its execution, and/or were an attendee. Every one of you were valuable. I am especially happy to find that there were so many more surveys returned this year. Your input will sincerely be considered as we plan the 2008 conference.

CONSIDER PRESENTING NEXT YEAR

If you have never presented at the ISTS Fall Conference, I would highly encourage you to consider submitting a proposal for a presentation slot next year. I have found it very successful to have a “newbie” from our department initially present with someone who has presented previously. It only takes one time, and then the new teacher is hooked. Being a presenter truly is fun, and I always feel gratified to know that I may have helped a colleague with a new idea for their teaching repertoire. Additionally, I always come home with a great idea from an audience member. We need more teachers who are willing to help other teachers!

REASONS TO ATTEND THE FALL CONFERENCE NEXT YEAR

This year 47 of the survey respondents were first time attendees and 132 had attended 1-5 of previous conferences. Educators are coming back year after year, and I encourage you to do the same. If you didn't attend the conference this year, here are reasons given by educators as to why they attend, and reasons why you should consider attending next year:

- *networking
- *to gain better understanding of great science instruction for your district
- *updates/to learn what's new
- *to renew friendships and visit exhibits
- *to establish and maintain relationships
- *to take advantage of learning opportunities

FUNDING TO PAY FOR ATTENDING THE CONFERENCE

If you're having trouble finding funding to attend the conference, here are the ways that some educators have funded theirs:

*convince your administration that this is one of the most valuable inservice opportunities available--our district is always able to come up with money to fund all 6 of us in the HS because they know how much being at the conference helps our teaching--we do help our district out by being presenters, which reduces the cost.

*UNI/PRISST

*STEM

*Phase II

*E2T2

*Grant from ISU

*Parent Group

*Title II

*Eisenhower

*AEA \$

*University

*Dept of Energy

*80 of the 295 survey respondents this year actually paid out of their own pocket, something I did for many years when conference attendance wasn't supported by the districts I was teaching in, but I felt the conference was valuable enough to pay for it out of my own pocket.

-- *Gale Vermeulen*

Message from your Vice Chair, Morgan Masters: **Call for candidates for President-Elect and Secretary for Iowa Science Teachers Section of the Academy of Science.**

It is that time of year again when we need to put together a list of possible candidates for the nomination of vice-chair (president-elect) and secretary. What a great opportunity to get involved in the progress of science education in Iowa. If you know someone you feel would make a great candidate for one of these positions now is the time to submit their name. Please submit your name or the

name of another interested member of the Iowa Academy of Science for one of these positions to a member of this year's Election Committee before the end of December, 2007. We will be happy to answer any questions and assist the candidate in getting their name on this year's ballot.

Candidates for these positions need to complete a Candidate Information Form found at this web site: http://www.iacad.org/download/candidate_bio_info.pdf

This year's Election Committee members include:

Traci Maxted – ISTS Chair (President)
Morgan Masters- ISTS Vice Chair (President Elect)
Gale Vermeulen- ISTS Conference Chair (Past President)
Tom Ervin – Retired Past President/Historian

-- Morgan Masters, Vice Chair ISTS

Observations of a Well-Seasoned Middle School Science Teacher

“Giving Students the Opportunity to Think – What a difference 2-3 seconds will make in your classroom.”

The emphasis of instruction in the best science classrooms is to help students learn *how* to learn. This type of instruction is often called learning by doing, discovery learning or learning by inquiry. The roles of the teacher and student are much different from the technique of... “read the chapter and do the questions” or “lecturing”. The teacher needs to provide a classroom environment that promotes active inquiry for students.

One of the simplest, yet most effective classroom strategies for getting students involved in their learning is the emphasis of “Teacher Wait-Time”. Wait-time is the wait or pause that follows a question posed by the teacher. The teacher should try to pause before responding, rephrasing or posing a second question. The pause does not need to be very long. This wait-time or pause allows students time to think and evaluate their past experiences and frame a possible response. When teachers are too quick to respond to student answers they interrupt the students thinking processes.

So how long does the teacher wait before interacting with student responses? Often times a pause of 2-3 seconds before interacting is very effective.

What differences will you most likely notice in your classroom?

- Shy and less confident students will make more contributions to your classroom discussions.
- The classroom often changes from a teacher-centered classroom to a student-centered classroom.
- More students become involved in the discussions.
- The number of unsolicited yet appropriate student responses increase.
- Wait-time increases the possibilities of other students responding to student comments as well as the instructor's.

Something as simple as pausing and allowing students to think can make a big difference in the effectiveness of learning in your classroom.

Morgan Masters, Northview Middle School, Ankeny, Iowa (vice-chair ISTS)



Our Chairs: Traci, Morgan & Gale – ISTS Conference 2007

Join the Iowa Junior Academy of Science

The Iowa Junior Academy of Science provides resources and programs for 6th-12th grade science students and their teachers/parents. IJAS promotes individual and small group student research, awards, scholarships, and extra-curricular activities to broaden a student's science experiences.

Two of the most popular IJAS programs are:

Starr Student Research Grants

-Individual student members and students who attend IJAS Member schools are eligible to submit grant proposals requesting up to \$200 in funding toward the expenses of their science fair research.

Outstanding Science Student Awards

-Every IJAS member high school selects one senior as the school's most Outstanding Science Student. This student is awarded a certificate and an engraved OSSA Medal.



School memberships are \$30.00 and individual student memberships are \$5.00.

Contact iascience@uni.edu for more information and to join!

Advertisement

Opportunities

• **Chemical Educational Foundation's 2007 Lesson Plan Competition**

Chemistry can be one of the most exciting and intriguing subjects to an inquisitive young mind and you can help feed that curiosity by encouraging educators in your state to enter The Chemical Educational Foundation's (CEF) *You Be The Chemist* (YBTC) Lesson Plan Competition.

The YBTC Lesson Plan Competition awards prizes to educators from across the country for lesson plan submissions that showcase innovative investigations and exciting experiments, focused on the subject of chemistry. Participating is easy – simply submit a lesson plan to the Chemical Educational Foundation's 2007 YBTC Lesson Plan Competition in one of the following categories:

- Scientific Inquiry
- Structure of Matter
- Human & Environmental Chemistry

Each category will have a \$1000 winner and two runner-ups, who will receive \$500 and \$250, respectively. In essence, educators in your state can win \$1000 for doing what they do every day!!

But wait ... there's more! Schools can win too! The school of each first place winner will receive \$250 for science education materials.

The deadline for submissions is December 20, 2007, so spread the word – SUBMIT A LESSON PLAN TODAY! The first 50 entrants will also receive a complimentary set of *You Be The Chemist* Activity Guides, lesson plan booklets for grades K-4 and 5-8. These guides serve as educational tools to engage educators and students in chemistry.

For more details about CEF's YBTC Lesson Plan Competition, visit our Web site at www.chemed.org or contact the CEF staff at 703/527-6223.

- **The ICEC Annual Winter Solstice**

SAVE THE DATE:

The ICEC annual **Winter Solstice** will be held on Friday evening **January 25th through Sunday, January 27, 2008** at the **Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca** near Solon, IA.

Come join us as we “**Plug into Environmental Education**” with Keynote speakers **Chip Taylor from Monarch Watch** and **Rich Leopold, Director of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources**.

Participant scholarships are available. There will be 40 - \$45 scholarship available to the first 40 people who request them with their registration. There will be **15 college student stipends** to attend. The first 15 college students to sign up will only have to pay \$15.00 for the whole conference. College students may also be eligible for a one time one year free membership to ICEC.

Need to fulfill your **credit requirements**? What better way to get those credits from attending this exciting conference while learning more about various aspects in environmental education. Look for sessions from Carl Kurtz, Claudia McGee, Dennis Schlict, and more. Field trips are scheduled to the McBride Raptor Center, Old Capital Museum, University of Iowa Museum of Natural History and others within driving distance.

Returning this year a **pre-workshop** to be held on Friday January 25, 2008, on **archery in the schools**, you do not need to attend the whole conference to participate in the pre-workshop. Know someone in your school who may be interested? Help us spread the word.

We hope to see you in January! For more details call Heather Niec, ICEC Administrative Coordinator at 319-848-7019 or email at Adminicec@hotmail.com.

• **Projects WILD/WILD Aquatic/Learning Tree On-line Course**
February 11 – April 13, 2008

This eight-week class is offered through Green Valley AEA 14. There is a required introductory session **Saturday, February 16, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** at the Green Valley AEA computer lab (1405 North Lincoln) in Creston. The rest of the course will be completed on-line. Participants are required to spend 2 hours per week on-line completing assignments. Participants should be comfortable with navigating web pages. A majority of the course materials will be provided on a CD with linked pdf files.

Registration deadline is **February 1, 2008**. You must register on-line. Go to the Green Valley AEA website – http://iowa14.gosignmeup.com/dev_students.asp?action=coursedeail&id=1977. Cost is \$70 for 1 license renewal credit, \$145 for 1 graduate credit from Drake University or \$120 for 1 graduate credit from Morningside or Viterbo; in addition to credit fees there is a \$25 material fee. For more information contact:

Shannon Hafner
Aquatic Education Program
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
2473 160th Road
Guthrie Center, IA 50115, (641) 747-2051
Shannon.Hafner@dnr.iowa.gov

• **The *Lawrence Scadden* Teacher of the Year Award in Science Education for Students with Disabilities**

Open to:

- **All current K-12 teachers** (general education, special education, or science teachers, public or private);
- Must have taught at least 5 years;
- Must have made an outstanding contribution to science students with disabilities.

The recipient will be recognized at the annual National Science Teachers Association Conference in March 2008 (Boston) and will receive a **\$1,000 award** to be applied to travel expenses for the conference.

To download an application, visit the Science Education for Students with Disabilities (SESD) website www.sesd.info and click on "Scadden Award." If you have questions, please contact John Stiles, Awards Co-Chair, at jstiles@aea11.k12.ia.us or 515-270-9030. Applications are due on January 18, 2008.

Sponsored by **RASEM** (Regional Alliance for Science, Engineering, and Mathematics for Students with Disabilities) New Mexico State University and **SESD** (Science Education for Students with Disabilities).

2006-07 Winner: Bruce Bergren, Special Education teacher, Homewood-Flossmoor HS, Illinois.

2006-07 Merit Award: Lillian Rankel Chemistry teacher, Hopewell Valley Central High School, Pennington, NJ

For other past winners, go to:

http://rasem.nmsu.edu/Htmls/teacher_of_the_year.htm

- **Einstein Fellowship seeks candidates for 2008-2009 school year - Application Period Opens October 1**

The Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship is a paid fellowship for K-12 math, science, and technology teachers. Einstein Fellows spend a school year in Washington, DC serving in a federal agency or on Capitol Hill. To be considered for an Einstein Fellowship, apply and submit three letters of recommendation online by January 13, 2008 at <https://applicationlink.labworks.org/applicationlink/default.htm>

For more information about the Einstein Fellows program visit www.trianglecoalition.org/ein.htm or contact Liz Burck at burckl@triangle-coalition.org or (703) 516-5963.

- **JAPAN FULBRIGHT MEMORIAL FUND**

The Japan Fulbright Memorial Fund (JFMF) Teacher Program, sponsored by the Government of Japan, provides teachers and administrators with **fully-funded** three-week study tours of Japan. The program is designed to increase understanding between the people of Japan and the United States by inviting U.S. elementary

and secondary educators to visit Japan and share their experiences with fellow Americans upon their return. JFMF participants travel to Japan, learn about Japanese culture and education, and return to implement a self-designed plan to share their knowledge and experience with their students, colleagues, and community. Participants travel in one of two cycles: Spring cycle: June 8 – June 26, 2008; Fall cycle: October 12 – October 30. The 2008 online application is currently available on our website at www.iie.org/jfmf with a deadline of December 10, 2007.

Contact:

Institute of International Education

Tel 888-527-2636 (toll free)

Fax 202-326-7672

Email jfmf@iie.org

• Take your entire community on a Journey through the Universe

We invite you to take your entire community - thousands of students, their teachers, their families, and the public - on a **Journey through the Universe**.

Take the journey! Meet our researchers and educators. Visit <http://journeythroughtheuniverse.org>

Journey through the Universe is a national science education initiative that engages entire communities using education programs in the Earth and space sciences and space exploration to inspire and educate. The initiative embraces the notion that - it takes a community to educate a child – which is the basis for the program's Learning Community Model of program delivery.

The program offers a broad array of grade K-12 programming, curricular content, and resources that a community can use to create a customized Journey through the Universe program: reflecting their strategic needs in STEM education growing from local standards of teaching and learning and NCLB; that can be delivered systemically across an entire school district; and that is designed to be sustainable.

What the human race knows about our world and the greater Universe is used to inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers through interactions with

the current generation; give teachers the tools and training to conduct powerful lessons in the classroom that are deeply relevant to the science curriculum; and provide venues for family learning where parents and their children learn together.

Programming is delivered by a National Team of engineers and scientists and master science educators from research and education organizations across the nation. The researchers are passionate about their research on the frontier, and are selected because they are gifted at communicating their passion to audiences of all ages.

The program provides an authentic window on science as a human endeavor – as a journey of discovery that requires a marriage of knowledge and process - and elevates scientists and engineers to the status of heroes and role models. Journey through the Universe content addresses exploration of the Solar System, galaxy, and Universe; Earth systems science; the search for extraterrestrial life; building a permanent human presence in space; and engineering for spaceflight. The content resides in a library of Grade K-12 Education Modules - compendia of inquiry-based, hands-on lessons at elementary, middle, and high school levels - that are used as the 'curriculum'¹ for community-wide programming.

It's your program, and you design it.

Journey programming is for grade K-12 students, their teachers, and their families. Programming can focus on a specific grade level(s), or be implemented K-12; and can be implemented across an entire school district, within one region of a district, or in rural areas across several school districts. For more information contact:

Stacy Hamel shamel@usra.edu
Co-Director, Education Programs
The National Center for Earth and Space Science Education
10211 Wincopin Circle, Suite 500
Columbia, MD 21044
Phone: 703-508-2898
<http://ncesse.usra.edu>

The National Center for Earth and Space Science Education is operated by the Universities Space Research Association (USRA; www.usra.edu)

• ***River of Words***[®] Poetry and Art Contest

Every year, ***River of Words***[®] (ROW) conducts an environmental poetry and art contest for students aged 5 to 19 in grades K-12. The contest is designed to help them explore the natural and cultural history of their own watershed, and to express what they discover through poetry and art. Each year, eight U.S. winners, one international winner, and a “ROW Teacher of the Year” are selected to be honored during National Poetry Month (April) at an Award Ceremony at The Library of Congress in Washington, DC. (ROW is affiliated with The Library of Congress Center for the Book.)

River of Words also publishes an annual poetry book of winning submissions, selected by Robert Hass, and exhibits the children’s paintings at museums, libraries, conferences, and other venues around the world. The contest is free, and every child is acknowledged with a personalized “Watershed Explorer” certificate. Children may enter on their own or through schools, nature centers, libraries, youth clubs, and other organizations.

River of Words is coordinated in Iowa by IOWATER. Entries not chosen as finalists or grand prize winners in the international contest are returned to IOWATER, where they are judged in an Iowa statewide ***River of Words*** contest.

Entry forms and previous statewide winners are available at www.iowater.net (click on the River of Words logo). For specific information (artwork and poetry requirements, due dates, contact information, etc.) visit the ROW web site at www.riverofwords.org

Here’s how it works...

- Entries must be postmarked and submitted **directly** to ***River of Words*** by February 15th each year.
- ROW returns Iowa's entries to IOWATER in April for Iowa's statewide competition.
- State winners are chosen in May.

Send entries by Feb. 15th to:

River of Words
PO Box 4000 J
Berkeley, CA 94704
Phone: 510-548-POEM (7636) Fax: 510-548-2095

Pat Lohmann

River of Words Coordinator for Iowa

IOWATER

109 Trowbridge Hall

Iowa City, IA 52242-1319

Phone: (319) 335-1593 FAX: (319) 335-2754; email: Pat.Lohmann@dnr.iowa.gov

News

- **A Message From Barb Jacobsen**

Thank you to everyone who visited the exhibit hall to network and gain knowledge at our ISTS Fall Conference. We appreciate the hard work by the exhibitors to bring quality information to conference attendees!!

- **Science Education's 'Overlooked Ingredient'**

Reprinted from *NSTA Reports*: NSTA Past President Harold Pratt reinforces the importance of elementary science education in his October 10 *Education Week* commentary titled "Science Education's 'Overlooked Ingredient.'" He writes: "A key ingredient—arguably the most important ingredient in effective science education—is being undervalued and overlooked: creative, engaging, and demanding elementary science. Instead, the legislative emphasis is on undergraduate and graduate education, the training of secondary school teachers, and support for Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses in high schools. All of these obviously are important, but what about support for science in elementary school, the fundamental starting point in the education of our students?"

- **News from the Space Place**

New on the Space Place web site: "Solar Indigestion"

We usually take our star for granted. We forget that it's not just a big, bright, warm light bulb crossing the sky each day for our comfort and convenience. On the contrary, the Sun has a very active (if not meaningful) life of its own. And it's not always in a good mood. When the Sun is having a tantrum, or, even worse, indigestion, we are included in its "suffering." Space weather includes the effects of solar activity on Earth's environment--and us. Find out more about what happens during bouts of "solar indigestion" at <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov>.

Play "New and Improved" Space Place Trivia!

Covering everything from *asteroids* to *zodiac*, the Space Place Trivia game tests your acquaintance with just about every part of the extensive NASA kids website, The Space Place. Read the term in big red letters (with pronunciation guide), then pick the one sentence out of three in which the word makes sense (instead of nonsense). Recently updated to include newly added topics and activities on the site, the game links each term to the page or activity that explains or demonstrates it. So those "Oop-sies" can quickly be converted to "Right-o's!" Go to <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov> and click on "Games."

Your ISTS Leadership:

Iowa Academy of Science Mission:

- **Promote scientific research and its dissemination**
- **Improve instruction in the sciences**
- **Promote public understanding of science**
- **Recognize excellence in science and science teaching.**

Check out past issues of the ISTS newsletter at

<http://ists.pls.uni.edu/newsletters/index.html>.

Your ISTS Leadership Team can be found at:

<http://ists.pls.uni.edu/officers.html>.

(We are always looking for good people. Send an e-mail to tmaxted@cr.k12.ia.us if you wish to be more involved.)

Invitation to improve/contribute to this newsletter

How best can this newsletter serve you? Do you have something to contribute for the good of the ISTS membership? Zing a line at nweirather@central-lee.k12.ia.us or tmaxted@crk12.ia.us.