

LYLE NEWS

By Veda Wood

Toots Magers drove to Norton on June 29, and went with Jane Engelhardt to Quinter to Judy and Charlie Easton's. They visited with J.T. and Denise Guy and Kurston and Kendra.

June Jolly has been getting good rains as we have. Again, she says she is doing the same ol' thing, making afghans, quilting twice a week and swimming.

Kathy Van Meter and Lloyd Frandsen visited his granddaughter in Colorado on Friday. They paid an overnight visit with her sister, Margaret in Loveland, Colo. on Saturday. Other visitors were Steve and Sabrina.

Emily Bader and Adrienne Vacura had a cookout at our city park Saturday evening for birthdays of Carol Moye and Skylar Hawkins. The kids had a blast with balloons, a pinata and the slides. Of course the grown-ups had fun watching. Kylie finally broke the pinata after several might blows. The

park's new bathroom is a wonderful addition.

Toots Magers played pinochle on Thursday. Matthew Helm came in for a visit while in the process of mowing. Another visitor was Larry Van Otterloo.

We had a very good dinner at Lyle on Sunday and lots of good company, nineteen in all. There is always more food than we can eat. Joyce Sumner and Toots Magers had five more small quilts for me to take home and hem or bind. Joyce delivers them to the hospital.

Due to hail and very little rain, Kathy Van Meter and Lloyd Frandsen's and many others wheat harvest is not up to par but the farmer's keep working on it and hope for a better crop next year.

For the first time in several years, Norcat kids, [large and small] were allowed the fun of having their fireworks, and it sounded like a good time was had by all.

On Sunday, I went to Emily and Darin's home for a scrumptious prime rib dinner.

Moving education into the Information Age

In spite of the billions of dollars spent on educational reform since "A Nation at Risk" was published in 1987, more than half of America's high school seniors are not proficient in reading, and 75 percent can not do math, according to the recently released National Assessment of Educational Progress.

"Clearly, the current approaches to educational reform are failing," says notes educational researcher and consultant Charles M. Reigeluth, author of "Reinventing Schools: It's Time to Break the Mold." "The problem is that major aspects of our educational system were devised to meet the societal needs of a bygone era."

"We need to change the paradigm - we need to move from Industrial Age 'factory model schools' to accommodate and reflect Information Age needs and realities."

The Industrial Age in the United States, roughly 1830 to 1960, was shaped by machinery and mass production. Many jobs moved from farms to factories, which required workers - and therefore students - who would follow instructions and endure repetitive, boring tasks, he says.

"We did not need to educate many people to high levels, so Industrial Age schools sorted students, promoting the few needed for managerial and professional

work, and flunking out the many needed for the assembly lines," says Reigeluth, a former high school teacher and Indiana University professor.

"Today, knowledge work is more common than manual labor, and our systems are far more complex. All adults need a higher degree of knowledge just to function in society, so we can no longer afford a system that is designed to leave many children behind."

Here are four Industrial Age educational artifacts, according to Reigeluth, and how to update them for the Information Age:

- Time-based student progress: Currently students in a class move on together to the next topic according to the calendar, regardless of whether they have learned the current material. Slower students accumulate learning gaps that make it more difficult for them to master related material in the future, virtually condemning them to flunk out. The system is designed to leave many children behind.

- A paradigm designed to leave no child behind would allow each student to move on as soon as he or she has learned the current material, and no sooner. This requires "personalized learning" and "learner-centered instruction" that is both high-tech and high-touch.

- Standardized and other broad tests: Rather than evaluating a

student based on how much he or she has learned in a certain amount of time, such as a 9-week period, each student should be evaluated to determine when the material has been learned, so we know when the student is ready to move on. This is called "criterion-referenced assessment," a different paradigm from "norm-referenced assessment."

"A big test with 20 different topics, as we use now, shows only how much a student knows compared to other students," Reigeluth says. "In the Information Age paradigm, all students are expected to finish learning whatever they undertake to learn. Like a Boy Scout working on a badge, each student continues to work until the material is mastered."

Assessments, then, are incremental and cover a single competency, or a small set of competencies. They certify mastery while also helping guide learning by showing students what they need to continue working on.

- The traditional grading system: The traditional grading system indicates how well a student performed compared to the other students in a class - a tool that is only effective in sorting students. It's not an effective way of guiding and ensuring individual student learning, and it tells you little about what the student has learned.

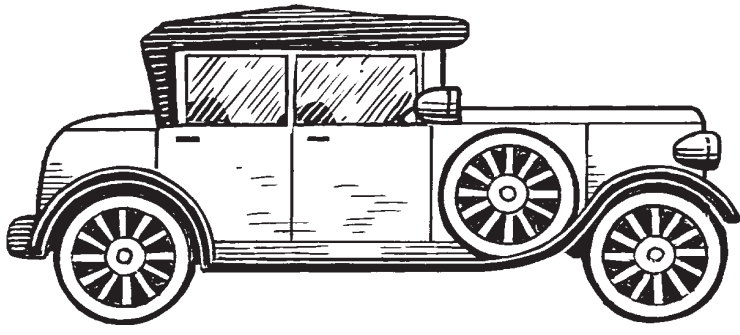
"Rather than achievement re-

flected as grades on a report card, it would be reflected as lists of skills and concepts that the student has mastered," Reigeluth says.

- Locking students into grades: Grade levels are incompatible with the Information Age model because students learn at different rates and become ready to move on to different material at different times. Grade levels are a key feature of the time-based, sorting-focused paradigm that served us well during the Industrial Age, but are detrimental to meeting Information Age educational needs.

Instead, group students into similar developmental levels, which typically span three to four years.

"Grouping developmentally, rather than based on age or rigid levels of content learning, accounts for the different rates at which children develop socially and emotionally," Reigeluth says. "Children can remain in their social-emotional peer group while working on projects typically tackled by students of a higher or lower age."



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