



PATHWAYS TO THE FUTURE

Frequently Asked Questions

Where does literacy fit in with the technology enhancements?

Literacy, numeracy and developing an innovative spirit serve as the foundation and focus at Avonworth Primary Center and at Avonworth Elementary School. Over the last two years, both schools have participated in training at the Reading Achievement Center at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit and Fox Chapel's Reading Center in aligning the English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum. Additionally, ELA and reading skills play a vital role in developing strong digital literacy.

Will this affect me as a taxpayer?

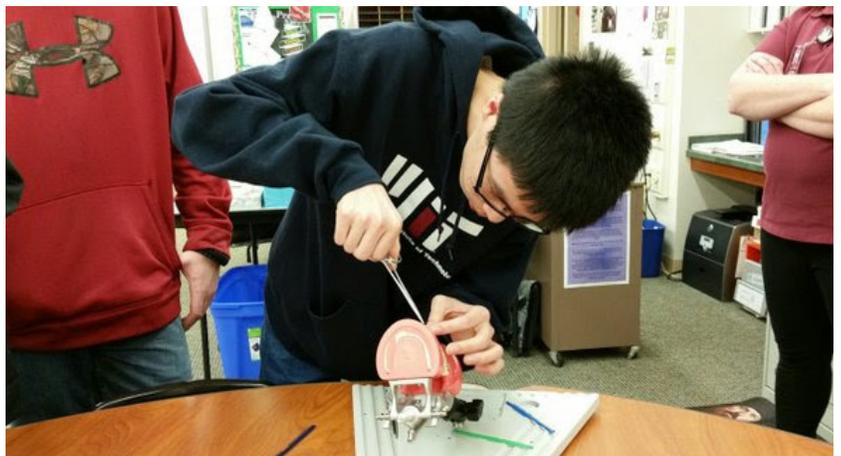
These changes will not trigger a tax increase. Furthermore, future projections indicate that a tax increase may not be needed for several years.

Will this affect college applications?

Avonworth already has a strong reputation for authentic learning and a high-quality education. Avonworth School District is a member of the League of Innovative Schools through the Digital Promise, and Avonworth High School was named a "P21 Exemplar School" last year through the Partnership for 21st Century Learning, both national recognitions. Additionally, Avonworth Middle School is a Don Eichhorn "School To Watch," a state honor. Continuing to improve our programming will only bring further positive attention to an Avonworth diploma and bolster our graduates' ability to be admitted to the school that is their first choice.

What does "personalized learning" mean?

From <http://edglossary.org/personalized-learning/>: The term personalized learning refers to a diverse variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic-support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations or cultural backgrounds of individual students. Personalized learning is generally seen as an alternative to so-called "one-size-fits-all" approaches to schooling in which teachers may, for example, provide all students in a given course with the same type of instruction, the same assignments, and the same assessments with little variation or modification from student to student. Project-based learning offers "voice and choice" of individual students, and the Personal Pathways Program will allow students to explore their own interests, talents, and passions through the curriculum and school experiences.



What is “project-based learning?”

The Buck Institute for Education (BIE.org) defines project-based learning “as a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge.” It differs from a traditional project where students learn about a topic and then create a poster or product to display what they have learned at the end. With project-based learning, on the other hand, the project is at the heart of investigative learning that involves real-world issues and an authentic audience.

How will the sixth grade be different?

Sixth graders have a maturity level that requires an academic program that varies from the other elementary grades. Sixth grade is also an important transition year to the middle school. The sixth grade will be organized in interdisciplinary, co-taught teams and have a project-based focus. Sixth graders will have an opportunity to interact with all of their peers and the full team of sixth grade teachers. Sixth graders will also have a specials rotation that will include art, band/music, computers, library and physical education/health.

When will students receive their devices?

Parent meetings for device distribution will be held in the summer. Middle and high school students will receive their Chromebooks prior to the beginning of school. The elementary and primary students will receive their devices at the start of school next fall.

Why is the high school moving to a later starting time?

Because of the sleep habits of adolescents and their natural predisposition to sleeping later, it is healthier for our high school students to start at a later time. Schools that have moved to later starting times have experienced happier, healthier students with improved student achievement.

Will the later high school time affect sports?

The later 8:00 a.m. start time will not have any impact on practices or games. The athletic director has made the necessary adjustments for practices and games.

Will 7-12 grade students be bused together with same start time?

With the same start time, middle and high school students will ride together. This is a normal circumstance in many districts. Currently, students in the high school often ride the middle school bus home when they stay after school for clubs and tutoring. Our middle and high school students inhabit the same building and campus without issues now. Our high school ridership is typically low because many of our students drive or walk to school.

