

# TECHNOLOGY

## STIRS EXCITEMENT IN STUDENTS

**W**hen young students in grades 5-8 at St. Michael School in Pinconning came back to school after Christmas break in 2018, gone was the outdated computer lab. In its place: a brand-new technology lab equipped with six new desktop computers, six laptop computers, iPads, a tripod, a green screen, a pocket-sized coding robot called Ozobot®, a 3D printer and Makey Makey™, an electronic invention tool.

By Taylor  
Trapani

Ashley Kanuszewski, principal of St. Michael school, explained she knew it was time to update the technology not just because it was becoming outdated, but also because of the change in learning.

“Kids are learning differently because of technology. They have an iPad or a device in their hands when they can barely talk,” she said. “Everything is at a faster pace and everything is at their fingertips. We don’t need to teach them facts about things because they can Google that. Now, critical thinking and problem-solving are the focus.”

St. Michael hosted various fundraisers throughout the year, such as a Kentucky Derby party and a Winter Bazaar, that raised money for the tech lab. Private donations, parent donations and a grant also contributed to the lab.

“In 2014, we received seed money from the computer education grant from the diocese that got us a small measure of technology in the classroom like iPads. That created more of a thirst for the technology lab,” said Deacon Gary Patelski, pastoral administrator of Holy Trinity Parish, Pinconning.

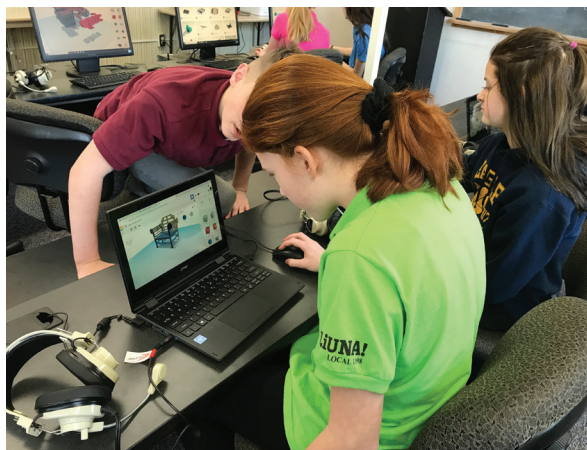
Teachers were also happy with the upgrade because it included a high-speed internet system and routers.

### FROM STEM TO STREAM

Fourth- through eighth-graders still see Nicole Rosekrans, the computer teacher, two to three times per week, but their lessons look a little different now.

“We hear of STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) and sometimes STEAM to include the art component, but there’s a new acronym STREAM: science, technology, religion, engineering, art and mathematics,” Ashley said. “What the computer teacher is doing is incorporating religion into technology.”

One example is an innovative project with middle-schoolers. Students use basic software to code a rosary. When you click on a bead, it plays a recording of the student reciting the prayer that corresponds with the bead. To complete the project, they’re using the 3D printer to print a cross.



<b>OUR SCHOOLS</b>			
<b>13 SCHOOLS</b>	<i>More than</i> <b>2,000 KIDS</b>	<b>ACADEMIC</b> <i>excellence</i>	<b>2017 GRADUATION RATE OF 100%</b>
<b>CHRIST</b> <i>-centered.</i> faith-based education	<b>SAFE, DISCIPLINED, FOCUSED ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>MASS, DAILY PRAYER and RELIGION CLASSES</b>	<b>SCHOLARSHIPS available</b>



**ENTHUSIASM TO LEARN**

Both Deacon Gary and Ashley have seen the technology create newfound excitement and greater motivation to learn.

“The students are interested in this. Using technology drives their motivation,” Ashley said. “They want to do more, and they don’t realize they’re learning. They’re excited to go to the technology lab.”

This excitement extends beyond the students too. Deacon Gary said parents and parishioners have shown enthusiasm towards the new technology which he hopes will lead to greater student retention.

“As kids get older, they get pulled to the public school system,” Deacon Gary said. “We’re hoping the technology helps with retention by giving them additional learning challenges and making them excited to be here.”

**FUTURE THINKING**

As technology evolves, Ashley hopes the school can move with it. She says the computer teacher is always on the lookout for new software programs and more advanced robots. They hope to one day have a one-to-one ratio of student-to-device (i.e., iPad or Chrome Book). Until then, the St. Michael staff continues to come up with creative projects for students. †

## SPOTLIGHT: CORMAC LYNN



**In July 2018, Cormac Lynn stepped in as the new superintendent of Catholic schools for the Saginaw Diocese.**

Cormac shares the diocesan mission to immerse students in a Christ-centered environment. His aim is to be a servant leader and a resource to the principals, pastors and pastoral administrators. He’s also interested in continuing to cultivate the family-like atmosphere within the schools.

“I hear time and time again from students, parents and staff that our schools feel like a family. It’s a great support system for the families, not just the students. What a great opportunity to know that our students are surrounded by people who care about them. I’m proud to be part of that and I hope to help grow that aspect of our school culture,” he said.

Cormac received a bachelor’s degree from the Ohio State University, a master’s from Michigan State University and an education specialist degree from Oakland University. He’s currently a doctoral candidate in education leadership at the University of Michigan-Flint.