

PROFILE: DUCKWATER SCHOOL



Seventy miles past Ely, Nevada, there is a one-room schoolhouse called Duckwater School. Nestled between farmland and the Indian reservation, the K-8 school appears to be old-fashioned. But on any given day, Duckwater students are taking an online quiz at their desktop computer, school board members are attending a school board meeting via videoconference, and Lyn Huston, the teacher at Duckwater School, is teaching with a document camera that projects a view onto a screen.

"When I started working at Duckwater School I started learning how to draw cartoon characters to help me illustrate words for the students," Huston stated. Today, Huston relies on technology to teach. She recalls a teaching moment when she was trying to convey to her Spanish-speaking students what the word avalanche meant. Huston turned to the Internet and brought up a video of an avalanche. It was an "ah ha" moment for the students, Huston said. "Technology allows my students to have access to the same resources that any other student at any other school has access to."

Most students have access to music classes. Huston's students do, too. The students at Duckwater School have the opportunity to take violin lessons from a teacher who lives in Iowa. The students take the class one to two times per week via Skype.

Not only are Duckwater students taking advantage of the school's technology but the community is, too.

"The community has access to dial-up or satellite Inter-

net while the school has a T1 line," Huston said.

The T1 line allows the school to have a fast connection speed. This speed enables high school students in the community to opt out of traveling 140 miles to the nearest high school building in the district. Students may also choose to attend high school in Eureka County School District by traveling 75 miles - 30 miles of which is over an unpaved, dirt road.

The Nye County School District does not provide bus transportation to Eureka HS at this time due to budget constraints and a low number of high school-aged students. Instead, these students can come to Duckwater School to take high school courses online. "Many of the students who choose to take online courses graduate early and enter the military or take college courses online," Huston said.

"Twenty years ago I dreamed of having this technology," Huston said.

Technology has changed the method by which she teaches and has enhanced the learning experience for her students.

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