



It All Started with a Spark



Minnetonka Vocational, Technical & Healthcare Institute became...

VANTAGE

MINNETONKA ADVANCED PROFESSIONAL STUDIES



The VANTAGE "Spark" from 2012

SUBMITTED BY CHRIS PEARS & BRENT VENINGA

"We propose a program where **student achievement** may be accomplished through vocational, healthcare or technological means while at Minnetonka High School. Employers in business, healthcare, technology and vocational professions see a **shortage of young, well-qualified high school graduates** capable of making an **immediate contribution to the workplace**. This program will present students with the authentic world of work and a 21st century application of learning. Minnetonka should establish itself as the **premier school in Minnesota** for producing excellent students in the business and vocational fields straight out of high school."

THE HUNT IS ON OCTOBER 1 MINNETONKASCHOOLS.ORG/SPARK

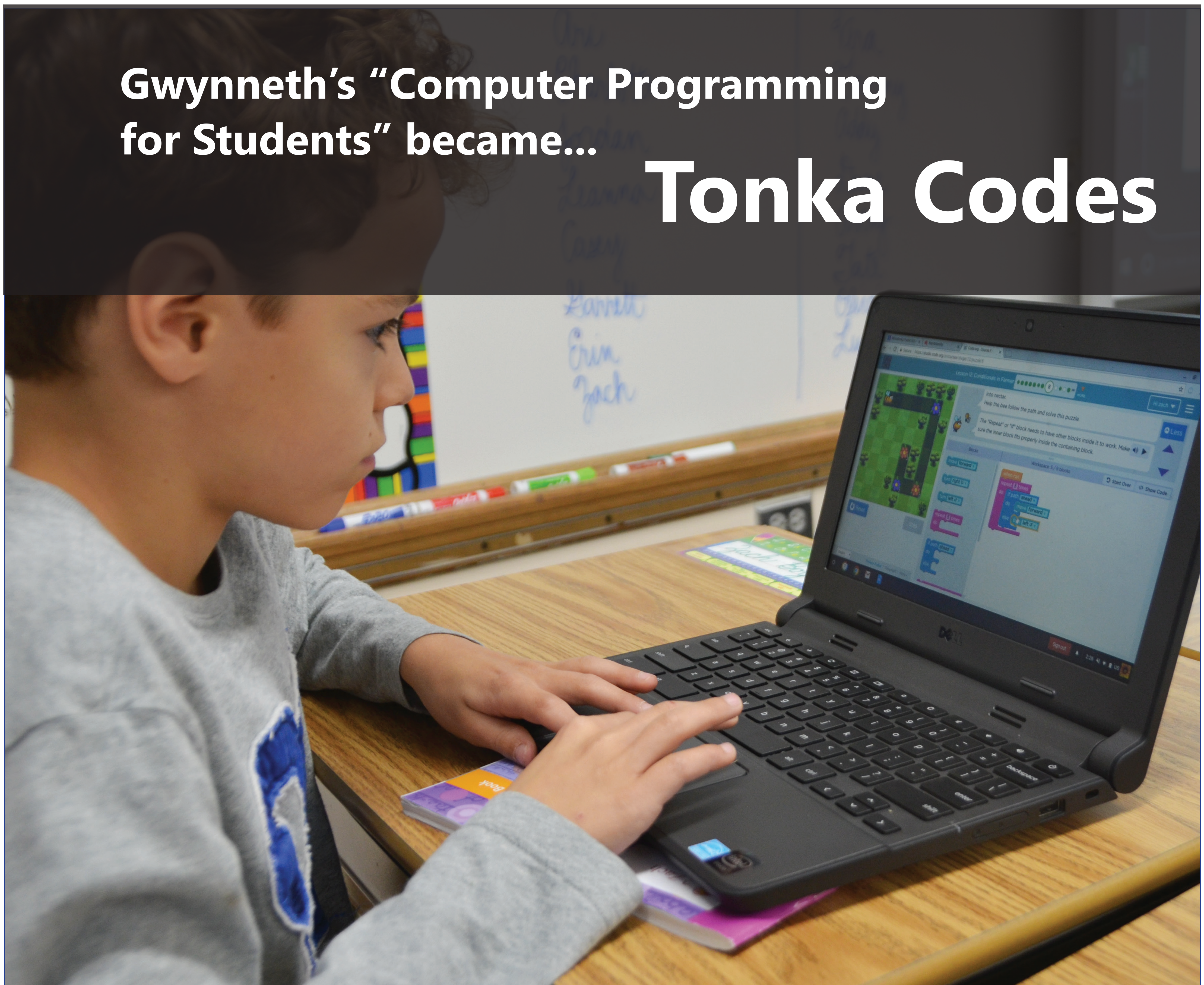


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Gwynneth's "Computer Programming for Students" became...

Tonka Codes



Computer Programming for Students "Spark" from 2013

SUBMITTED BY GWYNNETH WACKER

"By offering computer programming classes from elementary on up, our students will easily know their way around computers and the language of coding. Computer programming requires science, math, reading and technology skills. It requires digital citizenship. Our students need to (1) use solution fluency to identify the problem, (2) apply collaboration fluency to work as a team to try to solve the the computing problem, (3) understand the digital content and (4) use creative fluency to think outside the box to be innovative in their solution. Children in Estonia ages 7 to 16 have the opportunity to learn how to code in schools. Students in China are whizzes in computer programming. I believe Minnetonka students should be just as prepared."

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Nicole's "Big Idea" became...

Design for Learning



Thanks to the Minnetonka Foundation and its generous supporters for helping fund the Design for Learning program.

The Design for Learning "Spark" from 2014

SUBMITTED BY NICOLE SNEDDEN

"What if ... **Students had a voice** in solving problems in our schools and creating new styles of classrooms? What if ... our students could design, research, collaborate, and create a 21st century classroom; one that is built and **designed by the students** and pushes the boundaries of what society considers 'a typical classroom.' What if students could do more—**apply their learning to the real world?** In this idea, students would **partner with local professionals** in the fields of architecture, design, science, furniture design and production, art, music, and technology, and then **build a model 21st-century classroom**. We would also look to local companies, businesses and the local community for **sponsorship and support** in building this classroom model."

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Kim's "Science Research" idea became...



MINNETONKA
RESEARCH



The Science Research "Spark" from 2014

SUBMITTED BY KIM HOEHNE

"We have several options for students to **explore science** within our high school, but we can **extend opportunities** so much more! We have IB students, AP students, Science Olympiad teams, Bio Club Members, Rube Goldberg teams, an Envirothon team, and many other students who **would benefit from a dedicated space** for projects and research. Our current space is not enough ... if we provided dedicated space for longer-term learning projects, then students would have a chance to **investigate and design their own experiment**. Our current facilities limit them in the potential experiments they run, largely because of space. We have some **younger students** here who also want to really start pursuing some research opportunities..."

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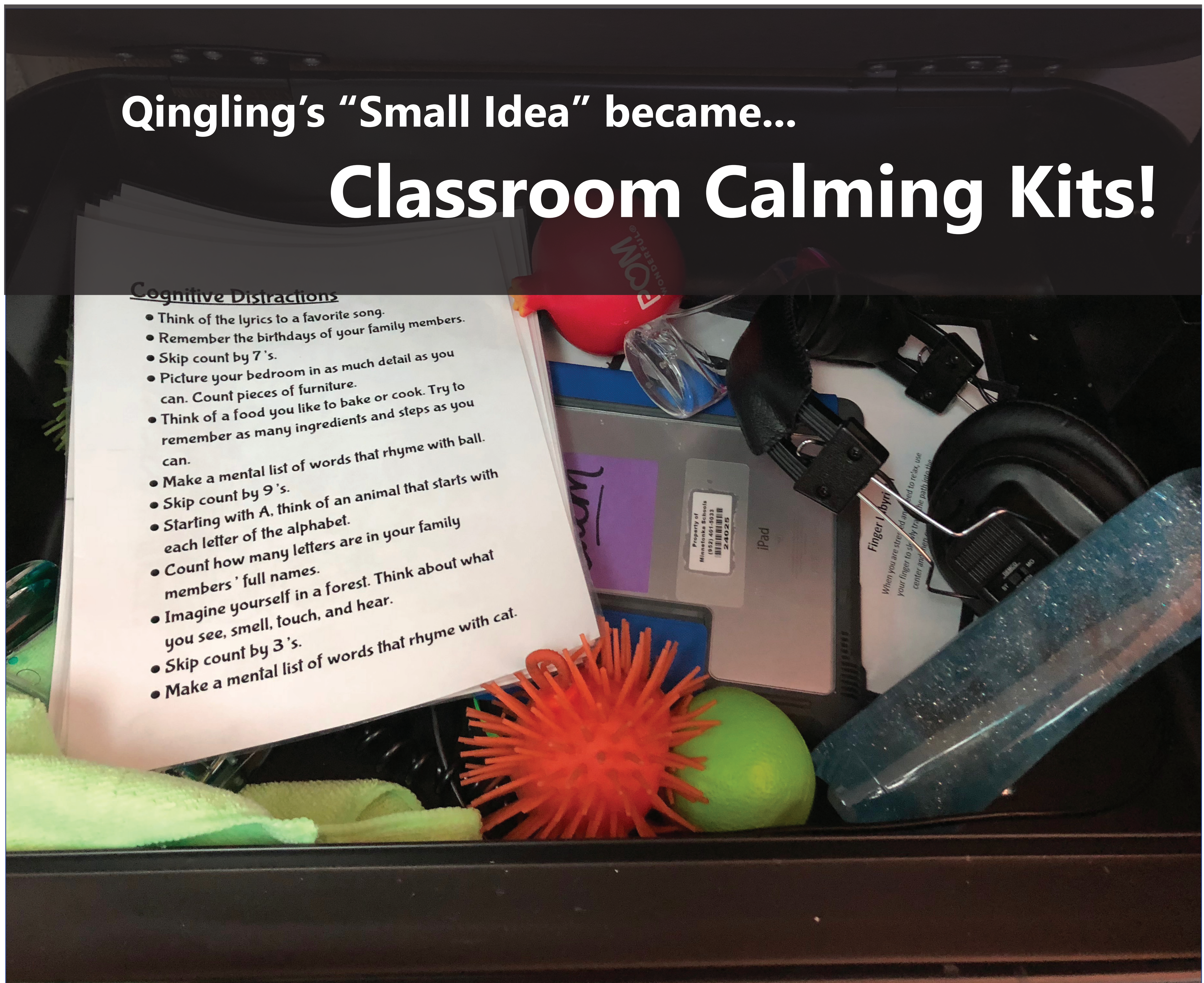


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Qingling's "Small Idea" became...

Classroom Calming Kits!



The Classroom Calming Kits "Spark" from 2016

SUBMITTED BY QINGLING MENDENHALL

Qingling Mendenhall, a third-grade Chinese Immersion teacher at Scenic Heights, would often find herself trying to **support a student's emotional needs** while simultaneously instructing and guiding her class. Qingling wondered how she could **help students self-soothe** and reclaim control of their emotions (anxiety, sadness, anger, etc.) and **get back to work** with minimal disruption. To solve this problem, Qingling developed a "Classroom Calming Kit." The first test kit contained an oil-water timer, squeezing ball, a piece of fleece, pipe cleaner, a breathing cue card and thinking putty. Nearly **40 teachers tested the prototype kits** and found that students could step away to engage with the kit, and then **rejoin the class** within a matter of minutes.

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Jonathan's "Small Idea" became...

Never Forget a Face



The Never Forget a Face "Spark" from 2016

SUBMITTED BY JONATHAN MAKI

"We can't always match a face with the person we're emailing. Let's add photos to go along with our email messages. Microsoft Outlook already has this option. Let's use it!"

In any large organization, where email is the primary form of communication, adding a professional photo to your email profile enhances connections and reminds others that there is a human being behind the words. The District Communications team emailed staff with instructions for uploading their own professional photo. As a backup, Minnetonka's Technology Team uploaded school photos for staff members who did not have a profile picture to share.

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Jim's "Medium Idea" became...

Appetizing Acoustics!

INNOVATION EVOLUTION!

During the Idea Workshop on this innovation, participants noted that—in addition to acoustic panels—noise might also be reduced by creating a "café experience" with music and circular tables so friends are seated closer together.

Inspired by this innovation, Clear Springs Elementary is making multi-faceted adjustments to their lunch experience, from reducing time in line to decreasing the number of students in the cafeteria at one time.



The Appetizing Acoustics "Spark" from 2017

SUBMITTED BY JIM PLAZIAK

"Right now, there is nothing to help muffle the noise of our students as they excitedly come in to the cafeteria for lunch. With the hardwood floors and concrete walls, **this noise is amplified** and causes discomfort to many of our students. How might we ... redesign the lunchroom experience to resemble a café to **create a calm and quiet atmosphere**? If we install acoustic panels to help reduce noise, students with sensory needs/social communication issues would be more comfortable eating with their peers. **Staff would also have an easier time communicating** with students. This would not only benefit students during lunchtime, but other groups who use the space (PE classes, Explorers Club, school assemblies, Community Education classes)."

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Claire's "Give Us a Break" idea became... MHS Extended Passing Time

TWO-HOUR LATE START

First Hour: 10:00–10:35 a.m.
Second Hour: 10:41–11:16 a.m.

MINNETONKA HIGH SCHOOL

DAILY SCHEDULE

Zero Hour: 7:00–7:55 a.m.
First Hour: 8:00–8:55 a.m.
Second Hour: 9:01–10:01 a.m.
Extended Passing Time: 10:01–10:13 a.m.
Third Hour: 10:13–11:08 a.m.

First Lunch
Lunch: 11:08–11:38 a.m.
4C Class: 11:44 a.m.–12:39 p.m.
5C Class: 12:45–1:40 p.m.

Second Lunch
4B Class: 11:14–11:42 a.m.
Lunch: 11:42 a.m.–12:12 p.m.
4B Class: 12:12–12:39 p.m.
5C Class: 12:45–1:40 p.m.

Third Lunch
4A Class: 11:14 a.m.–12:09 p.m.
Lunch: 12:14–12:44 p.m.
5C Class: 12:45–1:40 p.m.

Fourth Lunch
4A Class: 11:14 a.m.–12:09 p.m.
5B Class: 12:15–12:43 p.m.
Lunch: 12:43–1:13 p.m.
5B Class: 1:13–1:40 p.m.

Fifth Lunch
4A Class: 11:14 a.m.–12:09 p.m.
5A Class: 12:15–1:10 p.m.
Lunch: 1:10–1:40 p.m.

Sixth Hour: 1:45–2:40 p.m.

PEPFEST SCHEDULE

Zero Hour: 7:00–7:55 a.m.
First Hour: 8:00–8:47 a.m.
Second Hour: 8:53–9:45 a.m.
Third Hour: 9:51–10:38 a.m.

First Lunch
Lunch: 10:38–11:08 a.m.
4C Class: 11:14 a.m.–12:01 p.m.
5C Class: 12:07–12:54 p.m.

Second Lunch
4B Class: 10:44–11:08 a.m.
Lunch: 11:08 a.m.–11:38 p.m.
4B Class: 11:38 a.m.–12:01 p.m.
5C Class: 12:07–12:54 p.m.

Third Lunch
4A Class: 10:44–11:31 p.m.
Lunch: 11:31 a.m.–12:01 p.m.
5C Class: 12:07–12:54 p.m.

Fourth Lunch
4A Class: 10:44–11:31 a.m.
5B Class: 11:37 a.m.–12:01 p.m.
Lunch: 12:01–12:31 p.m.
5B Class: 12:31–12:54 p.m.

Fifth Lunch
4A Class: 10:44–11:31 a.m.
5A Class: 11:37 a.m.–12:24 p.m.
Lunch: 12:24–12:54 p.m.

Sixth Hour: 12:59–1:46 p.m.
Pepfest: 1:53–2:40 p.m.

MAST SCHEDULE

8:40–9:30 a.m.
9:36–10:26 a.m.
10:32–11:22 a.m.

Lunch
12:12–11:52 a.m.

4A Class: 11:28 a.m.–12:18 p.m.
Lunch: 12:23–12:53 p.m.
5C Class: 12:54–1:44 p.m.

Fourth Lunch
4A Class: 11:28 a.m.–12:18 p.m.

12:12–11:52 a.m.

4A Class: 11:28 a.m.–12:18 p.m.

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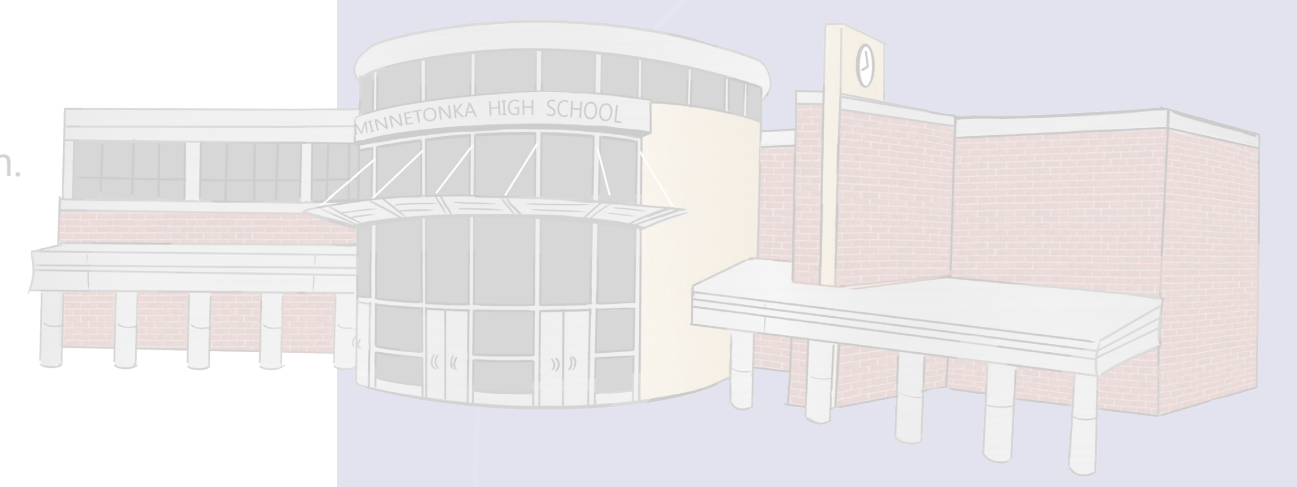
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 **Jeff Erickson** @TonkaPrincipal · Apr 17
Tonka...
We tested "Extended Passing Time"
Thoughts?
DM for additional comments.

72% Study further

28% Do not study further

Tested spring 2018 and adopted for the 2018-19 school year!

The Give Us a Break "Spark" from 2017

SUBMITTED BY CLAIRE HARLEY

"On non-MAST days, we would **add an extra six minutes of passing time** between 2nd and 3rd hour, so that we have 12 minutes between these classes. This extra time would provide a few extra minutes for **self-care between classes**, giving students an opportunity to use the restroom, purchase and eat a snack before the next class, or schedule an appointment with their counselor. This change would reduce each class period by only one minute, but would **significantly reduce classroom disruptions**. Students who have not eaten breakfast would no longer have to wait hours to eat before their lunch period. This extra time would be a **huge morale boost for teachers**, as well, who would now have time to use the restroom or get a snack themselves."

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