Speed of computer development, other equipment still amazing.

Computers are no big deal to Elizabeth Graham and her classmates at Gothenburg Public Schools.

They've grown up with them.

Because computers are second nature to fellow senior Dalton Johnston, he said he can do anything on them.

"They've been around forever," Johnston said.

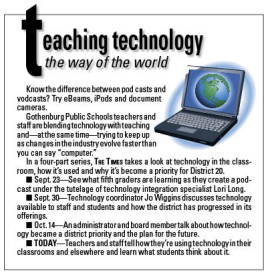
Still, senior Jared Blauvelt said he's amazed at the speed and how much technology has evolved.

Because of their rapid evolution, Johnston said he thinks the computers at school are often slow.

“There’s always some new technology to keep it going faster,” he said.

As a recent buyer of a laptop computer, Johnston said it’s amazing how quickly computers have changed from “something big and boxy to something slim and usable.”

While Johnston said



teaching technology
the way of the world

Know the difference between pod casts and vodcasts? Try eBeams, iPods and document cameras.

Gothenburg Public Schools teachers and staff are blending technology with teaching and—at the same time—trying to keep up as changes in the industry evolve faster than you can say "computer."

In a four-part series, **The Times** takes a look at technology in the classroom, how it's used and why it's become a priority for District 20.

■ Sept. 23—See what fifth graders are learning as they create a podcast under the tutelage of technology integration specialist Lori Long.

■ Sept. 30—Technology coordinator Jo Wiggins discusses technology available to staff and students and how the district has progressed in its offerings.

■ Oct. 14—An administrator and board member talk about how technology became a district priority and the plan for the future.

■ **TODAY**—Teachers and staff tell how they're using technology in their classrooms and elsewhere and learn what students think about it.

he thinks the technology provided by the district is below the bar compared to other schools, Graham and Blauvelt are satisfied for the most part.

“We’re better than some schools but other schools are pretty equal to where we are,” Graham said.

Blauvelt said he liked how different Internet sites become available for student research.

On her technology wish list, Graham lists school-provided laptop computers.

Johnston puts iPod Touches, with their Internet access, at the top of his list.

“It would be nice to be able to do your assignments on the go,” he said. “You could be walking down the hall and think ‘oh, I forgot to do that.’

“And just e-mail it to the teacher,” Blauvelt said.

Blauvelt said he didn't see problems with students having iPod Touches and communicating with friends because "you can't text." Texting is typed words sent through a cell phone.

School policy states that students are not supposed to bring cell phones, iPods and related technological equipment to school.

Johnston said he didn't think iPods would be a problem at school because controls placed on the computer could block e-mails and inappropriate Internet sites.

As far as teachers being technologically savvy, Johnston said he thinks "they're getting the hang of it."

Blauvelt said younger teachers grew up with technology and know what to do.

"Some of the older teachers have problems figuring it out but they use students to help them achieve their accomplishments on computers," he explained.

Despite students growing up with technology, some things are still new and exciting to Graham like eBeam.

An eBeam is a wing-like device that is magnetized to classroom whiteboards and connected to a teacher's computer.

A dry erase marker, wrapped in an electronic marker sleeve, is used as a pen or computer mouse as a presenter writes, pulls in diagrams and more.

“It’s like the teacher gets up on the board with you and writes with a mechanical pen,” Graham said. “It’s a little more interactive.”

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