Incorporating Web 2.0 Tools into the Classroom

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Description of the Capstone Experience

Incorporating Web 2.0 Tools into the Classroom /"Web Wednesdays" stems from the need for meaningful and student-centered technology integration in the classroom setting at Dawson County High School. Prior to this professional learning opportunity, "technology-focused" training for teachers was not offered. Dawson County School System recently introduced a system technology team. This team has been trying to identify area of improvement for technology use. By sending creating and sending out surveys regarding Levels of Technology Integration (LoTi) in the classroom, the technology team and graduation candidate, Mrs. Jamey Bearden, were able to identify weak areas and areas for improvement. A plan was created to incorporate the new technologies DCSS recently purchased; this includes iPads for Dawson County Middle School to pilot the 1:1 iPad (Device) Initiative at Dawson County Schools.

With all of this new technology being implemented, the decision was made to offer training for colleagues on how to use Web 2.0 Tools in the classroom. By using the data from the survey results that the technology team sent to teachers, it was decided which Web 2.0 tools would ease the transition to student-centered learning. A calendar of potential dates for training and topics was developed. Then Mrs. Bearden met with school administration to discuss the need for this training and the tentative schedule. Mrs. Bearden was met with positive feedback regarding her plan.

During the last Wednesday Workshop of the semester (held during planning periods on Wednesdays), the plan and proposed dates were introduced. Mrs. Bearden also told teachers with common planning that they could make appointments for

troubleshooting or collaboration during that time. She gave a brief overview of the

Web 2.0 Tools that she would show them how to use. She told them she was open to

other suggestions if they were curious about anything. Mrs. Bearden also told them

that this was not just a presentation/pay attention format. She expected them to

develop their own lessons using these technologies and wanted them to offer peer

and/or group feedback.

Mrs. Bearden began offering sessions on Wednesdays after school twice a

month. She would discuss the digital tool and showed teachers how to use it and

troubleshoot their problems or hesitations. These sessions focused on how to

incorporate these tools at first in a meaningful way, not just "adding" them as an

afterthought. Most teachers found the first couple of lessons interesting and feedback

was good.

It was then announced that DCSS officially purchased a license with the

Learning Management System (LMS) Schoology and that all teachers would have to

learn to use it and incorporate it into their curriculum and daily activities by the

unrolling of the 1:1 iPad Initiative. Mrs. Bearden met and collaborated with

administration and department heads again to discuss how she could help them with

the implementation process.   Mrs. Bearden is one of the Schoology Pioneers for

DCSS and already uses it in her classroom. The focus of the lessons then changed to

using Schoology meaningfully and effectively in the classroom.

Barriers and Obstacles

Participation was comparably low before the movement towards Schoology

use. Many teachers said they did not have time or even interest to learn something

"new" to "add" to their lessons. However, after the announcement of the new LMS,

participation increased as teachers new this was information they would have to know.

Participant feedback increased as well and teachers wanted to share their ideas to help

others or just show excitement that they knew what to do! Mid and End Survey

feedback were positive and offered great suggestions and specific feedback.

Obtaining adequate buy-in is necessary in becoming and being an effective

technology coach. Technology coaches need to be able to persuade others that they

can be trusted and are offering help, not criticism. Ultimately, a technology coach

needs to be able to interact with others and listen to their needs. Once trust was

established during this experience, amazing feedback was provided and walls were

broken down. Teachers helped other teachers tweak their lessons and offered

suggestions on presentation/share days and discussion days. Teachers began

effectively collaborating and focusing on students' needs as opposed to viewing this as

another "Hoop they had to jump through".

Mrs. Bearden discovered that it was difficult to take criticism from teachers

who did not want to believe that she genuinely wanted to help them. They seemed to

think she had ulterior motives or believe that these workshops were going to land them

more work. She learned that this criticism was meaningful and helped her to develop

other teaching strategies and buy-in strategies to make the process more pleasant and

meet the needs of her colleagues and the technology needs of the students. Mrs.

Bearden felt it was frustrating at first that more of her peers did not show up for the

first few meetings.

Follow-up

These meeting continued through the end of the school year. This current school year, the technology team created a Schoology committee, comprised of teachers who are knowledgeable of Schoology and are willing to help others. The technology team now holds meetings every Tuesday and Thursday after school in the media center and also during Wednesday workshops conducted during planning periods. The team has development training videos and online tutorials for teachers to use. Members of the team have also created lessons for teachers system-wide to show understanding and completion of the units. Teachers have been working to complete the six self-paced tutorial units for the year to help them learn to use Schoology for the 1:1Initiative.

Included is the original schedule with topics (see Appendix A). This schedule was modified beginning at the end of May to focus on how to use Schoology. Beginning in August, lessons were focused on various tools within Schoology. By fall 2016, more teacher leaders assisted with the Schoology training. The technology team and technology committees are meeting together quarterly to assess progress and learning of unit targets. The professional learning schedule for Schoology training still continues weekly, with one-to-one tutorials available as needed.

Conclusion

Through the capstone experience, Mrs. Bearden was able to learn how to meet the needs of her school. She learned how to effectively create meaningful surveys and then use the data from those surveys in a useful manner. She also learned what was needed to prepare successful lessons for colleagues and how to take criticism and make it into something positive.

From taking various classes at Kennesaw State University, Mrs. Bearden was able to take what she learned and use it to meet a great need in her school system. She used the knowledge of data driven results, planning professional learning opportunities and creating screencasts to help her colleagues learn how to do the same. She learned about the tools that she was teaching to her colleagues through her classes at KSU. Mrs. Bearden also learned to listen to the needs of her colleagues in order to facilitate change and make changes when necessary to promote learning.

Once the new LMS platform was announced and the need for training in this area was evident, many teachers started attending the workshops because it became more meaningful for them. The transition to more members went smoothly and the process became more meaningful. Mrs. Bearden implemented strategies to lead her colleagues, but not by being overly assertive or overstepping boundaries. She wanted to gain trust to provide effective feedback. Mrs. Bearden accomplished this goal because her colleagues still ask her for help with anything technology related. The site Mrs. Bearden created and used for the first session to facilitate the transition of using the new LMS (see Appendix B).

Discussion and Reflection

Through this experience, Mrs. Bearden was able to grow as a technology coach. The following are examples from the Incorporating Web 2.0 Tools Project that helped prepare her to be an effective technology coach and better herself as an educator. Mrs. Bearden was able to effectively promote technology use in a meaningful way.

By being a member of the Technology Team ad Committee, she was able to

facilitate the design, development, implementation, communication, and evaluation of

technology-infused strategic plans (ISTE 1a/PSC 1.1). She was also able to collaborate

with teachers and administrators to determine appropriate technology needs and tools

to facilitate these needs (ISTE 1b, PSC 1.2). Mrs. Bearden used her knowledge of

digital resources to aid in selecting and evaluating digital tools for accuracy, suitability

and compatibility with the school infrastructure (ISTE 3f, PSC 3.6). She was also able

to research, recommend and implement policies, procedures, programs and funding

strategies by recommending Schoology as the preferred LMS for DCSS (ISTE 1c,

PSC 1.3). By modeling to her colleagues how she communicated via Schoology

locally and globally with students, parents, peers and the larger community, she was

able to provide a valuable communication resource. (ISTE 3g, PSC 3.7)

By developing the knowledge of Schoology and other Web 2.0 Tools and

developing the disposition of technology facilitator, Mrs. Bearden was able to

facilitate the effective use of digital tools and resources to support and enhance higher

order thinking skills and facilitate the design and implementation of technology

enhanced learning experiences, allowing for the effective use of differentiation via the

Schoology platform (ISTE 2d, 2e; PSC 2.4, 2.5). Through her own use in her

classroom, she modeled how to use Schoology as an effective diagnostic, formative

and summative assessment tool to measure student learning and also how to use this

tool to systematically collect and analyze student achievement data from these

assessments to interpret results and begin the remediation process if necessary (ISTE

2h, PSC 2.8) By having the knowledge of this information to aid in this important

decision, Mrs. Bearden was able to facilitate the change process for DCHS. By using

these skills and the disposition of technology coach, Mrs. Bearden was successfully

able to demonstrate mastery of these skills.

This experience allowed Mrs. Bearden to use data-driven information collected

from surveys and teacher feedback to determine the technology needs of DCHS and

implement strategies for initiating and sustaining technology innovations and for

managing the change process at DCHS (ISTE 1d/PSC 1.4). Through the workshops

Mrs. Bearden was able to model, offer and implement technology-enhanced learning

experiences to facilitate learning-centered strategies addressing the diversity of all

students (ISTE 5a, 5c; PSC 4.1, 4.3). She used the disposition of technology

facilitator to model and facilitate the safe, healthy, legal ad ethical uses of digital

information and technologies through the creation and presentation of the copyright

presentation (ISTE 5b, PSC 4.2)

At each workshop, Mrs. Bearden modeled and facilitated the effective use of

researched-based technology practices ad tools (ISTE 2f; PSC 2.6). Through the

Schoology training workshops, she demonstrated effective ways to use digital

resources to collect data and analyze student achievement; thus enabling prevention

strategies and differentiation through this technology use (ISTE 2b; PSC 2.2).

Mrs. Bearden offered her support and knowledge to help colleagues

troubleshoot various technology issues in their classrooms (ISTE 3e; PSC 3.5).

Through collaboration and feedback sessions, she facilitated and researched various

adaptive technologies that teachers could use to support individual student learning

needs and create authentic learning experiences (ISTE 3d, 5c; PSC 3.4, 4.3).

Through Mrs. Bearden's screencasts, she demonstrated her knowledge and ability to expand the opportunities of her colleagues' teaching methods by introducing a method for creating an online and blended learning environment (ISTE 3a, 3c; PSC 3.1, 3.3). She learned how to effectively implement technology-based professional learning that aligns to state and national professional learning standards, integrate technology to support face-to-face and online components, model principles of adult learning, and promote best practices in teaching, learning and assessment (ISTE 4b, 2a; PSC 5.2, 2.1). By selecting to use both an online and face-to face experience, she was able to engage teachers in an authentic learning experience to be modeled to students. ((ISTE 2c, PSC 2.3) Mrs. Bearden designed and implemented program evaluations to determine the overall effectiveness of professional learning through program surveys.

Through this experience, Mrs. Bearden was grow to use her knowledge to research, recommend, and implement strategies for initiating and sustaining technology innovations and for managing the change process in schools regarding the new digital tools and LMS (ISTE 3f, 4a, 4b,4c; PSC 3.6, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3). She researched various practices and developed the skills needs to implement strategies learned ITEC 7305 to create buy-in. By modeling and presenting various Web 2.0 Tools and teaching her colleagues how to effectively utilize all of the features of Schoology, she was able to model effective management of digital tools and resources within the context of student learning experiences, facilitate the use of adaptive and assistive technologies to support individual student learning needs ISTE 3b, 3d; PSC 3.2, 3.4).

She also acquired necessary skills to conduct needs assessments to determine school-wide, faculty, grade-level, and subject area strengths and weaknesses to inform the content and delivery of technology-based professional learning programs, to develop and implement technology-based professional learning that aligns to state and national professional learning standards, to integrate technology to support face-to-face and online components, modeled principles of adult learning, and promoted best practices in teaching, learning, and assessment through the technology need surveys she created and administered. She designed and implemented program evaluations to determine the overall effectiveness of professional learning on deepening teacher content knowledge, improving teacher pedagogical skills and/or increasing student learning. She incorporated the strategies and techniques she learned in ITEC 7460 on effectively coaching others and strategic planning and analysis from ITEC 7410 to identify areas of need.

Finally, Mrs. Bearden's disposition allowed her to regularly evaluate and reflect on her professional practice and dispositions to improve and strengthen her ability to effectively model and facilitate technology-enhanced learning experiences (ISTE 6a, 6b, 6c; PSC 6.1, 6.2, 6.3). Mrs. Bearden mainly used the disposition and feedback she was given in her ITEC classes at KSU to model a technology coach and provide meaningful constructive criticism.

If a technology coach wants to implement change directly involving teachers and professional learning, it is important to have knowledge of current technology trends in education and be able to offer specific and timely feedback. It is also

important to establish trust and buy-in amongst teachers to facilitate an effective

change process.

References

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Appendix A

Date Range	Description	Technologies
December 2015 - 10 hours	• Meet with Administration • Plan activities	**None – Preplanning Stage**
January 2016 -10 hours	• Meet with Department Tech Experts • Web 2.0 Wednesdays • Meet Admin	• **Schoology –** School licensed social media site, teachers can use this to not only communicate with students, teachers, etc. but also to post notes, videos, tests, projects, etc. • **Google Drive –** great place to store and share data
February 2016 -10 hours	• Meet with Department Tech Experts • Web 2.0 Wednesdays • Meet Admin	• **Weebly** – provides free websites for teachers or students for projects, unit notes, blog spaces, etc.
March 2016 -10 hours	• Meet with Department Tech Experts • Web 2.0 Wednesdays • Meet Admin	• **SMART Boards Interactive –** SMART software online that provides interactive lessons for students and works seamlessly with SMART boards
April 2016 -10 hours	• Meet with Department Tech Experts • Web 2.0 Wednesdays • Meet Admin	• **Jing** – Awesome recording tool to make presentations or take screenshots
May 2016 -10 hours	• Meet with Department Tech Experts • Web 2.0 Wednesdays • Meet Admin • Teacher Survey 1 (Appendix A)	• **Diigo** – great tool to use to organize your bookmarks. You can add notes to them organize them, etc.
August 2016 -10 hours	• Meet with Department Tech Experts • Web 2.0 Wednesdays • Meet Admin	• **Wikispaces** – great site that allows for instant collaboration and feedback. Each user can edit the site and add to if given permission
September 2016 -10 hours	• Meet with Department Tech Experts • Web 2.0 Wednesdays • Meet Admin	• **Wikispaces** – way to collaborate with other teachers or to have your student collaborate on an assignment
October 2016	• Meet with Department	• **TBB –** This month's theme will

-10 hours	Tech Experts • Web 2.0 Wednesdays • Meet Admin	be determined by teacher survey feedback
November 2016 -10 hours	• Meet with Department Tech Experts • Web 2.0 Wednesdays • Teacher Survey 2 (Appendix B) • Meet Admin	• **TBD –** This month will have a mini lesson based on survey data and will also be used to learn how teachers have implemented the previous Web 2.0 Tools

Appendix B

Link to first Schoology Workshop

http://schoologyinonehour.weebly.com/