Hillary M. Johnson

September 27th, 2015

Dr. Redish

June 2015

Student Engagement through Teacher Websites

**2. Setting/Context**

This capstone experience will be completed in a high school setting at Lassiter high school in the Cobb County School District. The project will examine the opinions of students, parents, and teachers in regards to the effectiveness of classroom websites. The stakeholders are the students, parents, and teachers of the school. The school consists of a student body population that is 76% Caucasian with roughly 12% of students receiving free or reduced lunch.

**3. Capstone Problem and Rationale**

Many teachers use classroom websites to connect with students and post important documents. At Lassiter High School, all teachers are required to have some sort of classroom website, but many teachers do not fully implement all the benefits of having a website. Many teachers fall back to the option of a TypePad blog. This is the default program all teachers are given access to when they start teaching at the school. Due to the ever-changing new technology available to teachers, some teachers now use a different tool such as Edmodo, Blackboard, Google Sites, or Schoology as a classroom website. The concern is which classroom website components are the most beneficial to students and enhance the overall learning experience for students. Students are expected to navigate multiple types of websites, sometimes a different website for each teacher, and as a result struggle to be successful in their courses through these websites.

According to Holcomb, Castek, & Johnson (2007), teachers who have classroom websites are preparing their students for life in the world outside of the classroom. The issue is how teachers use these websites. If used effectively, classroom websites were found to be essential to extending the learning of students outside of the classroom (Holcomb et al., 2007). Through classroom websites, teachers are also preparing students for technology success in future classes and the outside world.

Creating classroom websites can also benefit teachers as they continue to navigate the ever-changing technology world. As Shaltry, Henriksen, Wu, and Dickson (2013) state, “techspoloration” is a great way for teachers to learn as they use technology to explore technology. Also, new teachers have more of a technology background than teachers who have been in the profession for many years. As a result, there is a technology gap that exists that can impact student learning based on types and efficiencies of teacher websites. As Holcomb et al. (2007) found, many teachers create websites but few maintain them to continue to be beneficial to the students. My project will offer a solution to this problem by determining the best components of a classroom website and use this information to create tutorial videos for teachers to navigate the best classroom websites.

**4. Objectives/Deliverables**

Need:

* Effective classroom websites for students and parents
* Websites that are user-friendly and easy to manage for teachers

Objectives:

* Determine student and parent need for teacher websites
* Identify teacher use and evaluate competency of teacher websites
* Determine teacher need for websites
* Determine the best website(s) to incorporate findings from surveys

Deliverables:

* Data analysis of student and parent surveys of teacher websites
* Data analysis of teacher surveys of how teachers use their websites
* A literature review of teacher use and student benefits of classroom websites
* Data analysis presented in table and charts where appropriate to demonstrate trends and information of the data
* Research article submitted for publication
* Screencast tutorials for teachers to navigate the best websites as determined by the surveys and data analysis

**5. PSC Standards**

**PSC Standards**

**1. Visionary Leadership**

Candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to inspire and lead the development and implementation of a shared vision for the effective use of technology to promote excellence and support transformational change throughout the organization.

**1.1 Shared Vision**  
Candidates facilitate the development and implementation of a shared vision for the use of technology in teaching, learning, and leadership.   
(PSC 1.1/ISTE 1a)

**1.4 Diffusion of Innovations & Change**

Candidates research, recommend, and implement strategies for initiating and sustaining technology innovations and for managing the change process in schools. (PSC 1.4/ISTE 1d)

**2. Teaching, Learning, & Assessment**Candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively integrate technology into their own teaching practice and to collaboratively plan with and assist other educators in utilizing technology to improve teaching, learning, and assessment.

**2.1 Content Standards & Student Technology Standards**Candidates model and facilitate the design and implementation of technology-enhanced learning experiences aligned with student content standards and student technology standards. (PSC 2.1/ISTE 2a)

**2.2 Research-Based Learner-Centered Strategies**  
Candidates model and facilitate the use of research-based, learner-centered strategies addressing the diversity of all students. (PSC 2.2/ISTE 2b)

**2.3 Authentic Learning**  
Candidates model and facilitate the use of digital tools and resources to engage students in authentic learning experiences. (PSC 2.3/ISTE 2c)

**2.5 Differentiation**  
Candidates model and facilitate the design and implementation of technology-enhanced learning experiences making appropriate use of differentiation, including adjusting content, process, product, and learning environment based upon an analysis of learner characteristics, including readiness levels, interests, and personal goals. (PSC 2.5/ISTE 2e)

**2.6 Instructional Design**  
Candidates model and facilitate the effective use of research-based best practices in instructional design when designing and developing digital tools, resources, and technology-enhanced learning experiences.  
(PSC 2.6/ISTE 2f)

**3. Digital Learning Environments**  
Candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to create, support, and manage effective digital learning environments.

**3.1 Classroom Management & Collaborative Learning**

Candidates model and facilitate effective classroom management and collaborative learning strategies to maximize teacher and student use of digital tools and resources. (PSC 3.1/ISTE 3a)

**3.2 Managing Digital Tools and Resources**

Candidates effectively manage digital tools and resources within the context of student learning experiences.   
(PSC 3.2/ISTE 3b)

**3.3 Online & Blended Learning**

Candidates develop, model, and facilitate the use of online and blended learning, digital content, and learning networks to support and extend student learning and expand opportunities and choices for professional learning for teachers and administrators.  
(PSC 3.3/ISTE 3c)

**3.5 Basic Troubleshooting**

Candidates troubleshoot basic software and hardware problems common in digital learning environments. (PSC 3.5/ISTE 3e)

**3.6 Selecting and Evaluating Digital Tools & Resources**

Candidates collaborate with teachers and administrators to select and evaluate digital tools and resources for accuracy, suitability, and compatibility with the school technology infrastructure. (PSC 3.6/ISTE 3f)

**3.7 Communication & Collaboration**

Candidates utilize digital communication and collaboration tools to communicate locally and globally with students, parents, peers, and the larger community. (PSC 3.7/ISTE 3g)

**4.  Digital Citizenship & Responsibility**

Candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to model and promote digital citizenship and responsibility.

**4.1 Digital Equity**

Candidates model and promote strategies for achieving equitable access to digital tools and resources and technology-related best practices for all students and teachers. (PSC 4.1/ISTE 5a)

**5. Professional Learning & Program Evaluation**  
Candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to conduct needs assessments, develop technology-based professional learning programs, and design and implement regular and rigorous program evaluations to assess effectiveness and impact on student learning.

**5.1 Needs Assessment**

Candidates 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. (PSC 5.1/ISTE 4a)

**6. Candidate Professional Growth & Development**

Candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to engage in continuous learning, reflect on professional practice, and engage in appropriate field experiences.

**6.2 Reflection**

Candidates regularly evaluate and reflect on their professional practice and dispositions to improve and strengthen their ability to effectively model and facilitate technology-enhanced learning experiences.   
(PSC 6.2/ISTE 6c)

**ISTE Coaching Standards**

1. **Visionary Leadership.** Technology coaches inspire and participate in the development and implementation of a shared vision for the comprehensive integration of technology to promote excellence and support transformational change through the instructional environment. Technology coaches:
   1. Contribute to the development, communication, and implementation of a shared vision for the comprehensive use of technology to support a digital-age education for all students.
2. Implement strategies for initiating and sustaining technology innovations and manage the change process in schools and classrooms.
3. **Teaching, Learning, & Assessments.** Technology coaches assist teachers in using technology effectively for assessing student learning, differentiating instruction, and providing rigorous, relevant, and engaging learning experiences for all students. Technology coaches:
   1. Coach teachers in and model design and implementation of technology-enhanced learning experiences addressing content standards and student technology sources
   2. Coach teachers in and model design and implementation of technology-enhanced learning experiences using a variety of research-based, learner-centered instructional strategies and assessment tools to address the diverse needs and interests of all students.
4. Coach teachers in and model design and implementation of technology-enhanced learning experiences using differentiation, including adjusting content, process, product, and learning environment based upon student readiness levels, learning styles, interests, and personal goals.
5. Coach teachers in and model incorporation of research-based best practices in instructional design when planning technology-enhanced learning experiences.
6. Coach teachers in and model effective use of technology tools and resources to systematically collect and analyze student achievement data, interpret results, and communicate findings to improve instructional practice and maximize student learning.
7. **Digital-Age Learning Environments.** Technology coaches create and support effective digital-age learning environments to maximize the learning of all students. Technology coaches:
   1. Model effective classroom management and collaborative learning strategies to maximize teacher and student use of digital tools and resources and access to technology-rich learning environments.
   2. Maintain and manage a variety of digital tools and resources for teacher and student use in technology-rich learning environments.
   3. Coach teachers in and model use of online and blended learning, digital content, and collaborative learning networks to support and extend student learning as well as expand opportunities and choices for online professional development for teachers and administrators.
8. Collaborate with teachers and administrators to select and evaluate digital tools and resources that enhance teaching and learning and are compatible with the school technology infrastructure.
9. Use digital communication and collaboration tools to communicate locally and globally with students, parents, peers, and the larger community.
10. **Professional Development & Program Evaluation.** Technology coaches conduct needs, assessments, develop technology-related professional learning programs, and evaluate the impact of instructional practice and student learning. Technology coaches:
    1. Conduct needs assessments to inform the content and delivery of technology-related professional learning programs that result in positive impact on student learning.
11. **Digital Citizenship.** Technology coaches model and promote digital citizenship. Technology coaches:
    1. Model and promote strategies for achieving equitable access to digital tools and resources and technology-related best for all students and teachers.
12. **Content Knowledge and Professional Growth.** Technology coaches demonstrate professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions in content, pedagogical, and technological areas as well as adult learning and leadership are continuously deepening their knowledge and expertise. Technology coaches:
    1. Engage in continual learning to deepen content and pedagogical knowledge in technology integration and current and emerging technologies necessary to effectively implement the NETS-S and NETS-T.
    2. Engage in continuous learning to deepen professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions in organizational change and leadership, project management, and adult learning to improve professional practice.

**7. Project Description**

For this project, I will be examining the best classroom websites for high school students. Through surveys given to students and parents, I will gather data on the best attributes of teacher websites to determine what is most beneficial to students and their learning. Based on the survey results and feedback from students and parents, I will determine what the best classroom websites are based on need. Then, I will create screencast videos to help teachers navigate what are the best websites and some how-to’s for how to use these websites in a way that benefits students and parents the most. To do this project, I will need access to classroom websites, emails to teachers and parents linking to a SurveyMonkey survey, and a student survey created on SurveyMonkey. I will also need software to create a screencast video of how to use the classroom websites.

**Timeline for Project:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Month(s)** | **Task** |
| October – December | Create surveys and work on literature review *(send literature review to advisor for review in November)* |
| January | Send out surveys and gather data |
| February | Analyze survey results |
| March | “Best” website analyses |
| April – May | Work on research article *(send draft to advisor for rough draft review in April)* |
| June – July | Create screencasts |
| August – October | Finalize project *(send draft to advisor for review in September)* |

**8. Evaluation Plan**

For evaluation of this project, data will be gathered from students, parents, and teachers via surveys and this data will be evaluated to determine the best classroom websites. Surveys will include questions for students about what websites their teachers use and have the students rate things such as: ease of navigation, availability of resources, and phone apps that accompany the website. Parents of the students will be asked similar questions to those above. Both students and parents will also be asked what they would like in an ideal classroom website.

Teachers will also be surveyed but with different questions such as: ease of access, what they like best about the current website platform, what changes they wish they could make about the current website platform, what features they commonly use on the current platform, and what features are not used or not beneficial. The literature review will allow outside information to be evaluated to determine the best method for teacher use of classroom websites. The final project will be evaluated by my advisor and others within Kennesaw State University. In addition, the research article will be submitted for publication which will be evaluated by those outside of Kennesaw State University.

**9. Part A References**

Holcomb., L.B., Castek, J.M., & P.R. Johnson. (2007). Unlocking the potential of K-12 websites to enhance learning. *The NERA Journal, 43*(1), 36-43.

Shaltry, C., Henriksen, D., Wu, M.L., and W.P. Dickson. (2013). Teaching pre-service teachers to integrate technology: Situated learning with online portfolios, classroom websites, and Facebook. *TechTrends, 57*(3), 20-25.