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**Increasing Access to Educational Technology Outside of the Classroom**

**Setting/Context:**

The environment that will be used for my capstone will be anywhere that internet and technology are available. Several examples of different locations could be: at home on a laptop, desktop, or portable device such as an I-Pad or Kindle. The setting could also be in a car where a student could be using a parent's smartphone. The setting really could be numerous places as the students have to be somewhere that allows them to access the internet and my blog during after school hours. The stakeholders in my capstone project will be my students who are in first grade at Timber Ridge Elementary in Cobb County, Georgia.

By increasing the amount of time that the first grade students at Timber Ridge are granted access to my teacher blog, I feel confident that I will see an increase in achievement if in fact the children are going to the blogs and participating in the educational activities that are provided for them. Determining increased achievement may be hard to measure but with the data from the parents and students, I will correlate as much as I can. We can measure the amount of times parents /students access our blogs on a daily basis. So, keeping data on the numbers of parents/students that access the blogs all year long will be an easy task. The goal will be to see an increase in number of visits to my first grade teacher blog on a quarterly basis.

**Capstone Problem and Rationale:**

In Education, technology is now viewed as a necessary component. According to Burdette, McGraw, and Ross (2001), "Information technologies have changed the way we learn, work, and

live, transforming the way teachers teach and students learn. This is a very exciting time to be a student with so many pieces of technology available to them at school and at home.

I teach at Timber Ridge Elementary and I have spent many hours researching appropriate sites to match our Common Core Curriculum. These sites are interactive, engaging, they offer differentiation, and also assess skills. They are added to our blogs to support our curriculum. The problem is that the students are not visiting my blog once they leave school. I feel very confident that if the students were given opportunities to visit my blog on a regular basis at home, that it would become a routine. This opportunity would also give the students support in our curriculum, it would engage them in the many interactive websites that are posted there. It has been seen in study after study that educational technology does increase student achievement.

I have access to the data that reports the number of times parents/students visited my blog for the 2012-2013 school year. My goal is to increase this number from the previous year and possibly even double that number in certain instances.

\ Research states that it is hard to know exactly what elementary students are doing when they are on the computer. In a survey that included almost 300 parents of a K-6 school, the results indicate that most of students' computer use was dedicated to game playing. I would like to encourage the parents of my first graders at Timber Ridge to participate in this study that would allow their children to go to safe sites that I have posted on my blog. Allowing the children to get time on these sites will increase educational time on the computers which can only result in increased achievement in the classroom.

**Objectives/Deliverables:**

I plan to survey the parents and students to get a base as to how often they currently visit my blog themselves along with how often they allow their children to visit my blog. Once I have received that data, I will set up activities on my blog that will encourage them to visit my blog more often. The activities will encompass our whole curriculum; math, language arts, science, social studies, and health. I have taken some age appropriate Web 2.0 tools that I was introduced to in a previous class to use as some of my activities that will attract my parents and students to visit my blog after school hours. Once the parents visit my blog for these curriculum related activities; the goal is that they will allow their child to continue to stay at my blog to participate in some of the many activities for practice, for review, or just to explore. Below is a list of the items I plan to use to attract the parents and students to my blog during after school hours.

**For the parents:**

- I will create a Jing with directions to get to my blog from the Cobb County website.
- I plan to offer a Technology Evening for parents during Book Fair Week, when we will already have parents in the building for the evening activities. This will allow me to highlight some of the interactive sights we use in the classroom; so they can see how beneficial it will be to allow their first grader to use the computer/I-Pad, smartphone, or Kindle for additional computer time at home.
- I will post videos, narrated photo stories by the students, and pictures of their children that will entice them to see their sweet darlings in action in the classrooms.
- I will post an interactive voicethread that they can respond to.
- The spelling lists for our spelling tests, the class calendar, our lunch menu, and our specials schedule are also posted on my blog.

**For the students:**

- I will create a Jing with directions to get to my blog from the Cobb County website.
- I will create a scavenger hunt for the students to participate in to get them familiar with my blog.
- I will provide a “Question of the Week”, that can only be answered by going to my blog. The children will have to bring in the answer, with parents signature, and be able to enter to win a prize at the end of the week. Three names will be pulled from the entries on Friday. Winners will get a small token like a fancy pencil or a note tablet.
- I will assign homework that must be completed by going to my blog and using one of the interactive sites. Parent’s signature will be required to show that they have completed this assignment.
- I will create a voki that will attract my students to visit my blog for entertainment purposes.
- I will create a wordle and require them to create their own wordle activity using spelling words.
- I will create a tagxedo and require the students to create their own tagxedo using long vowel words.

**PSC Standards:**

**1.1 Shared Vision-** Candidates facilitate the development and implementation of a shared vision for the use of technology in teaching, learning, and leadership.

**1.2 Strategic Planning-** Candidates facilitate the design, development, implementation, communication, and evaluation of technology-infused strategic plans.

**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.

**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.

**2.3-Authentic Learning-** Candidates model and facilitate the use of digital tools and resources to engage students in authentic learning experiences.

**2.4 Higher Order Thinking Skills** - Candidates model and facilitate the effective use of digital tools and resources to support and enhance higher order thinking skills (e.g., analyze, evaluate, and create); processes (e.g., problem-solving, decision-making); and mental habits of mind (e.g., critical thinking, creative thinking, metacognition, self-regulation, and reflection).

**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.

**3.2 Managing Digital Tools and Resources** -Candidates effectively manage digital tools and resources within the context of student learning experiences.

**3.5 Basic Troubleshooting-** Candidates troubleshoot basic software and hardware problems common in digital learning environments.

**3.7 Communication & Collaboration-**Candidates utilize digital communication and collaboration tools to communicate locally and globally with students, parents, peers, and the larger community.

**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.

**4.2 Safe, Healthy, Legal & Ethical Use** - Candidates model and facilitate the safe, healthy, legal, and ethical uses of digital information and technologies.

**6.1 Continuous Learning** -Candidates demonstrate continual growth in knowledge and skills of current and emerging technologies and apply them to improve personal productivity and professional practice.

**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.

**Project Description:**

- a. I will encourage my parents to allow my students to go to my blog on a regular basis. It is a safe site that allows for them to engage in many educational websites that supports our first grade curriculum. Many of the interactive games and engaging sites provide additional support which in the end can help increase achievement in the classroom. The sites also allow for increasing creativity and skill development. I will upload many different projects by the children using technology to entice the parents to go to my blog so that they can see the technology activities that the students have created along with allowing their children to use the blog to enhance academic opportunities.
- b. Activities that will be posted on Mrs. Butler's Blog to encourage parents to visit it and to allow children to use my blog.

Month	Blog Activities
September	Record number of visits to blog

September	Survey the students using I-Respond
October	Survey parents
September	Create Jing for parents and students
September	Post photo story of students using technology
October	"Question of the Week" activity
October	Hold Technology Night for parents
October	Post video with student explaining addition strategies
October	Wordle assignment using spelling words
October	Post pictures of students using I-Pads
October 11th	Record number of visits to blog for first quarter
November	Post a new Photo Story of students using Blog in classroom
November	Homework assignment to be completed using Blog
November	Post photo story using leave creations
December	Post photo story/video about Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and Sacagawea
December	Post a scavenger hunt on my blog
December	Survey parents and students
December	Tagxedo assignment using long vowel words
December 20th	Record number of visits to blog for second quarter
January	Create a voicethread for parents/students to respond to
January	Post work samples on Mrs. Butler's Blog



January	Posts pictures of students working with I-Pads
January	Homework assignment to be completed using Blog
February	"Question of the Week" activity
February	Post a student video
February	Create a voki for my blog
March	Post pictures of students at work using technology.
March	Create a voicethread for parents/students to respond to.
March 12	Record number of visits to blog for third quarter
March	Final survey for parents and students
April	Graph all collected data

	<b>2012-2013 Blog Visits</b>	<b>2013 - 2014 Blog Visits</b>
<b>1st Quarter</b>	August 13-October12, 2012 <b>2229 visits</b>	August 7- October 11, 2013
<b>2nd Quarter</b>	October 13 - December 20, 2012 <b>2043 visits</b>	October 12 - December 20, 2013
<b>3rd Quarter</b>	December 21, 2012 - March 15, 2013 <b>2472 visits</b>	December 21, 2013 - March 12, 2014
<b>4th Quarter</b>	March 16 - May 23, 2013 <b>1834 visits</b>	March 15 - May 21, 2014

The resources that I will need to complete my capstone will be very minor. I will need my computer and the internet. I will need different pieces of my student’s work, to post on my blog. I will need to access the number of visits to my blog each quarter. My administrators will help me with getting those numbers since I do not have access to the administrative rights of our school blogs. I will need to use a survey tool to create an online survey. When I host the Technology Night for my parents, I will provide some cookies and punch along with some printouts that can verify that educational computer use can lead to increased achievement. I will need the I-Pad cart, the I-Respond cart, and the laptop cart which I will sign out from our computer lab.

**Evaluation Plan**

My goal is to increase the number of after school visits to my blog. I will show that I’ve met my objectives of providing reasons for my parents to visit my blog more often. I will provide the link to my blog which will show the posts that I’ve made throughout the year. These posts will include the activities that are listed on this proposal. I will also provide an updated table which will include the number of visitors for the current school year in addition to the previous school year. This table will also show the growth that I’m expected to see. I will also provide the results from the three surveys that I take to show responses from parents in addition to any comments that they add. Through those surveys and the data from the number of visitors to my blog, I will be able to determine if I have seen an increase in student use during after school hours.

	<b>Evaluation Schedule</b>
30-May	Compare the data from the two surveys - note differences/increases in numbers
1-Jun	Compile number of visits for the year into the table - note if increase from last year
10-Jun	Complete Capstone Report

Sample of Survey Questions:

For Parents:

**Do you visit Mrs. Butler’s Blog on a regular basis?** (Yes or No)

**How long has it been since you have been on Mrs. Butler’s Blog?** (2 weeks, 1 week, 4-5 days, 1-3 days)

**What kind of information do you go to Mrs. Butler’s Blog for?** (see recent posts, check schedules, allow your child to go to educational activities, look at pictures of classroom activities, all of the above)

**From what type of technology source do you or your child access my blog?**

(Computer, smartphone, tablet, all of the above)

**Is there anything that you would like Mrs. Butler to add to her blog?** – (yes, no, leave space for comments)

**How do you feel about first graders completing homework or doing activities on a teacher's blog?** (I feel comfortable; I think they are too young, I'm indifferent at this time)

**Does your child ask you to allow them to go to Mrs. Butler's Blog?** (Hardly ever, sometimes, often)

**Does your 1<sup>st</sup> grade child share a computer device with an older sibling who needs to complete homework on the internet?** (Yes, no, sometimes)

**How would you like to see teacher blogs used?** (Communication, educational activities for children, photos of your children, all of the above, none of the above)

### **References**

Burdette, K., McGraw, T. & Ross, J. (2001). Toward an effective use of technology in education. A summary of research. (p.7) Charleston, WV: AEL

	<b>2012-2013 # of Blog Visits</b>	<b>2013 - 2014 # of Blog Visits</b>
<b>1st Quarter</b>	August 13-October 12, 2012 2229 visits	August 7- October 11, 2013
<b>2nd Quarter</b>	October 13 - December 20, 2012 2043 visits	October 12 - December 20, 2013
<b>3rd Quarter</b>	December 21, 2012 - March 15, 2013 2472 visits	December 21, 2013 - March 12, 2014
<b>4th Quarter</b>	March 16 - May 23, 2013 1834 visits	March 15 - May 21, 2014

