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Digital Learning Environment Inventory.

1. *What tools, software, operating systems, and equipment are available in your school and classroom? (including but not limited to: videoconferencing, streaming, photos sharing sites, video sharing sites, document sharing sites, podcasts, blogs, wikis, social networking sites, etc.)*

Our students have access to MacBook Air laptops for every student. Those laptops allow them to videoconference, access podcasts, blogs and wikis within pre-approved websites. They can share all documents, videos, etc through their Google Docs accounts. In every classroom, there is a projector and Apple TV for using technology and we have Blackboard and Google Classroom for students to share work and access content. All staff have MacBook Air computers with the standard apps (Pages, Keynote, iTunes, iBook, etc). Additional software is provided as needed to staff for specific curricular requirements, but most middle school students utilize the standard suite of applications. PowerSchool is the district's grading program and all students, parents and teachers have twenty-four hour access to grades and student progress. We have recently switched to Google Mail from first class and all students have an email account, however, theirs remain internal and cannot be used to reach people outside of the school district. Teacher accounts are universal and can be used to contact anyone, in addition, teacher computers are only banned from accessing sites labeled as "adult" during school hours. Teacher computers are completely unlocked outside of school, while student computers are still somewhat locked outside of the school building.

2. *How does your school make use of school and/or teacher websites?*

The school website functions mostly as a giant bulletin board. We have been unsuccessful in making it a portal for community access or student content. Some teachers have websites but it is entirely the responsibility of the teacher to find training and time for the upkeep of their website. Teacher sites are not currently linked to the school's website and have many formats, which make it difficult for parents to know where to find information.

3. *How are you currently utilizing technology for learning?*

This year has been a challenge for utilizing technology for learning. This is the first year my students have all had laptops so I am just beginning to shift my focus away from paper and pencil tasks that I used to use. Currently, I am using Google Classroom to assign work, collect work and return work with comments to students in a timely manner. My co-teacher and I are also working to put some of our lessons online. For example, today, the entire lesson was online with students watching a video at youthforhumanrights.org and then responding to questions following the video. Students could watch the video as many times as needed, pause to answer questions or think and be able to review their answers with others before submitting them to me. Our big challenge is that the network often won't support lots of students being online at the same time so lessons that should take only moments take longer or cannot be completed at all. I am only beginning to utilize technology to take learning beyond merely replacing paper and pencil with technology to truly transform the learning into the digital realm.

4. *From the list of global e-learning sites included below, which are available and which sites are blocked by your firewall? The only sites that you're required to explore are listed here, but feel free to look at/comment on others on the list that I have attached. Please reserve time to explore these sites and process what they have to offer.*

1. Skype www.skype.com Available upon request (the technology staff will unlock it at teacher request for certain student computers) It offers wonderful communication opportunities, but we would need others to skype with, which rarely, if ever happens.
2. iEARN www.iearn.org Available. It offers wonderful ways for students to interact beyond just a lesson plan to open student's eyes to new ideas. The projects are very intriguing.
3. ConnectAllSchools <http://www.connectallschools.org> Available. It might be a way to begin to connect with others. Only two schools in our metro area utilize this website, which I find completely amazing.
4. Peace Corps Speakers Match <http://www.peacecorps.gov/www/speakersmatch/> Available. My co-teacher is a Peace Corps alumni and she has been good about helping us locate resources through the Corps.
5. ePals <http://www.epals.com> Available. I found this website really interesting as it didn't just match schools but allowed teachers to share what they are interested in learning to help match goals.
6. Global Nomads Group www.gng.org Available. I might share this resource with the Social Studies and Science teachers as a way of easily beginning an international project.
7. Omprakash <http://www.omprakash.org/about> Available. This site could provide more opportunities for our staff to expand their own horizons. It is definitely a site I will revisit.
8. Primary Source www.primarysource.org Available. The professional development looks interesting. I need to explore more to find out what is available at a distance.
9. Edutopia <http://www.edutopia.org> Available. This site is often referenced in our professional development. Many staff report using it often.
10. Outreach World <http://www.outreachworld.org> I was unable to access this website.
11. The UN Works <http://www.un.org/works/> Available. We already use this site with our human rights lessons.
12. Global Education Conference <http://www.globaleducationconference.com> Available. I think this site might be better once we are further into working on global competency. I wouldn't even know where to start with them.
13. Online Newspapers <http://www.onlinenewspapers.com>. Available, but not all the connecting websites are available and almost all of the ads get blocked by our site software. I think, when asking kids to resource, it is an excellent way to get real text in the hands of kids.

5. *What sites and tools are colleagues in your building using?*

I asked my colleagues and this is the list they generated: Google docs and Google Classroom, Blackboard, American History videos on demand on a wiki, You Tube, online text, iCivics, PBS, History Channel, iTunes, iMovie, virtual museum, scholastic, Ellis Island site, Civil War websites, Tenement Museum, freetech4teachers.com, Kahoot, Citation Machine, Edutopia, GarageBand, metronome.com, onlinetuner.com, musicracer.com, therhythmtrainer.com, musictheory.net, sonicfit, socrative, brainscoop, ToonDoo, Storybird, IBooks, flocabulary, News-2-You, Reading A-to-Z, online textbooks, DuoLingo, Quizlet, NebraskaCareerConnection.org, choosemyplate.org, Twitter, Tweetdeck, Skitch, Evernote, EduCannon, EduClipper, Diigo, Remind.com, skyandtelescope.com, ixquick.com, commonsensemedia.org, refseek.com, scholar.google.com, NEA's The Big Read, youthforhumanrights.org, reading.org, weebly.com, padlet, Glogster, TalktoText, Quicktime, ShowMe, Wondershare, Mileposts, math-aids.com, interventioncentral.org, ALEKS Math, Aimsweb, Review 360.

6. *Is there a system for evaluating student technology literacy in your school? If so, how effective or helpful have you found the assessment?*

I asked our building technology coordinator and she didn't know. I asked the district technology coordinator and he didn't know, so I am guessing, no, there is no system for evaluating technology literacy in students. I would say that most of the technology is being used on the teacher end and we are just starting to move into how to get students to use it. Until this year, at least for seventh graders, technology was scarce (one set of 30 laptops per 150 students) so they had minimal access.

7. *Gather suggestions from students on their ideas for integrating technology into their learning.* Students have universally said that they would like more of their learning online where they can go at their own speed, more use of visuals and manipulatives online and they would much rather type their work than handwrite things. My students also like being able to find copies of their work online and turn it in that way as well. They say they feel more organized and less likely to lose things.
 8. *What tools that are not presently available, would help to achieve district objectives?* I think more digital production equipment, where kids could video themselves and have an area of the building for working on such productions in a quiet environment that is stocked with things they could use as props. We also, due to technology agreements, are somewhat limited as to what we can install on student computers.
2. **Using your Digital Learning Environment Inventory, develop a solution or suggest an improvement customized to your circumstance and curriculum.** Create, implement and evaluate *one change* in a globalized lesson plan to use technology for learning in a meaningful way. (**PLEASE NOTE!** If you are unable to use technology in your classroom this week, you may do it next week and submit this assignment next week.) **To document and reflect on this change, please submit two paragraphs (include these in the same word document as the Digital Learning Environment Inventory):**

In order to make student learning more individualized and allow students to go at their own pace, I decided to place an entire day's lesson into Google Classroom. Students were given a set of instructions to follow, links to videos to watch and a list of questions to digitally answer and submit to the teacher. Usually we had watched the video together and then had a classroom discussion and the discussion was often anemic. With each child having a laptop, they were all able to work on the class lesson at their own pace and with extra resources (like a dictionary and extra information) in one place. They were also able to spell check their work before turning it in and deciphering handwriting would no longer affect their grade if I couldn't read what they had written.

The biggest surprise to me was how many times the students watched the video. Normally they would watch it once and try to get all the information in one sitting. Most students watched the video more than once, if not in its entirety, at least significant portions of it to clarify their understanding and be able to answer the questions. I was impressed that students had the opportunity to watch as many times as they needed for comprehension, to pause for processing or to answer the question before moving on. For students who struggle with understanding, it allowed them to go at their own pace. I did allow them to work in partners if they chose and was impressed to see how well they chose whether to work in a partnership or alone, based on their own learning style and needs. Something about having the headphones on seemed to focus them as well, as I had very little off-task behavior. Given that they submitted electronic answers, I had a paper for everyone (no nameless papers) and those students who need to redo the answers, I have a digital trail to follow to see if they have made the suggested improvements to their work.

