Ed. Tech Guidelines

Dave Kootman– April 2008

- Use technology that is free or open source so students can use/explore it at home if possible
  - Our objective is to have students enjoy the educational projects we use in school so much that they continue using them outside of school. Students will even create educational projects on their own if the tools are free.
  - Promote independent work at home/library on student's own time. Motivate not by grades or extrinsic rewards, but by publishing or the giving students the ability to help others in class!
- Plan digital projects out on paper or similar format before producing them.
  - Digital projects follow a similar process to the writing process.
  - Students will take forever on the computer if they have no plan to follow.
  - This lets more students use the computers since students are ready to get up and running when they sit down .
- Have a classroom/ personal website that is more than just links. Use it as a portal to classroom content and resources. Update it frequently. Keep usage stats on it.
  - Think:What is the incentive to visit your site?
  - Students/parents will use it every day, at school and home if there is value for them.
  - Statistics tell you where people are visiting from, which pages they visit most and what changes/updates you make generate you the most traffic.
- Model, but give students the opportunity to explore.
  - Use your LCD projector if you have one. Demonstrate what/how to do things. As incentive to pay attention, let attentive students come up and see if they can remember how to do things.
- Don't start too many projects or show too many new sites at once.
  - Students burn out when given too much at once. Our brains crave new things.
  - Spread out the tech tools so as students are getting bored of certain types of projects you are introducing new ones or modifying the older ones.
- Share/publish student projects. Allow comments, but model proper commenting and moderate them.
  - Students love to see their own work and that of their peers
  - Commenting creates motivation and gives authentic feedback. It creates dialog and buy in.
  - Teach students how to comment. *Value added comments* not just "It was good. I like it."
- Don't use technology just to "use technology." Find a way to truly do something new and better with technology.
  - Programs that start with a "blank slate"- Inspiration, video production software, Photostory, ToonDoo, Paint, PowerPoint, word processors...
  - Drill and kill has its merits, but should be limited in order to increase higher level thinking and project based learning.
- Watch out for the "bells and whistles" in many programs.
  - They may seem fun, but students can spend forever messing around with them.
  - Such as fonts, special effects, transitions, advanced features that students may not understand
- Follow safe/legal computing guidelines
  - Keep students anonymous and/or use waivers.

- Teach copyright law- cite your sources, don't steal images, music...
- Teach responsibility by giving it away, not by taking it away. Teach them how to handle inevitable situations
- Google is not a source, it's a *re*source (and a very valuable one)

- It's OK to teach non-academic tech.
  - Students will assimilate it and use in their daily lives. Many kids improve their typing speed much quicker using Instant Messaging than typing programs.
  - Transfers to educational uses and fosters advanced learning.
- Join ed tech groups (Google Educators, Discovery Educator Network, ISTE, CUE, list serves, Twitter, Meebo Rooms)
- Collaborate, Collaborate, Collaborate – Share (School/district intranet, email groups, Google Docs, groups mentioned above), “We” is greater than “Me.”