Individual Teacher Technology Assessment of Christie Atkins

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Fall 2013

Kennesaw State University , ITEC 7460

Individual Teacher Technology Assessment

        Christie Atkins, an upper school math teacher of Algebra 1, Algebra 2 and Geometry,

agreed to participate in instructional coaching to personally help her own technology skills as

well as to increase student engagement, therefore improving student achievement. Christi teaches

almost every freshman and sophomore at the school and a few juniors and seniors that may have

enrolled late. Christie decided to do a project with her Geometry class to begin with and once

she feels comfortable with this group she wants to add a project in every class. After many

coaching sessions she decided to do a Geometry shapes project that would include her Geometry

class making a movie with Geometry shapes that they could share with classes at Darlington

School's Early Learning Academy. She hoped by giving the students the "real job" of teaching

the younger students, she would increase student engagement. If successful with this project,

Christie will adopt more technology projects across the board. Many technology-coaching

sessions have been scheduled to ensure successful implementation and adoption.

Adoption and LoTi Level

        Christie was first surveyed for her adopter category as described by Roger's Change

Theory (Rogers 1995). Christie would be categorized as a late adopter for a few reasons.

Christie has a child with special needs and finds it very hard to give quality time to learn new

ideas for the classroom. This also limits her time to be social so she is somewhat isolated from

her peers, therefore she doesn't have as much time as others to see what new ideas and

innovations are being used in their classrooms. Christie uses a smartphone for personal use but

only for making phone calls, she doesn't understand much about it's other features. Christie has

just begun using the online assignment's page because of the schools requirement to put all

student assignments online. She has adapted well and wants to add more technology to her daily use.

Christie was then evaluated for her current used of technology in her classroom. In the beginning Christie was excited to have coaching sessions but developed a bit of nervousness in fear that the questions and surveys would have a negative effect on her job. Once a good partnership was developed between the coach and teacher she felt more comfortable that she was on the right track to creating a better learning environment for her students. Spending time with the technology coach helped her to see that everyone has to start somewhere. After the evaluation Christie was acknowledged at LoTi level 1, awareness. She uses her Smartboard but not to the fullest potential. All of her students use eBooks instead of hardcover books but that's only because the school is shifting toward using all eBooks and she had no choice. She still uses paper handouts and tests even though every student has a laptop and Quia online quizzes are provided for her. Christie does not have the students use their laptops for any kind of projects or hands on learning for her classes but is optimistic to do that in the future. (LoTi Framework 1994)

Christie's Perspective

Christie is aware that every student at Darlington School is provided with a laptop so she knows it's important for teachers to use that technology to engage students and increase student achievement. Being a master teacher for many years she has great methods for helping her students to learn the materials and knows that it's not always easy to integrate technology into a math classroom. During the interview Christie stated that she believes that technology helps with engagement and creates a classroom that's rich with teaching and learning. She also

believes that before integrating technology into a math classroom it's important to weigh the

costs and benefits of using it before the decision is made to use it. Christie made the comment,

"I want to be trusted by my administrators to decide when technology is best for a given unit and

when another approach is the best for their learning. I don't like using any method just for the

sake of using it," which really proves that she understands that the use of technology is important

but wants to make sure that it's the best method for her students to learn the material. Christie

believes that on-going technology coaching will help her to gain the knowledge she needs to

integrate technology into the classroom more frequently and effectively. She stated that she is

excited to continue the coaching on a weekly basis to gain new ideas for technology integration.

Training Needs and Approaches

Christie 's technology skill needs are not to the extreme but there are many skills she

needs to acquire and master in order to use them successfully in the classroom. After the initial

interview and one coaching class it was determined that Christie needed more Smartboard

training, picture and movie editing skills for her Geometry project that she was implementing,

online submissions through the Darlington School website and Quia. The planned schedule was

to meet forty-five minutes every week during Christie's planning period, keeping in mind her

current workload and not putting to much pressure on her. It was also important to keep in mind

that Christie has a child with special needs at home. With this in mind it was significant to

appreciate if she was able to give up that free period, so she would not have to take too much

work home that evening.

During these weekly meetings, a small instruction would be given on a new skill or

reinforcement of a previous method during the last coaching session would occur. Christie

would be given a series of things to do on her own during the next week, possibly during class if she felt comfortable. She would then make notes on her log sheet that was given to her to mark her accomplishments. Also on the log sheet she would note any questions to ask during the next coaching session.

Conclusion

Upon evaluating Christie's technology use, skills and levels it was determined that while she may be at a lower level and a slow adopter, she is very enthusiastic about using technology. She seemed very willing to learn new technology and ideas to use every day in the classroom as well as in her personal life. While doing this evaluation it was interesting to learn that not everyone is slow to adapt technology because of skepticism. In this case, it was concluded that the user was slow to adapt because of a special needs child and very limited personal time to invest. With this taken into consideration, planning small amounts of time during the teacher's free period will result in more technology use in the classroom.

References

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