**My Educational Technology Teaching Philosophy!**

As teachers of at-risk students, we know that teaching students how to behave in school, is just as important as teaching students academics. Additionally, when it comes to teaching technology, online literacy, and online behavior should be equally important.

But what is educational technology? My definition of educational technology is any device, tool, or service that aids ALL students to respond to instruction. Technology is classically considered to be an expensive and noticeable accessory device, such as an iPad. However, there are many educational technologies that are free (online dictionary), small (ear buds), inexpensive (pencil grip), and/or very easy to use (Google, Youtube, and the iPhone calculator app).

When talking about technology, it is also important to define literacy, and what being “literate’ truly means in 2013. Being literate or being a “good reader” has traditionally focused on five research-based reading components: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary knowledge, fluency, and comprehension. Now as we fast forward to the 21st century, these five components are just the base of what students now need to know to be a “good Ereader”, or to be “technologically literate”. New online literacy, as well as online behavior, components, have now been added to a “good reader’s” list of what it means to be a literate adult. Examples of this new literacy (not a exhaustive list) would be: knowing how to read informational text online with hyperlinks, knowing how to search for information, knowing when to stop reading a text in order to search for extra/clarifying information, knowing what to share and not to share online, and knowing the difference between credible information, and incredibly fake information.

Also what’s important in talking about literacy, online behavior, or technology is the importance in teaching these concepts to students with disabilities explicitly. Students with disabilities struggle with mastery and will need more time, and more practice to become fluent in technological literacy. Although once mastery is achieved, this new technological literacy can serve a leveling ground for some students with disabilities. Through the use of educational technology, writing blog posts, responding to a video tutorial, or giving a presentation can show a student with disabilities’ strengths, and make the proof of learning a concept universally accessible/achieved.

As I mentioned briefly above, there are some technological literacy goals that I hope to teach my students. I think all of these goals are essential for my students to be able to “keep up” with the viral, and constantly updating adult society. My goals also have a lot to do with online basics, behaviors, and how to help students map out their online persona in a positive way. I hope to teach my students how to:

**Online Literacy Basics**

1. Know how to read informational text online with hyperlinks, when to click on the hyperlinks, and how to open those links into different tabs to not lose the original window/text.
2. Knowing how to search for research information, what a credible site looks like, and examples/non examples of a credible site.
3. Knowing when to stop reading a text because the information is too hard, in order to search for clarifying information to be able to read the original text for meaning.
4. Knowing the order to read a webpage that is flooded with tabs, links, embedded videos, headings, and picture captions.

**Online Behaviors:**

1. Knowing how to share as little information about themselves as possible (not home address, age), and that everything they post online is never really deleted, and in many cases can be seen through the use of search engines.
2. Knowing how to ‘code switch’ their online language from talking slang to friends on social media, versus typing Standard English to a teacher through an e-mail/discussion post.
3. Talking about online bullying, and how to express one’s thoughts, feelings, and attitudes online in a way that is not offensive to others.
4. Knowing how to share information through out the different social medias.
5. Understanding what is public with social media and to give tips on creating social media files that are professional, and could one day used for job searching, or career mapping.

When I think about how I am going to help my student’s achieve these goals. I have to think back about how I learned about all of these things…from college courses! I had technology class called CEP 416 where every week where we:

1. Explored a new technology (for example blogging), then we were shown good examples of someone who used the technology (someone blogging with links, succinctness, and embedded videos), and bad examples of the technology (blogs that are too long, with broken links, educational blogs have student names in them, and blogs that cited things incorrectly).
2. Next, with the teacher modeling, we would begin an assignment, in-class, using the new technology, off a site of the teacher’s choice (create your own blog on blogger).
3. Lastly, we had a small extension assignment out of class, or had to finish the technology assignment on our own, or we could stay after and get help from our professor.

This learning process was really *I do, we do, you do* technological literacy education. I would do this same process with my students in computer lab, where I would spend the first half of the year teaching them my online literacy basics’ goals, and then spend the second half of the year teaching students the new technologies, and the types of online behaviors that are appropriate/not appropriate, given the technology they are exploring.

I end this philosophy with a kind if disclaimer statement in which I want to be clear that depending on what grade I will be teaching next year, I will have to tailor my goals and technology programs I chose, to the age appropriateness of my classroom. I also want to end my statement in saying that I think my school district, and really all school districts need to support and nurture technology literacy, and correct online behavior early on in a student’s academic career.

In a perfect world, there would be a technology literacy teacher, who’s full-time job would be to have students building their technological literacy, by first teaching them the basics, and then teaching students how to not just use, but also master the most used technologies in jobs/life today.

Now it seems that students are pencil and papering it through K-12 and then get hit with online classes, and are flustered with figuring out D2L, Angel, Blackboard, along with how college works. I hope that, one day, with a good technology teacher, students will have enough background knowledge to be able to “use what they already” know about technology from K-12, and apply it towards the new technologies that are in the job and college sectors today.