

DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT INVENTORY

Holland Public Schools

Available Equipment and Software:

1. Devices:
 - a) Ipad – one to one environment
 - b) Teacher chooses personal device provided by district: Mac laptop or Ipad
 - c) Google Chromebooks: for students participating in New Tech programs only
 - d) Windows desktop computer at teacher workstation in every classroom
2. Videoconferencing equipment: large equipment for rental at Ottawa Area ISD. Skype is installed on each student's Ipad, teacher device, and teacher workstation.
3. App availability:
 - a) Students in grades 10-12 have unrestricted access to downloading free apps.
 - b) Students in grades 8-9 are unable to download apps on their own.
 - c) Teachers may purchase and download apps for personal use. Each department is given money each year (amount changes depending on the year) to install apps on students' devices.
4. Required use of software:
 - a) Edmodo. All high school teachers must use Edmodo in their classrooms. All students must use edmodo for communication with counselors, scheduling appointments, etc.
 - b) Google: all teachers use google mail with a hollandpublicschools.org address. Google docs is utilized as a document sharing tool within the school, and between teachers and students. Google docs may be used as a classroom sharing tool.
5. District to teacher recommendations:
 - a) All teachers create a Twitter account as a tool for collaboration with other teachers, gaining new ideas, professional development through twitter chats, etc
 - b) Google sites: All teachers create a google site website to for parent and student communication
6. Other available technology:
 - a) screencasting
 - b) Mac desktops available for small collaboration on big projects
 - c) publishing material to be displayed on televisions throughout the school

Interesting Use of District/School Website (www.hollandpublicschools.org):

1. Technology Instruction Information:
 - a) Managing technology at home: A resource guide for parents (in Spanish & English)- information is provided to parents about social networking sites, the problems of cyber bullying, tips for monitoring technology use, etc.
 - b) A list of free wifi hotspots in our city

2. Build 21 Progress: A page filled with videos and photos of the progress around the district toward building a 21st century learning environment
3. Staff Pages: links to teachers' webpages/google sites

My Use of Technology as a Tool for Global Learning:

1. Investigating the World

In many ways, a personal device (Ipad) in the hands of each of my students has revolutionized the way in which students find information. As we learn about culture and discuss global topics, when questions come up, I no longer have to be the one answering them. I turn the question back to the students, and they search for the answers to share with each other using their Ipad. It has also become a way to see the world in real time, rather than relying on textbook pictures, fake drawings, and two dimensional figures. Tools I use weekly for investigating the world:

- a) Google Images
- b) Google Earth (including street view)
- c) Google Search

2. Gaining Perspectives

We of course expand our perspectives when we discuss culture and investigate the world, but I would like to create a routine task specifically for expanding our perspectives. This could come in the form of epals or other consistent collaborations, but I also think I could use global online newspapers (even in English for lower level Spanish students) to focus on culture and reading/writing. In ELL classes, this would be a great literacy initiative that would also allow for individualized learning (students exploring topics of interest to them). Students could set up video blogs where they post about and reflect on what they are learning as they investigate the world.

Websites to set this up:

- a) www.onlinenewspapers.com
- b) google sites (creating a collaborative wiki)
- c) www.weebly.com

3. Communicating Ideas

Since most of my classes are set up with a task-based teaching methodology, my students communicate ideas with each other using the Edmodo application system. I currently have students in lower level Spanish "on trips" to different countries in groups, and they have a collaboration group in another country. These groups share their learning journeys with each other through their presentations – both in real time and by sending presentations and other information via their groups on Edmodo. In Spanish III, I have all students living in Madrid for the year, but all in separate neighborhoods and apartments. They share information with each other and "neighborhood pride" also through Edmodo groups. In the future, I can find ways to share knowledge more with international audiences. My students, twice a year, have videoconferencing sessions with school groups in either Peru, Nicaragua, or Costa Rica. Epals would also be another way to communicate ideas outside the classroom walls, regularly.

- a) Edmodo
- b) Skype
- c) www.epals.com

4. Taking Action

A few times a year, usually coinciding with our videoconferencing sessions, my students host fundraisers and school-wide campaigns on global issues (water, child labor, food scarcity, etc.) Not being in a 1:1 environment before, we now have the opportunity to use technology to take action within the school and community by using Edmodo as a student social networking tool to spread awareness, creating videos to send to the school broadcast, or maybe even create crowdrising campaigns for a special project or petitions on change.org

- a) Edmodo
- b) www.change.org
- c) www.crowdrise.com
- d) free website and blogging tools

Teachers' and Students' Freedom of Use of Technology:

All the websites listed as recommendations from TGC, as well as all additional websites listed in this inventory, are free for student and teacher use within the district and its policies. Most social networking sites are also available (twitter and linkedin), but facebook is blocked. Also, students in grades 10-12 are free to download any free apps available.

How are Teachers Using Tech?

Teachers often share student created projects on our teacher edmodo group. Currently, the most common “new” applications being used regularly in the classroom are:

- a) socrative (a great tool for formative assessment and checking for understanding)
- b) knowmia (for creating a flipped classroom)
- c) prezzi (a better type of powerpoint)
- d) keynote (like powerpoint, but students can share slides with each other)
- e) showme (an application for creating voice and image presentations)

Some teachers have done videoconferences with Skype to speak with state representatives or authors. Also, one teacher created her own digital textbook using the ibooks app on the Ipad. Teachers are also flipping their classroom recording videos of their lessons, and using screencasts.

Evaluating Digital Literacy

This year, our district is using the Technology Integration Matrix, created by the Florida Center for Instructional Technology. All teachers are required to have this in their classrooms, and it will be used in our evaluations beginning next year. This is not as much a student rubric for digital literacy, but more of an evaluation tool for the teachers' use of technology within the classroom. The matrix is quite helpful to see where one is at on the use of technology in the classroom. It is simply overwhelming as there are so many initiatives happening at once, and it seems there is little time to do them all well.

Teachers need more collaboration time to work together on integrating tech with their curriculum.

<http://www.hollandpublicschools.org/vnews/display.v/ART/503e10f177085>

Reflections on Tech Use in my Classroom

1. Skype: I am using skype a few times a year to converse with people in Spanish-speaking countries. It is a great way to connect students' learning with the real world, allow them to use their Spanish, and more importantly, gain other perspectives. While some of our Skype chats are simply fun hour long conversations to get to know each other, others are deep learning experiences where we discuss topics such as food security, clean drinking water, education for girls in the developing countries, etc. I hope to begin to use Skype even more regularly as I look into the new "mystery skype" program.

2. Tech as a publishing tool: Students are creating presentations via their Ipad to be published to a real audience. Most recently, after learning how agricultural products arrive to our table, students investigated resources both inside and outside our local community where shoppers may participate in responsible consumerism. We created a responsible consumerism guide and shared this school wide on all of the televisions placed throughout the building, and through Edmodo, our online communication program used by the school. In this way, students were taking action, one of the national standards for global competency.

3. Google Earth: This has been an essential tool in my classroom used to make predictions about a place and investigating the world before beginning a unit of study, get direct access to interesting cultural information through observation of a place (street view), and even do "treasure hunt" activities. It is an incredibly engaging tool, enhances the lesson in a real-life way, and generates lots of questions from students about culture during use.

4. Edmodo: This is a great way for students to communicate ideas with each other. They can share projects, websites, pictures, and comment on each other's work. I can also upload global learning resources in folders that they can access on their own time at home or at school.

5. Twitter: I use Twitter in my classroom as a way for students to share information with the world, stay informed of global issues themselves, and be proactive global citizens. Students seek out global resources, share new resources with each other, and sometimes publish their own work via Twitter.