

Technology Innovation Fund Proposal

Prepared for: Technology Department Rocky View Schools

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Objective

To enhance classroom practice and implementation of 21st Century Learning through technological innovation in my own classroom by adding versatile and engaging technology that is familiar to students.

Goals

To create new methods of student engagement using innovative approaches and technologies. Limited funding at times halts innovation as technology is not available to ensure adequate levels of technology are available at all times. My goal is to provide a consistent enhanced level of technology so that students in my environment can fully integrate technology into the classroom utilizing skills they already have.

Solution

My solution to these goals is to provide a low cost technology that will allow for research, dissemination of classroom ideas, immediate feedback during lessons and the ability to create digital content to share ideas. Through research I have conducted and my own experience with the iPod Touch device, I believe this would be a cost effective and ideal device to support 21st Century learning and integrate technology further into my practice.

The iPod Touch as a Media Device

The iPod touch is at the forefront of technology, and is a device that many students are familiar with and use on a daily basis. It stores powerpoint, word and other documents, has the ability to interact with Plone and other websites and can be used to create content and record audio. These features will allow students to interact directly with my web-based course content and use the iPods to store and manipulate data in new ways. Using the Plone interface, classroom quizzes, responses and research can all be conducted directly on the device without a computer lab. When a number of computers are added to the classroom environment, the iPod touch becomes an excellent supplementary device, allowing students to transfer files back and forth from device to computer.

The iPod Touch as Technological Innovation

In addition to the use of the iPod touch as a media device, the App Store included with it creates a nearly unlimited potential for future uses. New educational applications are being added daily to the app store, including many free ones. Some examples that I would use in my classroom include a free Shakespeare App which houses all of Shakespeare's works and will be used instead of a textbook for Shakespeare and poetry study. Other applications include a dictionary and thesaurus, Wordpress blogging App, news and media studies applications, and much more. Use of many of these applications which are low-cost or free allows for less reliance on traditional textbooks and their replacement costs. As a classroom teacher, I have never had a complete set of dictionaries and thesaurus in my classroom for student use, even this small application makes a difference to the students.

Implications and Expected Outcomes of this Proposal

I believe that students in the 21st century must be working with and using the technologies that they are interested in and use most effectively. The interface of the iPod touch meets this need as many students use and own these devices. Students are more comfortable entering text on the iPod and they feel more at ease using this technology than even the laptops they are provided to work with. This project will see students working in their way with their technology, and from what I have seen in my own classroom, this will lead to further engagement and achievement by students. My own experience with the iPod touch has guided me to this proposal as I have integrated this device into my teaching practice and have seen first-hand the difference it has made to my professional work. I relish the opportunity to provide the same difference for my students.

Costs of the Proposal

This proposal will require a combination of hardware and software solutions to set up and maintain. In addition to the 36 iPod touches, I will require an iMac computer with a number of powered USB hubs for charging and transferring data to the devices. In addition, I will require 36 microphone-enabled headphone sets for recording of podcasts and interactive note-taking. Connection to the devices can be done through sync-cable, but ideally I would be able to purchase docking stations for the devices for ease of student access and control of the assets. In addition to the hardware for these devices, as the teacher administering these devices, I will require a MobileMe account for information dissemination and application purchase and installation for the devices. You will find a detailed cost breakdown below:

- iMac computer station for sync and maintenance of devices: \$1250
- 36 iPod touch devices (8gb model at educational price): \$9325
- 36 Microphone-enabled headsets (at educational price): \$1050
- Software purchase budget for Apps and MobileMe: \$1000
- powered USB hubs to connect to iMac & charge:
(Memory express item# MX6872) \$175
- Locks and setup of iPod station in classroom: \$200

Total cost of proposal: \$13,000

In Closing

Thank You for the opportunity to submit this project for consideration. I am excited by the possibility of bringing this innovative approach to learning to my students. I would appreciate any feedback that you may have, and if you have any questions or require clarification, please call or email me directly.