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Technology in Education

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As a minimum, what are the minimum technology tools do you feel should be in a classroom?
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Megan Veschio • Anything that can be used for multiple purposes is very helpful. When evaluating what to spend your money on, be sure to look into how the tool can be used. Talk to your teachers and students and find out what they want, and be sure to ask them why they want those tools.
Follow Megan

Tandra Ericson • Thanks Megan, I think I should revise my question as I do appreciate your answer, I was looking for more of specifics on preference of actual technology than process. In other words in your opinion what specific technology would you like to see in a specific classroom and why, broken down by what you think is important for a teacher to have and what is important for a student to have.
Follow Tandra

Denise Murphy • Is this for one school or for a number of schools in a region? Is it for all ages (4-18) or just for 4-11 or 12-18? Do you have a centralised regional education network infrastructure with good bandwidth to each school? Or are you talking about schools with individual LAN infrastructure?
Follow Denise

Mathew Georghiou • It's difficult to make good recommendations without knowing the process, because tools support the educational process and methodology as Megan points out. And Denise makes a good point about how you can make your money go farther. But with that said, I would consider:
(1) Tablets for sure. Tablets change everything. I think the 9" are better than the 7" for school.
Follow Mathew

Carl Maegerman • Net Op School http://www.netop.com and Zoomit from Microsoft are a wonderful tools for a teacher like me :-).
Follow Carl

Carl Maegerman • Don't forget a dataprojector :-)) like it better and it is cheaper than those smartboards.
Follow Carl

Simon Williams • Looking worldwide, I would say something to write on and something to write with.
Follow Simon

Carl Maegerman • I agree Simon, but for a informatics teacher like me the tools i mentioned are really helpful :-).
Follow Carl

Bob Zehausen • The minimum technology for the classroom is email. K-12 education was one of the first pioneers in online learning, preceded only by persons with disabilities. In 1985 Kidsnet was created using Listserv mailing list.
Follow Bob

Shane Hogan • @Mathew - would you like to expand on your point that tablets with keyboards won't cut it? Where budget is restricted, I feel that keyboards are essential, and I've come across the argument that bluetooth keyboards for tablets are the ideal mix of technologies. Do you have a different experience to share?
Follow Shane

Christopher Christensen • We just went through what you are going through and here is what every classroom in the district has regardless of age group:
1) Smart brand IWB with ultra short throw projector
2) AppleTV (we use iPads so this may not fit for your situation)
3) Teacher Laptop
4) Document cameras are in every room left over from before the bond but are quickly becoming a relic.
Follow Christopher

Mathew Georghiou • @Shane I love tablets. But, they are also quite limited in certain ways, particularly content creation. Adding a keyboard makes them more convenient for typing for sure, but it does not address their limitations, as it is just a keyboard.
For example, simple copy and paste is really clumsy and slow. The lack of file management is a problem.
Follow Mathew

Dr. Denise M Robinson • To know what to do right now, look at the world and see what they are using. 90% of businesses are using PC, so make sure the students know how to use a PC. Tablets are the next up-coming great tool, but don't let them be the main tool.
Follow Dr Denise M

Deborah Vasenda • Minimum. Teacher computer with a LCD projector and a screen,
* Interactive whiteboard
* ISRS-Individual student response systems or for older students-cell phones for polling.
* Doc camera for teacher computer
* Be sure that there is a purpose for the purchases. Staff Development is extremely important if the district wants this equipment used by teacher.
* It is all in the presentation. Technology is not something EXTRA a teacher has to add to her schedule; it make what she already does easier and more engaging.
Follow Deborah

Megan Veschio • Tablets are becoming increasingly popular and students would definitely be excited to receive one. If going this route, I strongly encourage you to look into 1:1 instead of investing in a few classroom sets to be shared by all. When students are able to take ownership of the device, they are more careful with it and their work shows a higher pride of ownership than if they are simply using a classroom set.
Another consideration if going this route is to be sure to leave some money for purchasing apps. Tablets are a great tool, but they become even better once equipped with a few helpful apps.
Follow Megan

Dan Exelby • Teacher tools:
Digital Projector
Teacher computer
Document camera
Sound field system
Some sort of annotation tool either a remote tablet with software or IWB software
A big TV with AppleTV and an iPad is a nice too have and might sub for the projector in certain cases.
For student use in intermediate through High School you should be planning for 1:1 but the program should drive the hardware.
Follow Dan

Deborah Vasenda • A self insurance program for the school for laptops or tablets is a good idea. If parents know that the student is responsible for a school assigned piece of equipment, the district can have a \$50-\$75 insurance for the parents to pay on the device.
Follow Deborah

Alan Portman • We have switched from projector/screen setup to large screen TVs in many of our classrooms. It does depend on the size of the room. For a 20-25 seat room, a 50" TV HDMI setup to a podium is about \$1,000 cheaper and provides fewer headaches and a better image.
Think VERY, VERY, carefully about software titles beyond MS Office/LibreOffice. Look at the educational impact for what you are buying.
Follow Alan

Carl Maegerman • I agree Alan. In Belgium too, we are all MS addicts. It's a pity that the people aren't more open to opensource, although I find MS Office a really good suite :-).
Follow Carl

Mathew Georghiou • I think that despite the mass adoption and comfort with MS Office, most people probably only use a dozen features in each of the applications. There could be a big gain in productivity if we each learned perhaps 5 or 10 more. For example, I bet most people don't ever use the FORMAT PAINTER, yet it is one of the biggest time savers.
On the positive side, using so few features makes it very easy to switch to a different suite, like the new online offerings (although I still find the Google Docs word processor really clumsy with formatting, but getting better).
Follow Mathew

Chris Ogilvie-Taylor F IDM • A CleverBoard! Half the price of Smart boards, 25 years warranty, uses ink markers as well as digital and shipped worldwide from our factory in the UK. Details on request.
Follow Chris

Carl Maegerman • Nice for small classes (see visibility).
I work with older people as students and in classes with 20+ students its better to project bigger. So the students at the last row can see what your doing. Dataprojectors are also much cheaper.
Follow Carl

Alan Portman • Mathew Georghiou makes an excellent point. I have been in "EDIT" for almost 20 years. I am really disappointed in the level of training I see on using an Office suite. I routinely see documents where a combination of tabs and spaces are being used to center things. Where changing the font is about as far as formatting gets. And of course, whatever MS grammar checker says, goes.
Follow Alan

Elizabeth Irwin Harrison • I agree with Alan. When we tried to implement IT standards across the school that had specific objectives eg. By the end of gr 7, students should be able to use word/tables in excel, we eventually discovered that most of the gr 7 teaching staff were unable to do these things, but were reluctant to admit it.
Follow Elizabeth

Linda Glassop • Cloud-based software is making tablets much more viable. For example, I am about to launch a new writing app specifically designed for students (ComWriter); it has the library online, students can collaborate, very modern features for writing to academic standards; the formatting made real easy with pre-defined style guides; in-built referencing and teachers can create templates (projects and sections) to help students improve their writing. You can sign up for the beta at www.comwriter.com and there is a youtube video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-2d3pBmH0
Follow Linda

Pragya Saxena • A quick digital tool for quick online test and immediate feedback. Teacher can inform parents about each and every detail of students. Digital aid to give more clarity on the topic students can compare there performance for competitive analysis.
Follow Pragya

Troy H. • There are some great points made in this discussion. We are here to get our students prepared for the future. We need to make sure they are using the tools and devices that the corporate world will be providing. How many businesses are using Chromebooks? How many businesses use MS Office? Nothing replaces a great teacher. We need to focus on them by providing tools and data to make their job easier.
Follow Troy

Gabrielle Richard-Harrington • laptop, iPad, Apple TV, & LCD. The laptop has access to everything. The iPad can be used as a recorder, video and still camera, document camera, airplay for anything the interactive whiteboard could do, music composition, drawing, research, writing, notes, etc.
Follow Gabrielle

Bogdan Pospielewsky • Don't forget DISC. So once you get down to implementing software and hardware consider your tools carefully because there are students who will succeed in your classroom regardless of what tools they use (slates, wax tablets) and then there are those who really benefit from going with technology. But only if the technology supports teaching. Check out this UdL project in British Columbia public schools using only for teaching literacy in middle school with laptops. There's about a dozen schools and most of them are blogging their experiences.
Follow Bogdan

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