

ETEC512: Assignment 4: Project Proposal

Project Proposal: Bring your own Devices Tutorial

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PROJECT PROPOSAL: BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE TUTORIAL

Table of Contents

Rationale	2
The Need and the Audience	3
Creating Resources for Teachers	5
School Wide BYOD Policy	5
Communication of Policy:	6
Teaching Students Digital Citizenship	7
Assessment and Classroom Management Tools and Tips	7
Exploring Communities of Practice	8
Conclusion	10
References	11

PROJECT PROPOSAL: BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE TUTORIAL

Rationale

In 2012, the province of Alberta produced an in-depth guide for schools on the implementation of a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy. They define BYOD as: "...technology models where students bring a personally owned device to school for the purpose of learning" (Alberta Education, 2012, p.3). The rationale presented here discusses the research-based evidence of BYOD's effectiveness, thereby offering reasons for educators and schools to adopt such a policy.

For the first decade and a half of this century a key buzzword in education has been '21st Century Skills'. The questions around the water cooler in the teacher's lounge have had a similar refrain: 'What are the skills we need students to develop in order to succeed in the 21st century?'. Here we are, it is 2016 and the world of tomorrow is upon us. As Dewitt (2013) states: "We have come to a time when we need to accept the fact that the concept of 21st century skills is no longer a progressive phase to latch onto but a reality that we need to instil into our school systems" (p. 1).

What are these 21st century skills, and how can BYOD help in their development? Simply put the skills are: critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication. BYOD has been shown to support these skills in numerous ways. Watters (2012) claims that: "...a growing number of schools, such as New Jersey's New Milford High School (NMHS), let students use their phones, recognising that even the simplest such gadget can be a tool

PROJECT PROPOSAL: BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE TUTORIAL

for communication, calculation, photography, videography, and calculations” (p.1). In Alberta, school districts that have implemented a BYOD policy have reported that: “...students with one-to-one access were more engaged and invested in their own learning” (Alberta Education, 2012, p.5).

In essence BYOD represents a way to provide this one-to-one access to technology. With this technology, which is already so often a part of their daily lives, learning for students can be:

1. more engaging, familiar, and current
2. bridged between the formal and the informal
3. personalized
4. non-local, reaching around the globe (Alberta Education, 2012)

For these reasons, and more, this proposal will develop a plan for the creation and execution of an online interactive BYOD tutorial, for the use of educators.

The Need and the Audience

We will be developing a resource that can be used to help teachers and administrators navigate the numerous resources and techniques that come with BYOD. There are a number of reasons that schools would benefit from BYOD policies and practices. Financially, schools struggle for resources at the best of times. Making matters worse is the fact that technology is changing so rapidly that it is difficult for institutions to keep up with the pace of change of technology. BYOD approaches essentially outsource acquisition of technology

PROJECT PROPOSAL: BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE TUTORIAL

to the families of the students.

Some form of BYOD strategy is needed for schools to remain relevant. Devices like smartphones and tablets, and the apps that they facilitate, are a daily part of the students lives and therefore should be considered in any well rounded curriculum. These devices are essentially a gateway to the wide world of web-based resources that are changing the face of business and communication. A relevant and comprehensive BYOD program may be the answer to preparing students for success in this environment. It has already been shown that students, teachers, and employees in many industries show a preference for bringing their own device (BYOD in Schools Literature Review, 2013). A personal device is usually customised more efficiently for the user than the ones provided by the schools or workplace. Furthermore, an unprecedented number of people have access to smartphones, tablets, or computers.

If it is accepted that some form of BYOD pedagogy is desirable or necessary in schools, then teachers need to be trained for the transition. The problem arises from the fact that the students are 'digital natives' and the teachers are 'digital immigrants'. Professional development has always been an important part of teaching. As technology is changing rapidly, teachers need regular tutorials to keep ahead of the curve. It is our hope that this resource will help teachers overcome the challenges in implementing BYOD practices in their classrooms.

Creating Resources for Teachers

School Wide BYOD Policy

Although more and more educational institutions are allowing BYOD in classrooms, BYOD policies are often vague or immature due to the fast pace of changing technology. BYOD policies need to be reframed and should keep pace with emerging technology in order to be fully successful (Vignesh & Asha, 2015). At the same time, teachers need to be trained and work collaboratively with IT staff to cope with, and benefit from these continuous changes. Moreover, teacher mindset is important while implementing BYOD policies. Many teachers think the internet and technology have a positive impact on students' research habits, however, others think technology is decreasing students' attention span and will lead to diminished ability to focus on a particular concept to increase in depth understanding/mastery (Holeywell, 2013). In addition, BYOD policies might be expensive and very subjective in nature (Difilipo, 2013). Different schools and even different teachers may have distinct views while contributing to the policy (Difilipo, 2013). During our tutorial, we will explore more challenges and ways to overcome them. But first let's review some basic guidelines to develop an effective BYOD policy (BYOD in Schools Literature Review, 2013):

1. **Guidelines for use:** The primary purpose of BYOD is educational, thus use of BYOD should not be disruptive in anyway. Students will behave like responsible digital citizens and are strictly prohibited to distribute

PROJECT PROPOSAL: BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE TUTORIAL

unauthorized material on online platforms.

2. **Consequences of misuse:** BYOD is taken away and a disciplinary referral is issued that involves parents/guardians. Complete remote wipe-out of data if a student misuses BYOD in any way.
3. **School liability statement:** Students are responsible to take care of their devices and they will remain student/family's property. School is not responsible for any loss/damage. Thus, it is wise to have theft or hazard insurance along with an extended warranty if possible.

Communication of Policy:

In the student/parent letter, website, social media, or any other communication platform, a policy document can be shared along with (BYOD in Schools Literature Review, 2013):

1. A clear description of the types of devices that are allowed, for example: laptops, netbooks, tablets, e-Readers, and/or cell phones/smartphones to be used.
2. How the internet is going to be connected to BYOD- communicate [minimum specifications](#) if any.
3. Provide a list of accessories, for example: headphones, charger, additional batteries if there are not enough charging stations in the building.
4. Communicate if parents/guardians need to buy any app/technology tool for their child.
5. If a child does not have access to a device, they may share with other

PROJECT PROPOSAL: BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE TUTORIAL

students or use library/classroom devices.

6. Use of device (when, why, how, how much etc.) totally depends on the teacher-student-school-parent agreement.
7. Student and parent need to sign a digital etiquette contract.

Teaching Students Digital Citizenship

All teachers need to inform their students about the positive and negative effects of the online world. It is wise to prepare a common school wide [digital citizenship curriculum](#) that can be adapted for each classroom (BYOD in Schools Literature Review, 2013).

Assessment and Classroom Management Tools and Tips

In our tutorial, we will try to find the latest simulations, apps, virtual worlds (e.g. Second Life), and safe social networking options (e.g. Google Classroom). We will provide comprehensive set of assessment tools such as [plickers](#), [Socrative](#), [Kahoot](#), [Zaption](#), [Plickers](#), [QuickKey](#), [ZipGrade](#), [Blubbr](#), and [GradeCam](#) [Freshgrade](#) in order to provide teachers the best possible resources available.

We will also provide information about classroom management apps such as [Classdojo](#), [Class Charts](#), and [Teacher Kit](#), along with research based classroom management tips to maximize student learning while allowing BYOD to function in the classroom.

Exploring Communities of Practice

A Community of Practice consists of a group of individuals participating in communal activity, and continuously experiencing/creating/negotiating their shared identity through engaging in and contributing to the practices of their communities (Wenger, 1998). Communities of practice are spaces into which newcomers can enter and attempt to learn the sociocultural practices of the community. These individuals develop a “shared repertoire” of resources and knowledge for their practice through mutual engagement in a “joint enterprise” (Wenger, 2000).

It can be foreseen that novice teachers would increasingly need to be supported in implementing BYOD effectively. Teachers who are not confident with ICT, and/or have previously had negative experiences when trying to use new technologies with their students may be difficult to persuade to engage with BYOD. Research carried out in Switzerland and Quebec (Akkari & Heer, 2006; Karsenti & Larose, 2005) found that young teachers, although better trained in the use of technology, tend to use this less to innovate in the classroom than more experienced teachers (young teachers being too busy with classroom management issues). The problem with technology is amplified in the case of BYOD since it involves not only dealing with different technological tools, but also a variety of devices. According to DeWitt (2013), although many teachers want to allow students to bring their own devices, they do not always understand how to handle the concept. A report on BYOD implementation in

PROJECT PROPOSAL: BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE TUTORIAL

three US districts found that BYOD implementation cannot be successful without the teachers and instruction being ready for it (Stutsman, 2013, p. 36).

Our tutorial will aim to bridge this gap to connect teachers with communities of practice for BYOD which could help them in:

1. Choosing the right BYOD model for their school - locked down models where the device and software to be used are dictated and controlled by the school, or those that meet specific requirements, or allowing any personally owned device provided it is internet ready.
2. Learning about different teaching practices to make effective use of BYOD – choosing between pedagogy, andragogy and [heutagogy](#) in case of different contexts and different technologies.
3. Learning about new tools and apps to be used in the classroom. This could include tools such as [eCoach](#) and [Versal](#) which could help teachers transform existing lessons into eContent or content sharing platform like [Haiku learning](#) or Apps like [Socrative](#) and [Kaizena](#) for formative assessment.
4. Learning about [strategies of management](#) in a class implementing BYOD like setting expectations, assigning roles, demanding attention etc.
5. [Sharing experiences](#) by connecting to schools implementing similar programs like the [West Hartford Public Schools](#) or teachers engaged in similar activities in forums and blogs like [Educators' personal learning Networks](#).
6. Feedback and Appreciation

Conclusion

Our basic research has identified various resources to use BYOD, several benefits of BYOD, and a few obstacles while implementing BYOD in the classroom. However the biggest hurdle seems to be attitude (Newcombe, 2013). Thus, we will provide success stories of other schools to learn from and opportunities to collaborate/train via Pinterest, twitter, and edutopia communities. In addition, TED talks, Lynda.com, Coursera, WIZIQ , and other F2F and/or online professional development platforms may also help motivate/inform the global teacher community to use BYOD's in order to develop 21st century skills among our students.

We are going to do more in-depth research while working on our final product. At this point our team is confident about the outcome that we are planning for our tutorial. However, as we continue to work on this project or after getting instructor feedback on this proposal, some questions may arise. Thus, we may need some skype/google hangout sessions with our instructor in the future.

PROJECT PROPOSAL: BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE TUTORIAL

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PROJECT PROPOSAL: BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE TUTORIAL

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