

Title of Session: Math and Technology

Moderator: David Weksler

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DavidW: This is going to be a somewhat open session - I was hoping to gather some ideas from people here about topics that they might like to explore

BJB2: for example, David?

DavidW: Well, using specific software, specific web sites, etc.

DavidW: What technology do you have access to, Maureen, for your classes?

BJB2: I'd like to see how the beeweb sites are doing

BJB2: www.beeweb.org I think

MaureenB: I have 3 stand alone EMacs and access to a class set of laptops

DavidW: BeeWeb is quite a bit more than just math - spelling, geography, etc.

DavidW: Do you use any specific software for math, Maureen?

BJB2 nods...patterns also

MaureenB: We use Investigations which is put out by Scott Foresman

MaureenB: there is a technology component to it

DavidW: Yes, I think they include some LOGO activities

MaureenB: right now we are doing measurement and geometry

MaureenB: yes

MaureenB: moving our friendly turtle

DavidW: Have you seen InspireData - it's from the same folks who publish Inspiration, now

MaureenB: and making polygons and finding missing measurement

MaureenB: yes I downloaded the free trial and am looking into getting it for the school for next year

DavidW: that's great- it's a superb program and makes the basics of data analysis really accessible

MaureenB: we have Kidspiration and Inspiration so it is just an add on

MaureenB: we do data and graphs in our first unit so I used it than

DavidW: Have you used any of the online manipulatives from the National Library for Virtual Manipulatives, Maureen?

DavidW: <http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html>

MaureenB: yes that is one of my Friday centers on the computer now with our geometry unit

MaureenB: BBC has a great site too for measurement

DavidW: I'm not sure if I know that - do you have the URL handy?

MaureenB:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks2bitesize/maths/shape_space_measures.shtml

DavidW: Thanks - that looks good

MaureenB: I have many math sites for elementary on my web page reference link

MaureenB: <http://www.os4e.com/pvc/d/pves/mbeyer/>

MaureenB: some I got from you :)

DavidW smiles

DavidW: Do your students use calculators?

MaureenB: yes for checking because they can't use them on the state assessment

DavidW: I know that local school districts often go through a lot of consternation deciding whether it is appropriate or not for elementary students

MaureenB: we have a game in Investigations called Broken Calculator

DavidW: Yes, that's a wonderful activity

MaureenB: they have to come up with a number like 424 but the 4 and 2 button is broken

DavidW smiles

DavidW: Gets students thinking for creative approaches

MaureenB: very powerful when I did it up on the SmartBoard

DavidW: Bj just posted to the discussion about a new set of activities from the Shodor Foundation which include interactive assessments

DavidW: I'm not sure if you have seen it, yet. Here's the web page:

DavidW: <http://www.shodor.org/interactivate/>

MaureenB: doesn't look familiar have to check it some more

DavidW: Shodor has also been producing applets and other web-based activities for some time

DavidW: Investigations tends to be a very rich environment and can often be quite demanding of the teacher

DavidW: Are there any specific topics that you are still looking for other activities to supplement topics in Investigations, Maureen?

MaureenB: I like the Connect 4 type of game

DavidW: I think they have some quite interesting activities

MaureenB: Have to add a new link my web page and a new Friday center :) or recess when it is to cold to go out

DavidW: Glad to share that with you

DavidW: Do you find the Investigations curriculum lines up pretty well with the tests your students have to take?

MaureenB: yes and no

DavidW: that's one of the criticisms of it that I've heard from a number of teachers

MaureenB: we are having that discussion on Thursday at our grade level meeting

DavidW smiles

MaureenB: the test seems to come so early (March) and it is hard to think March to March and feel confident that they covered things the year before

DavidW: yes, I would think so

DavidW: Is the whole school using Investigations?

MaureenB: so we have all started to do test prep things for morning work

DavidW nods

MaureenB: yes the new program (without much training)

DavidW: That's unfortunate - I have a friend who does Investigations implementation and she finds that for some teachers the curriculum can often really stretch their math backgrounds

MaureenB: we were all do some units and another program but now we have to fully implement Investigation

DavidW: right, often it seems to be helpful to phase it in so people are more comfortable with the style

MaureenB: the new program explains it better

DavidW: I'm sorry to make you do all the typing - looks like this group of pre-service teachers isn't logging in after all

MaureenB: but we used to have an in-house Math person who really stretched our thinking but no longer

MaureenB: I am going to have to stop and ice my hand and fill my belly very shortly

DavidW: It seems it's even more important these days to have someone doing support for math in elementary schools

DavidW: Thanks for joining us this evening

DavidW: I hope you get to take the brace off soon

MaureenB: see you next time and hopefully I won't be disabled

MaureenB smiles

DavidW: You were doing fine

MaureenB: my students love helping me though

BJB2 hugs Maureen. Take care

DavidW: I'm sure

MaureenB: nite

DavidW waves goodnight

DavidW: Take care

BJB2: I'd like to explore the math support idea further. That was surprising to me

BJB2: and the idea of prof development for math teachers

DavidW: It seems critical that there is someone there for teachers with all the new materials, technology

BJB2 agrees

DavidW: typically that person is hired when a new curriculum is implemented, but then often disappears

DavidW: It will be interesting to find out what the folks in Washington, D.C. are doing and whether they can really have hundreds of teachers using Tapped In

SusanR joined the room.

SusanR: I can't understand why teachers colleges and school districts do not encourage educators to take their PD here

DavidW smiles

DavidW: I know in some states the PD has to be delivered by groups approved by the state board of education

SusanR understands

DavidW: It would be wonderful if Tapped In has some sort of university-like status and could also grant continuing education units

DavidW: That question has been asked a lot

DavidW: Do either of you know whether the certificate of participation from the summer

festival has been helpful to any teachers?

SusanR: I have not heard

BJB2: some schools honor it...and usually instructors will take the cert as proof of participation

BJB2: but I don't have any specific hard data on it

DavidW: I guess part of the challenge to an administrator is understanding what TI is and what transpires in the discussions

BJB2: this is a big topic for Dianne Allen

DavidW: credit for TI participation?

BJB2: yes

BJB2: one of the reasons there is a Certificate of Participation group...

BJB2: Dianne also belongs to the ProActive Educators group

BJB2: my feeling is that this is a bottom up issue, not a top down issue. Teachers have to demand more effective prof development

DavidW: I wonder if Dianne feels that schools in Australia are more open to have teachers involved in online learning

BJB2: I don't know