



CHAPTER

3

Creating a Digital Citizenship Program

School technology leaders are in a position to set the tone for appropriate technology use by educating teachers, administrators, parents, and community members about digital citizenship. By employing a teaching model—rather than simply creating policies against technology misuse and abuse—technology leaders can create a self-sustaining digital citizenship program that will benefit all aspects of school technology use. This chapter explores how leaders can initiate this process.

All members of the school community need to be awakened to the importance of digital citizenship and its connection to current policies and future practices. A technology leadership team should be established that brings together representatives from all areas of the school community—administration, faculty, classified staff, parents. This team should begin by identifying the specific needs of the school or district (and the community around them) as they relate to the nine elements of digital citizenship. While every member will come with particular concerns and motivations, the team's common goal should be to establish a program that will enhance the appropriate use of technology for learning, collaboration, and productivity at all levels.

Developing a Plan for Digital Citizenship

Once a technology leadership team is in place, it is important that all members acquire a baseline awareness of digital citizenship issues. The following discussion suggests five steps to begin this process. These steps are depicted graphically in Figure 3.1.

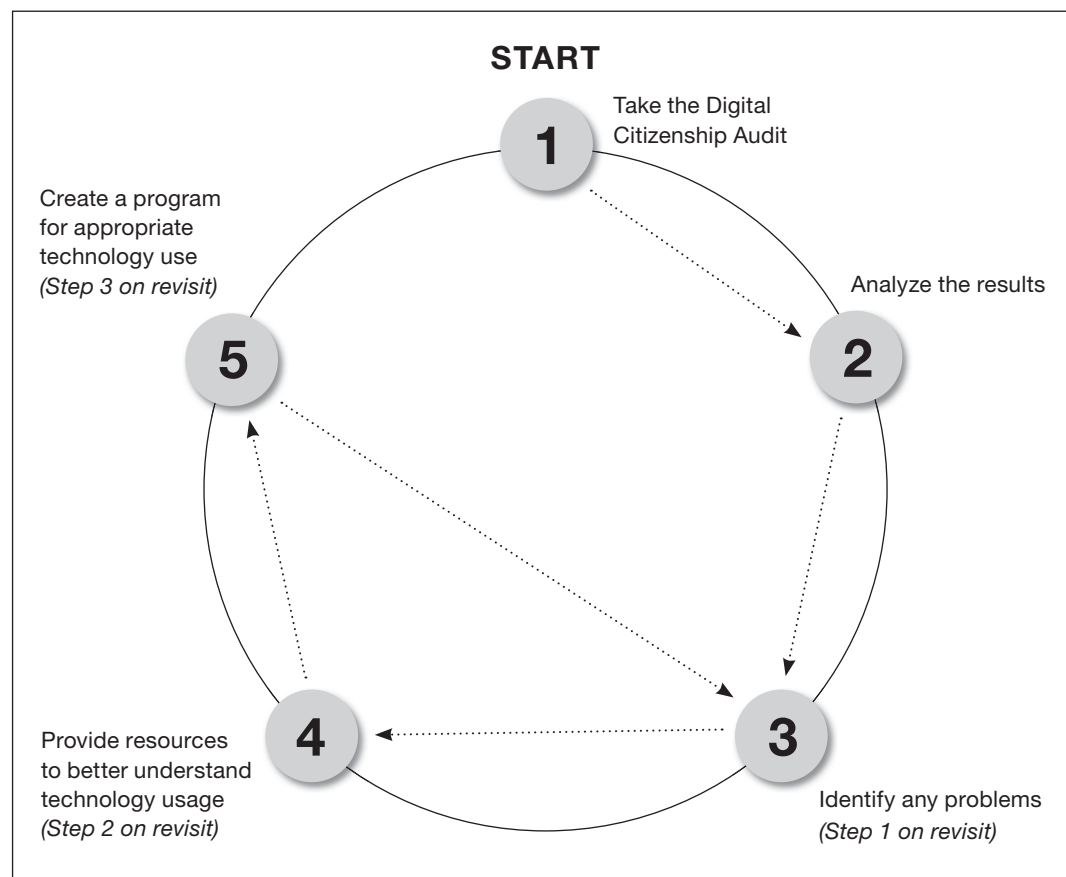


Figure 3.1 Process for developing a plan for digital citizenship.

Step 1. Have members of the technology leadership team complete the Digital Citizenship Audit (see section following these steps). The audit takes only a few minutes and will help determine which elements of digital citizenship are significant issues in your school or district. The Digital Citizenship Audit is a quick way for technology leaders to determine whether technology resources are being properly used, or being misused or abused.

Step 2. Analyze the results of the audit, using the scoring guide.

Step 3. From the results gathered in Step 2, the technology leadership team should ask themselves: Are there significant problems? If so, are the inappropriate technology activities in violation of laws, rules, or policies? Are these activities causing physical or emotional harm to students? Are these activities disrupting the educational process? How aware of these problems are teachers, students, board members, and community members?

If the scores are low (10–19), the team leader should spend some time addressing these issues and informing stakeholders. Look for ways that other schools of similar size and location have addressed these issues.

If the team finds no problems of significance, the team leader should be prepared to share some of the examples and scenarios from Chapter 2 that illustrate the nature of the nine elements of digital citizenship. This will inform the team of possible problems that they may not have considered or that may appear in the near future.

Step 4. Consider the following questions as a team, exploring each member’s feelings about the different elements of digital citizenship:

- Should all students have equal access to technology? Unlimited access?
- What issues related to buying and selling items online are appropriate to address in school?
- What should students know about using communication technologies in school? Should limits be placed on those technologies?
- How do students currently use technology to learn new ideas? What might they be able to learn if their technology literacy and access were higher?
- How does student technology behavior affect others in the school community?
- What do students and teachers need to know to keep themselves safe when using technology? Do students understand how to protect their identity when online?
- Do students and teachers know the difference between legal and illegal uses of technology? How do they demonstrate this?
- Do students act responsibly and courteously when using technology?

If any business owners are on the team, have them discuss the importance of appropriate technology use in running their business. If members are still having trouble grasping the many interrelated issues of digital citizenship, the leader should implement some or all of the activities in Chapter 4.

Step 5. Once a consensus is reached on the most important issues and priorities, the leadership team should begin the process of designing a program to teach and model good digital citizenship. The team should focus on these questions as they design the program:

- With regard to technology use, how does our emphasis on “rules and regulations” compare with the schools’ emphasis on “education of all stakeholders”?
- Where should digital citizenship be taught in the curriculum? How can room be made for it?
- Who should teach digital citizenship?
- What kinds of staff development opportunities need to be provided first for the program to be effectively implemented?

Once the digital citizenship program is under way, the team should periodically revisit Steps 3–5 to evaluate their progress. The program should be flexible enough to account for changes in technology and usage patterns. As technology changes, so should the digital citizenship program.

Technology has become an integral part of teaching and learning. However, some students are learning and practicing poor digital technology habits. A quality digital citizenship program will require all participants to raise their awareness of how they are using technology, how it affects others, and how inappropriate use can be avoided. Technology leaders must raise their expectations for technology-infused teaching and learning, and focus on the effective and appropriate use of technology for learning. Technology leaders cannot afford to do anything less if they expect to develop productive digital citizens.

The Digital Citizenship Audit

Consider the relative importance and frequency of the activities, behaviors, and concerns related to digital citizenship presented in Table 3.1, and rank each item from 5 (extremely important) to 1 (extremely unimportant). Then use the following scoring guide to interpret your score.

Scoring Guide. Tally your score for each item in the last column to the right, then add them together for a total score.

40–50 This score shows that use of technology is high in this school or district. Unfortunately, inappropriate technology use is also very high.

30–39 Technology use in this school or district is moderate to high. With increased use there is above average technology misuse as well.

20–29 A score in this range denotes the middle of the road. Either the school or district is not using a great deal of technology or educators are unaware of the issues related to digital citizenship.

10–19 A score in this range indicates a low amount of inappropriate technology use. The school or district is either not using technology or the digital citizenship problems are minimal.

This holistic score provides a thumbnail sketch of your needs and engagement with digital citizenship issues. High scores are not entirely bad news. Although a high score indicates that your students may not be following good digital citizenship practices, it also means that you have a high level of technology use in your school.

Table 3.1 Digital Citizenship Audit Form

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP	Extremely Important	Somewhat Important	Neither Important or Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Extremely Unimportant	Score
Using cell phones to text message text answers to other students	5	4	3	2	1	
Using email or web-sites to intimidate other students	5	4	3	2	1	
Downloading music files illegally from the Internet	5	4	3	2	1	
Being unable to complete class projects or research activities because of a lack of access to technology	5	4	3	2	1	
Using a computer in an awkward position	5	4	3	2	1	
Plagiarizing information obtained from the Internet	5	4	3	2	1	
Using cell phones during class time	5	4	3	2	1	
Posting private information on the Internet	5	4	3	2	1	
Going online to buy and sell items on auction sites during school	5	4	3	2	1	
Dropping out of school for lack of distance learning alternatives	5	4	3	2	1	
TOTAL SCORE						

These scores have implications both inside educational institutions as well as out in the workplace. As students are trained (or not) in schools, they will take this information (or lack of it) into the workplace with them.

Implementing a Plan for Digital Citizenship

Here are some points that technology leaders need to think about when implementing a digital citizenship plan:

- Make digital citizenship a priority in the district and building technology plan by explaining its importance to students' futures and the future of society as a whole. If schools and districts are to effectively use technology for learning and skills development, digital citizenship must become a key element of that plan.
- Encourage your technology leadership team to look at and discuss the nine elements of digital citizenship from every perspective. Digital citizenship is not a one-time issue. Technology and technology use is always changing, so these issues must be readdressed on an ongoing basis.
- Engage all stakeholders (especially parents) in dialogue on digital citizenship issues, using the essential questions from Chapter 2 as a starting point for discussion. It is not enough to look at this issue from the inside. School leaders should listen to the perspectives and concerns of community members from outside the school environment as well, to gain a greater appreciation of where these issues manifest themselves outside of school.
- Empower the technology leadership team to identify and prioritize the steps needed to address digital citizenship in curriculum, staff development, and board policy. Provide them with a clear understanding of the areas that are of most immediate concern, and identify the skills that will make the biggest difference in the way students use technology to learn and succeed.
- Create a plan to integrate digital citizenship into all curricular areas. Identify ways to reinforce the idea of appropriate use in all technology-related assignments. Digital citizenship issues and skills should not be relegated to the computer lab; instead, they should become an integral part of content learning in all disciplines.
- Educate teachers on the concept of digital citizenship so they feel comfortable speaking on the subject in their classroom. Section III provides ideas and activities for teaching digital citizenship in the classroom. If teachers do not fully understand digital citizenship, they will not be able to help or direct student use of technology in the classroom.

A comprehensive dialogue about digital citizenship is long overdue in most schools and districts. If we hope to create digital citizens who know right from wrong and appropriate from inappropriate behavior in the digital age, technology leaders must make digital citizenship a top priority in their school districts. If not here, where? If not now, when? If not you, who?

Lessons Learned— Ideas from Other Schools or Districts

Since the first edition of this book was published, an increasing number of schools and districts have discussed the topic of digital citizenship, and some have moved rapidly to adopt its elements and principles into their policies and procedures. Here are a few examples of schools and districts that are using digital citizenship to provide resources for their faculty and staff.

Pike County Schools, Pikeville, Kentucky, U.S.

The Pike County Schools have been strong supporters of digital citizenship for several years. One of the projects they began with was a Digital Citizenship Month, during which they covered different elements of digital citizenship each week. During the month they also had contests for students to create ways to inform others about the issues of inappropriate technology use. In their second year, the schools again had digital citizenship activities and, now that their students understood the basics, the high school students acted as mentors for the elementary students, helping them to understand the various topics. Through their community outreach personnel, the schools in Pike County also began talking to parents about the issues of digital citizenship and how the schools could be a partner in this discussion.

Battle River School Division, Alberta, Canada

This school division took a year to rewrite their acceptable use policies, using the nine elements as their foundation. Since they have been using these new AUPs, they have seen a decrease in the number of inappropriate technology activities in their upper-division schools.

International School of Brussels, Brussels, Belgium

The International School of Brussels has been moving toward a 1-to-1 (typically one laptop to one student) initiative with their Grade 7–12 students. They are working on a plan to involve parents in understanding the technology and the issues that go with it by hosting technology nights during which staff talks with parents about the reason for their move to 1-to-1, as well as about ways to help support their students in using the technology appropriately.

Other Examples

There are other examples of schools and districts making their staff and students aware of the issues surrounding technology use. In October 2008, then-President Bush signed an update to the Universal Services Administrative Company's E-Rate program. In this program, schools and districts receive funding for telecommunication services and for some equipment. Schools receiving USAC E-Rate funding are now required to teach their students about Internet safety as well as secure and proper online behavior.

Digital citizenship is helping schools and districts to begin creating the foundation for teaching students from K–12 (and beyond) the issues that they need to be aware of when using technology. Technology continues to change, but with a good, grounded idea of the issues, the lessons learned can transcend these changes. Education is a process and everyone needs to begin with a good basis on which they can build.



CHAPTER

4

Professional Development Activities in Digital Citizenship

Before technology leaders begin to integrate digital citizenship into their school or district, faculty and staff should be trained on the appropriate use of technology. To do this, ongoing staff development activities covering the various areas of digital citizenship should be provided, along with informational resources to help participants understand the concepts.

This chapter provides 16 activities designed to give teachers, staff, and administrators a better understanding of digital citizenship and its implementation in a school or district. Many of the activities include links that lead to resources for staff development in technology. Staff developers are encouraged to use these resources to develop innovative ways to engage staff in the issues of digital citizenship.

Some of these activities are technologically based, while others are more traditional. The technology leader should keep in mind that some teachers, administrators, and parents may be facing a double learning curve—being exposed to the technology itself for the first time while also learning about the principles of digital citizenship. Technology leaders should choose activities that will keep users in their comfort zone until they are ready for stronger challenges.

Each activity is correlated to appropriate performance indicators from the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers (NETS•T) and Administrators (NETS•A). Both sets of standards are listed in Appendix C.

Standard 5 of the NETS for Students and Standard 5 for Administrators, both called “Digital Citizenship,” and Standard 4 for Teachers, “Promote and Model Digital Citizenship and Responsibility,” all provide valuable starting points for considering appropriate uses of technology. Each of these sets of standards (updated respectively in 2007, 2009, and 2008) include the words “digital citizenship.” By adding this language to their definition of technology standards, ISTE has shown how important they consider this topic to be in the professional development of teachers and administrators as well as in the education of students. Technology leaders need to provide this information to their constituents to explain why digital citizenship is important and how it can fit within the curriculum.

Activity Format

These activities are formatted to identify key objectives, points of emphasis, activity progression, and target outcomes. The format includes the following six elements:

Activity Title, NETS Addressed, Focus Question, and Related Questions. These are the elements of digital citizenship the activity is designed to explore.

Objective. The desired outcome of the activity is listed here.

Resources Needed. Resources include the tools and materials needed to complete the activity.

Activity Description. This section offers a step-by-step plan for answering the focus question and meeting the activity’s key objective.

Extension Ideas. Educators can refer to these related activities for further professional development on the topic.

Teaching Tips. Here you’ll find suggestions for working with teachers on digital citizenship.

Introduction to Digital Citizenship

The following activity is designed to introduce the basic concept of digital citizenship.

ACTIVITY 1 • Email Bingo (General Digital Citizenship)

NETS ADDRESSED	NETS•T 4.b; NETS•A 5.c
FOCUS QUESTION	How can we use technology to learn about the appropriate use of technology?
RELATED QUESTIONS	Where can users learn digital citizenship concepts beyond just having technology training? Can technology help to extend administrators' ability to teach new concepts to teachers?
OBJECTIVE	Members will learn about appropriate uses of technology in a nonthreatening way.
RESOURCES NEEDED	Icebreakers and Energizers: www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/classmanagement/icebreakers.html Icebreakers, Warmups, Energizers, and Deinhbitizers: www.wilderdom.com/games/Icebreakers.html Digital Citizenship Bingo cards (see Figure 4.1)
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	Using the Digital Citizenship Bingo cards as an example, make a set of bingo cards with the entries in different locations. Distribute the bingo cards to your faculty. Explain that you will be sending emails with concepts related to the digital citizenship elements. When an email has ideas related to an element, participants can mark it on their bingo card. Have them send an email to the technology leader once someone has a bingo (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal). Keep a stash of prize incentives and distribute them to the winners. After someone has a bingo, announce that participants should clear their cards and start again.
EXTENSION IDEA	Have faculty members come up with their own bingo cards for their classrooms. Find out how students respond to the activity.
TEACHING TIPS	Make sure that the faculty members understand that this is to be a fun activity, but also one that will help them learn more about the elements of digital citizenship. Have the faculty get together and share what they have learned by playing bingo.

Understand that some users may not be as interested in playing the game. If you make it interesting, people will follow.

DIGITAL ACCESS	DIGITAL RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES	DIGITAL HEALTH & WELFARE
DIGITAL COMMUNICATION	DIGITAL LAW	DIGITAL COMMERCE
DIGITAL LITERACY	DIGITAL SECURITY	DIGITAL ETIQUETTE

Figure 4.1 Digital Citizenship Bingo: Nine elements students should know.

This activity can be tied to a book study that you might be doing on digital citizenship (see Book Study Bingo card example, Figure 4.2).

Know your audience—bingo activities may not be for every group.

We have put technologically driven change in a compartment so that traditional instructional activities can continue untouched.	... no generation has ever had to face the amount of change as those in the past 30 years have.	Due to the emergence of these new technologies, learning will not be confined to a single place or single source.	Paradigm is a model, perspective, value system, frame of reference, filter, or worldview that guides one's actions.
When two or more ... technologies converge and blend, they create technological hybrids whose power is greater than the ... individual technologies themselves.	Change is a subtle thing. Change is sneaky.	People do not need to know what the data says; they need to understand its impact and significance so it can become information.	Communication technologies will create even more global competition ... for just about anything we can and cannot imagine.
In other words, schools have opted for trying harder with what is rather than working smarter with the new technology.	The ability to adjust, adapt, and leverage what you know will matter as much as the experience you have gained.	Is technology really changing our lives in fundamental ways, or is it merely being used to speed up old and outdated ways of doing things?	We should never limit our focus by looking only at what is "hot" today.
To fully appreciate the impact of technology on modern life, it is important to understand the development of technology throughout history.	Today, learning has become a lifelong process.	Educational institutions know that they must find solutions to this technology dilemma if they are to stay competitive.	It is really about seeing the present as nothing more than the past of the future.

Figure 4.2 *Windows on the Future* Book Study Bingo.

(Source of phrases: *Windows on the Future: Education in the Age of Technology* by Ted D. E. McCain and Ian Jukes, ©2001. Reprinted with permission of Corwin Press.)

Learning and Student Performance

Activities 2–8 are designed to help participants explore appropriate technology use while getting acquainted with otherwise unfamiliar technologies.

ACTIVITY 2 • Understanding Digital Technologies (Literacy)

NETS ADDRESSED NETS•A 5.b; NETS•T 4.b

FOCUS QUESTION How do educators teach students to use digital technologies?

RELATED QUESTIONS Why is it important for teachers, students, and parents to have activities to learn about using technology?

How can users of technology best learn about the issues surrounding the use of technology?

OBJECTIVE Educators will discover new ways for teaching content using digital technologies.

RESOURCE NEEDED Cyberlearning World—Bookmarks: First Day of School Icebreaker Activities:
www.cyberlearning-world.com/nhhs/html/firstday.htm

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION Begin the session by dividing class members into groups of three or four.

Ask the members about any interesting things they have done or heard of teachers doing through the use of digital technologies.

Have the groups come up with three activities that they could do to teach the use of technologies to other teachers, to students, and to parents.

Bring the groups back together and have them share their ideas.

EXTENSION IDEA Have group members brainstorm technology activities they could do in their classes. Have them provide reasons why these activities would make the lessons more meaningful.

TEACHING TIPS Identify areas where there are lots of ideas, as well as areas that need to be better represented.

Allow members to be creative and come up with new and interesting ways to teach about appropriate technology uses, but require them to be specific about how they will accomplish these activities.

Make sure that the group understands what would be considered good classroom activities.

ACTIVITY 3 • Appreciation Blog (Communication)

NETS ADDRESSED	NETS•A 5.d; NETS•T 4.d
FOCUS QUESTION	How can we use technology to recognize staff members for taking better advantage of the technology resources available to them?
RELATED QUESTIONS	Can technology help staff members feel more appreciated in their job? Is technology an appropriate tool to help increase communication between staff members?
OBJECTIVE	Teachers will become more comfortable using digital technologies to communicate and collaborate with colleagues toward common goals.
RESOURCES NEEDED	Articles about “Employee Recognition”: http://humanresources.about.com/lr/employee_recognition/123196/1/ Five Tips for Effective Employee Recognition: http://humanresources.about.com/od/rewardrecognition/a/recognition_tip.htm
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	Create a blog (see A Primer on Blogs, next page, for more information) to identify a staff member who has done exceptional work. Provide a professional biography of that staff member and explain why that person has been identified. Ask users to reply to a blog entry and add their own personal information about this individual. If this is done by nomination, get the person who is nominated to contribute to the blog as well. If time allows, design this activity so that all staff members can add new names to the teacher “blog of fame” whenever an individual does something that should be recognized. This update may be weekly, monthly, or at some other designated time.
EXTENSION IDEA	Begin posting school information on the blog. Invite the staff to respond to an entry on the blog.
TEACHING TIPS	Help instructors understand that blogs are a way to make the staff and community feel more connected. Be careful when determining who can add information to the blog. Restricting write access to the blog may be important. However, allowing parents and students to have read access to the blog may also be a good thing. If you open the blog to outside readers, make sure to let the staff know so they can self-monitor what they post on the blog.

A Primer on Blogs

The word *blog* originated from a shortening of the phrase “web log.” The most simplistic view of a blog is that it is an online diary. A large number of blogs are just that—an individual’s account of his or her day, pets, relationships, or opinions about current events. But blogs can be much more than this. Because many allow readers to post comments and all allow entries to be linked to by other bloggers, the “blogosphere” is a communal space that promotes and sustains dialogue among any number of users with common interests.

This creates many opportunities for education and collaboration. If guided and encouraged correctly, students can use blogs to write stories, gather information, share data, and negotiate differing opinions and disagreements. Teachers and administrators can use blogs to share information with parents, make announcements, or create a forum for discussion.

The following lists provide several links related to blogs. The best way to learn about blogs, however, is to visit one (or several) and see what people are writing about.

Education Blogs

Online Education Database:

<http://oedb.org/library/features/top-100-education-blogs>

The Landmark Project’s Class Blogmeister:

www.classblogmeister.com

Blogmeister allows educators to take a look at student blogs before they post.

Weblogg-ed:

www.Weblogg-ed.com

Other Blog Directories

(Note: Some material on these websites may not be suitable for all users.)

Blogged Directory:

www.blogged.com/directory/education/k-12-education/

ontoplist.com’s Education Blog Directory:

www.ontoplist.com/education-directory/

Articles about Blogs in Education

Blogging 101:

www.unc.edu/~zuiker/blogging101/

Using Blogs in the Classroom:

<http://husd4-tr.blogspot.com>

ACTIVITY 4 • New Digital Communication Models (Literacy)

NETS ADDRESSED	NETS•A 5.d; NETS•T 4.d
FOCUS QUESTION	Why are blogging, podcasting, and Twitter important means of communication in a digital society?
RELATED QUESTIONS	Should teachers encourage the use of these technologies in their classrooms? Are these technologies appropriate for every classroom?
OBJECTIVE	Teachers and staff will learn about and experiment with the latest digital communication tools.
RESOURCES NEEDED	Landmarks for Schools: http://landmark-project.com Blogging Overview: http://robinfay.net/site/content/blogging-overview What Is Podcasting?: http://digitalmedia.oreilly.com/2005/07/20/WhatIsPodcasting.html Frequently Asked Questions about Twitter: http://support.twitter.com/forums/10711/entries/13920
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	Begin by asking what the group knows about blogging, podcasting, and Twitter (see Primers on pages 62, 64, and 66 for more information on these topics). Find out if teachers are already using any of these technologies in the classroom. Provide a basic introduction to these technologies, offering several educationally themed examples. After looking at these models, lead teachers in a discussion of how these technologies might be applied in their own classrooms. Ask the group to create a basic blog or podcast for school announcements or a blog for teacher support, and require all teachers to post at least a few comments or recordings over the next several weeks.
EXTENSION IDEAS	Once the podcast or blog is well established, publicize it to others in the school community (parents, administrators, students) as appropriate. Check the forum periodically to see how actively teachers are using these tools.
TEACHING TIPS	Provide teachers with user-friendly examples. Make their initial examples as simple as possible. Use terms and technical explanations that will be understandable to your audience.

A Primer on Podcasting

To understand podcasting, you first need to understand blogging (see A Primer on Blogs). In simple terms, podcasting is audio blogging. Instead of writing out information, podcasters record and post audio files on the Internet, where they are available for anyone who wants to listen to them.

Podcasting has its roots in the Apple community. The original podcasts were for Apple iPods, but today, any device that can play MP3 files can also play podcasts. The process for creating a podcast can be as complex or as simple as the user wants it to be. Several good audio editing programs are available that can help you make more professional-sounding recordings and eliminate the “ums” and mistakes. However the audio file is recorded, it needs to be saved or converted to the MP3 format. To learn more about creating a basic podcast and to find resources for doing so, see www.speedofcreativity.org/2006/02/28/podcast37-effective-school-podcasting/.

As always, the best way to learn a new skill is to use it. Even if you do not have an iPod or other MP3 player, most computers can play MP3 files. The Landmarks for Schools site (<http://landmark-project.com>) has several educational podcasts that you might find interesting.

What are the implications for education? Take a look at the Edupodder Weblog: <http://Weblog.edupodder.com/2004/11/podcasting-in-education.html>. The author, Steve Sloan, explores the many ways that podcasting can support educational objectives: distance learning, additional support for special needs students, and make-up classes, among others.

ACTIVITY 5 • Twitter for Gathering Information (Literacy)

NETS ADDRESSED	NETS•A 5.d; NETS•T 4.d
FOCUS QUESTION	How can teachers automatically monitor and get the latest updates on current events or on a particular topic?
RELATED QUESTION	How can technology be leveraged to provide new content and resources to faculty at little or no cost?
OBJECTIVE	Teachers and administrators will learn about Twitter and its educational applications.
RESOURCE NEEDED	50 Ways to Use Twitter in Education: http://cooper-taylor.com/blog/2008/08/50-ideas-on-using-twitter-for-education/
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	<p>Twitter is a free service and it is easy to set up an account for yourself (see A Primer on Twitter, next page, for additional information). By using a Twitter account teachers and staff can have access to resources from in the school or around the world. Once these accounts are set up teachers can search for their particular fields—literature, biology, history, and so on. With this access teachers can ask questions and can quickly receive answers from other users.</p> <p>A Twitter account can provide current school information. Encourage teachers and staff to become followers of the page to see updates, resources, or all-staff questions.</p>
EXTENSION IDEAS	Have teachers share their favorite Twitter pages with one another. Vote for the best ones and post the list on a web page or blog.
TEACHING TIPS	<p>Have teachers in the same subject area work together to set up their Twitter pages and search for others to follow on their subjects. Recognize that some teachers will be apprehensive about all the new, “geeky” terms, and be patient and supportive. Take time to explain how Twitter works and what it can bring to the classroom.</p> <p>Help teachers integrate the use of Twitter to support their classroom lessons. Have them talk about what they’ve done and what seems to work best on a regular basis.</p> <p>A school Twitter site can be a great way to persuade teachers to try the technology, but it must be used on a regular basis or faculty will lose interest.</p>

A Primer on Twitter

Once users have an understanding of blogs, they are ready to move on to Twitter. Twitter is a micro-blogging site. It allows users to post short messages (or tweets) of 140 characters or less. The origin of Twitter started with cell phones (this is the reason for the short number of characters) but has grown beyond the original concept.

Major newspapers (such as the *New York Times*) and other traditional media outlets have created Twitter accounts to promote their content. Once you have set up your account with Twitter, any feeds that you subscribe to (or follow) will send updates directly to your account.

Creating an account is a simple process. Go to the site twitter.com and click on the Sign Up button to create an account. The site also has good primer information about using their service. Go to <http://twitter.com/education> to see some of the many examples.

The nice thing about Twitter is that users are able to ask questions and they will often receive information from other users in a matter of minutes (possibly less, depending who is online). Users can receive tweets from several different sources to stay updated about changes that are happening locally or around the world. Twitter is not one directional—users can become involved in the conversation.

The benefits for education are obvious. Teachers can subscribe to feeds on topics they are currently covering in class and receive the latest information as it happens. Schools can also create their own Twitter page for teachers, parents, and students, eliminating the need to send out hundreds of emails.

Here are some other excellent resources for learning about Twitter:

Clif's Notes—Twitter in Education:

<http://clifmims.com/blog/archives/187>

WeFollow—Education Twitter Users:

<http://wefollow.com/twitter/education>

Scribd—Can We Use Twitter for Educational Activities?:

www.scribd.com/doc/2286799/Can-we-use-Twitter-for-educational-activities

ACTIVITY 6 • Blogs and Wikis for Parent Communication (Communication)

NETS ADDRESSED	NETS•A 5.d; NETS•T 4.d
FOCUS QUESTION	How can teachers use blogs and wikis to communicate classroom activities and events?
RELATED QUESTIONS	What benefits can these communication models have in a classroom? How can technology help parents become more involved in the learning process?
OBJECTIVE	Teachers will create a blog or wiki to share what is happening in their classroom with parents.
RESOURCES NEEDED	Social Media Explorer—Determining the Top Education Blogs: www.socialmediaexplorer.com/social-media-marketing/determining-the-top-education-blogs/ Wiki in Education: http://c2.com/cgi/wiki?WikiInEducation
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	Introduce the concepts of blogs and wikis to teachers (see A Primer on Wikis, next page). Help teachers create a study guide for their classes, using a blog or wiki. The study guide should be made available to students and parents, and regularly updated and modified as the course progresses. Have teachers share their experiences with the study guide and ideas for improving it in follow-up staff meetings. Invite parents to visit these sites to see what their students are doing in class and to keep up-to-date on their progress.
EXTENSION IDEA	Create a moderated blog site and have teachers post ideas, questions, and thoughts about teaching with technology.
TEACHING TIPS	Make sure that teachers know enough about these tools to explain their use to students. Provide several examples. Communicate your expectations on frequency of posting—once a day, week, month, or any interval you think is appropriate. Underline the importance of articulating boundaries for appropriate postings: no profanity, no bullying, and so on. Teachers should remind students that parents will be looking at these sites. Inform parents and administrators that teachers will be using these tools in class, and ask them to support it with their involvement. Provide parents with a copy of the school or district acceptable use policy and show how this activity integrates with it.

A Primer on Wikis

According to one wiki information site:

Wiki is Hawaiian for “quick.” Wiki is also a software tool that allows users to freely create and edit hyperlinked web pages using a web browser. Wiki [software] typically uses a simple syntax for users to create new pages and crosslinks between pages on the fly. In addition to the main open source version there are also many non-commercial and commercial clones and some “wiki farms” (places where you can set up a wiki without needing your own server). (Blanche, 2004)

The wiki is a powerful tool for collaboration. One user can begin the development of a document or information page, and then other users can add to or make modifications to that document. A record of all changes and additions is kept (along with who made them). The most famous example of a wiki is the online encyclopedia Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org>.

Wikis can be used in classrooms for creating collaborative writing projects. For example, students can create their own study guides for the class. One student places some information on the wiki and others can update that information or add their own. Students can create a glossary of key terms, a timeline of critical events, a catalogue of important characters, or a list of essential formulas. Because the wiki resides on the Internet, it is always available to students and their parents.

Wikis require a bit more time and computer savvy than blogs or podcasts, but they can offer amazing returns in student learning and motivation when used well.

Wiki Resources

PBworks—Using PBworks in Education:

<http://pbworks.com/content/edu+overview>

WetPaint—Wikis in Education:

<http://wikisineducation.wetpaint.com>

ACTIVITY 7 • Use of Technology in Education (Literacy)

NETS ADDRESSED	NETS•A 5.b; NETS•T 4.a
FOCUS QUESTION	How can technology be effectively integrated in the curriculum?
RELATED QUESTIONS	What resources do teachers need to successfully use technology in their classroom? How can technology be used beyond typing papers and doing research on the Internet?
OBJECTIVE	Teachers will explore new ways to use technology to support content learning and personal productivity.
RESOURCES NEEDED	Microsoft.com—Lesson plans: www.microsoft.com/Education/en-us/teachers/plans/Pages/index.aspx Education World—The Concept-Mapping Classroom: www.education-world.com/a_tech/tech164.shtml
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	Ask teachers to describe how they currently use technology in their classrooms. Then, have them brainstorm ways they might use technology if no limitations were placed on equipment or access. Compile a list of the top ideas, and have teachers rank them by instructional effectiveness. As a group, identify which of these ideas could be accomplished right now in your school or district, given the technology resources currently available. Identify ideas that teachers could accomplish if they had more training in the technology involved.
EXTENSION IDEA	Ask teachers to prepare one lesson in the next two weeks that integrates a new technology. Have them report on their experience at a follow-up meeting.
TEACHING TIPS	Provide examples of innovative uses of technology in education. Provide teachers with a range of ideas, from the basic transfer of assignments (creating a movie instead of a paper, for example) to major changes in curriculum. Encourage teachers to look for new ideas and approaches instead of just updating activities they have used in the past.

ACTIVITY 8 • Providing Digital Access Outside School (Access)

NETS ADDRESSED	NETS•A 4.b; NETS•T 5a
FOCUS QUESTION	What kinds of digital access do students have outside school?
RELATED QUESTIONS	How many students have access to digital technologies outside school? What responsibilities do schools have to provide technology to students?
OBJECTIVE	Teachers and staff will better understand the technologies available to students outside school and will determine whether more school-sponsored access is needed.
RESOURCES NEEDED	Project Tomorrow—Speak up 2009 Report: www.tomorrow.org/speakup/pdfs/SU09NationalFindingsStudents&Parents.pdf Digital Access Project: www.digitalaccess.org Digital Divide.org: www.digitaldivide.org
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	Invite teachers to poll the students (formally or informally) about the technology access they have outside school. Determine how much access is available outside school. Share the data on student access with teachers and administrators. Identify issues that might affect student learning. If a significant number of students do not have access to technology outside school, determine ways the school (or community) might help provide that access (e.g., by opening the school computer lab during evenings and weekends or partnering with community leaders to increase access at libraries and computer clubs). Have teachers discuss whether the lack of technology access is an issue for their classrooms. Are students assigned classroom activities that require technology access outside school? How does this affect their lessons?
EXTENSION IDEA	Discuss whether a 1-to-1 program (using laptops or handhelds) makes sense for your school or district. How might such a program be implemented and funded?
TEACHING TIPS	Have teachers evaluate their current practices and lessons in relation to technology access. Are they getting the most out of the technology they have available? Could greater student access make a difference in what they could do? If teachers are assigning projects that require technology access outside school, ask them to develop alternative assignments for students without access.

School Environment and Behavior

Activities 9–13 directly address appropriate and safe uses of technology.

ACTIVITY 9 • Appropriate Technology Use (Rights and Responsibilities)

NETS ADDRESSED	NETS•A 5.c; NETS•T 4.c
FOCUS QUESTION	Should students be able to use cell phones and digital cameras whenever and wherever they want?
RELATED QUESTION	When using digital technologies, what rights and responsibilities do people have?
OBJECTIVE	Teachers will gain a greater understanding of when and where it is appropriate to use technology in a school setting.
RESOURCES NEEDED	Group Icebreakers: http://wilderdom.com/games/Icebreakers.html Business Training Works: www.businesstrainingworks.com/Train-the-Trainer/Icebreakers-Free.html
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	Begin a session on digital citizenship. A couple minutes into the presentation, have a teacher stand up and start taking pictures of all participants with their cellphone. A couple minutes later, have one teacher call another on a cell phone and begin a conversation. Stop the session and have the teachers discuss their thoughts on these digital technology disruptions. Ask the teachers when it might be appropriate to use digital cameras or cell phones in the classroom and when it might not.
EXTENSION IDEA	Have the group come up with a set of rules to govern cell phone use during the school day.
TEACHING TIPS	Have teachers brainstorm ways digital cameras and cell phones might be used in the classroom to support learning. Research your school or district AUP or look at the AUPs of similar schools and districts, and share these definitions of appropriate use with teachers. What modifications might be useful and appropriate? Focus the discussion on appropriate use, rather than simply on restricting use.