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ETE 107

Leadership Action Plan Educational Research and Innovation (Part 4)

Innovation is the introduction of a new idea or method. In education, technology innovation is the introduction of new technology ideas, products, and teaching methods. I believe some of the goals of educational innovation is to provide students the opportunity for learning and growth, enhancing classroom instruction, and engaging learners. Steve Jobs said, “Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower.” Technology leaders use innovation methods and ideas to reach the above listed goals.

As an Educational Technology Specialist, I am constantly being introduced to new innovative ideas. It is usually easy for me to get excited about trying new ideas and methods but the trick is finding manageable ways to introduce them to teachers and students. Currently, I have been working with teachers on innovative ways to use one iPad in the classroom, iPad labs, chromebooks, Apple TV’s and other projection software, and more. The possibilities available with these technologies are exciting and endless.

Staying current on new research and innovation requires personal motivation and willingness to learn. For me this happens through attendance to technology leadership conferences and events including Utah’s cforum, UCET, ISTE, webinars, online classes, etc. I also try to stay current on education trends and research through social media. Using social media platforms like Twitter, Zite, Flipboard, and others I am able to access information and articles from a variety of perspectives and viewpoints. All of these methods keep me current on innovative ideas and provide me great ideas to share.

Innovative ideas are constantly being introduced to me, which allows me the opportunity and personal obligation to share them. I will share innovative ideas with my faculties through professional development, model teaching, formal and informal training methods, and through being an example of technology implementer. Each of my buildings has different goals and instructional priorities and through working with principals and BLTs, I am able to promote the desired innovations.

Currently the newest innovative tools being introduced to the teachers at my schools are Chromebooks and Google Docs. These devices and programs are new and unfamiliar for many teachers. Through the use of these tools, we hope and plan to see much improvement in student engagement, collaborate grouping strategies, ease in online testing demands, and more. These new tools open up new many new possibilities for teachers but they also create some resistance and anxiety with some teachers. There are many teachers who find innovative technologies such as these intimidating. It takes patience and a strategic implementation plan for successful integration of these tools into the teaching environment.

Although innovative ideas are exciting and provide new possibilities to learning they should be implemented in a thoughtful and systemic way. They require training, modeling, practice, and time for teachers to feel comfortable in implementing their use in their classrooms with students. Innovative ideas and methods can bring new opportunities to students and teachers in the way curriculum is delivered and how students learn. It takes a strong technology leader to start the trend and lead the way in their implementation in the classroom.