

Weekly Summaries – Coach Project

Coach: Ramon Veral (Math Teacher)

Student: Ianna Hafft (Science Teacher)

Week 1: Prior to her first meeting, I had approached Ianna to see if she was interested in participating in a coach project with me. Ianna and I have been colleagues for ten years, and we also have spent time as friends outside of school, so we are familiar and comfortable with each other. She agreed. On our first meeting (9/1) Ianna and I met in her classroom. I had asked her to come prepared with three questions or needs that she felt she had with regards to technology use in her classroom. Below are the following “needs” Ianna identified:

- Becoming more familiar with tools for communication with parents and students
- Ideas and strategies to help students use technology for educational purposes, not recreational ones
- Maintaining consistency with my technology use

At the conclusion of our meeting, I told Ianna that I was going to research and prepare some ideas for our “coaching” collaboration, and asked if we could meet again in a few weeks.

Week 2: I reviewed the questions Ianna wanted to address through this process, and I decided to focus on the first one. I planned to address the other two, but the bulk of the coaching would focus on improving communication through technology. I reviewed the tools we had used in our EDEL program, including Twitter, Edmodo, Remind, Instagram, Google Classroom, and creating a website (e.g. weebly). I decided on Edmodo and Twitter because I thought those were two platforms that are user friendly, the students are already familiar with them, and they are versatile so Ianna could tailor them to her needs.

Week 3: This week I played around on Edmodo and Twitter so that I was more comfortable with the tools since I was going to be teaching them. I had used Edmodo in my classroom before, but I knew I had not fully used all of its features. I also reviewed educational websites (e.g. Edutopia) for guidance:

<http://www.edutopia.org/practice/social-media-making-connections-through-twitter>

<http://www.edudemic.com/guides/guide-to-twitter/>

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/maximizing-teacher-use-shared-resources-mary-beth-hertz>

<http://ideas.ted.com/theres-no-app-for-good-teaching/>

Week 4: This week I met in-person again with Ianna. We talked about my research and we reviewed some of the education sites I read. She thought Edmodo sounded like a good idea, so we began there. She was familiar with the set-up (particularly because it is similar to Facebook in design), and many of her students had mentioned it. I showed her how to log on, and then we began setting up a class site. We discussed possible barriers to her students using Edmodo, but

she thought most of her students already had smartphones, and/or they used Edmodo with another teacher. Once I showed her a few of the features she got the hang of it pretty quickly. We then brainstormed an activity she could do using Edmodo. We decided that she would tell students to post at least three questions that they had on an upcoming exam and then require that they respond to at least two questions. This would serve as a study guide for the students created by the students.

Week 5: This week we met in the library. We talked about how it went with her Edmodo activity. She thought the students liked it because they were able to get feedback and they also could ask questions whenever they thought of them, not just during the class or when they were at school. Next we took a look at Twitter. Ianna had used twitter in her personal life but did not have an account set up for school. Once she set up a second account, I showed her how easy it was to switch between the two accounts on her smart phone. We talked about ways that she could “broadcast” her twitter handle to her students and their parents. She ended up deciding to put her name on the board in the front of her class, as well as putting it on the bottom of her email signature. We also found educational and biology resources for her to follow. We also decided that she would start using Twitter to remind her students of upcoming tests and quizzes. She thinks if she can get the hang of it, she will start using Twitter more and she will include her handle in her syllabus at the start of the semester.

Week 6: We spent week 6 talking about Digital Citizenship. I showed Ianna the information I had developed in my EDEL coursework regarding this issue. We spent most of the time discussing hypothetical situations that might arise with students and digital citizenship. For instance, we talked about cyber-bullying and what would happen if a student started teasing another student for a question they asked on Edmodo. We talked about how important it is for teachers to talk to students about ensuring that the online environment is as safe as the physical environment.

Week 7: This was our final meeting. We reviewed how things were going with her Edmodo and Twitter. Ianna enjoyed having a Twitter account, but she was having a hard time getting her students to follow her without requiring it. She ended up taking a few minutes out of her biology class last week and had everyone in her class “follow” her. There were a few students who said they did not have Twitter so she showed them how to sign up. Overall, during this session, we talked about this entire project. Ianna said she liked having the one-on-one instruction, and it allowed her to really focus on the new tools and ideas she was learning, rather than just hearing about it in a meeting with a lot of people. She also liked the hands on instruction on how to use the different websites. We decided that we would check back in next semester to see how everything was going.