

Technology Integration Scouting Report

January 2020

COMMUNICATION AND

SOCIAL MEDIA



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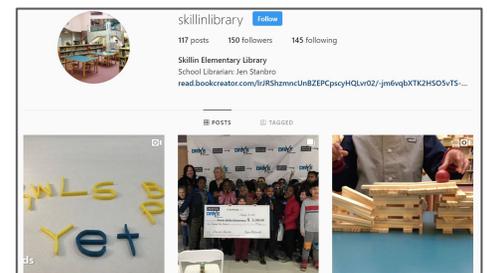
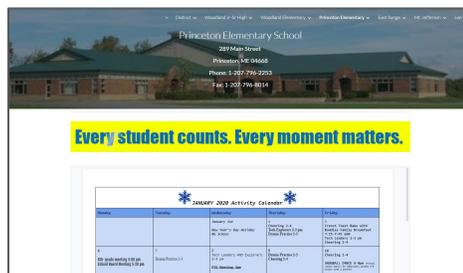
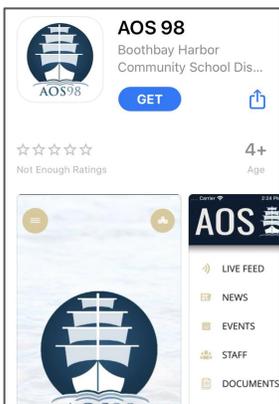
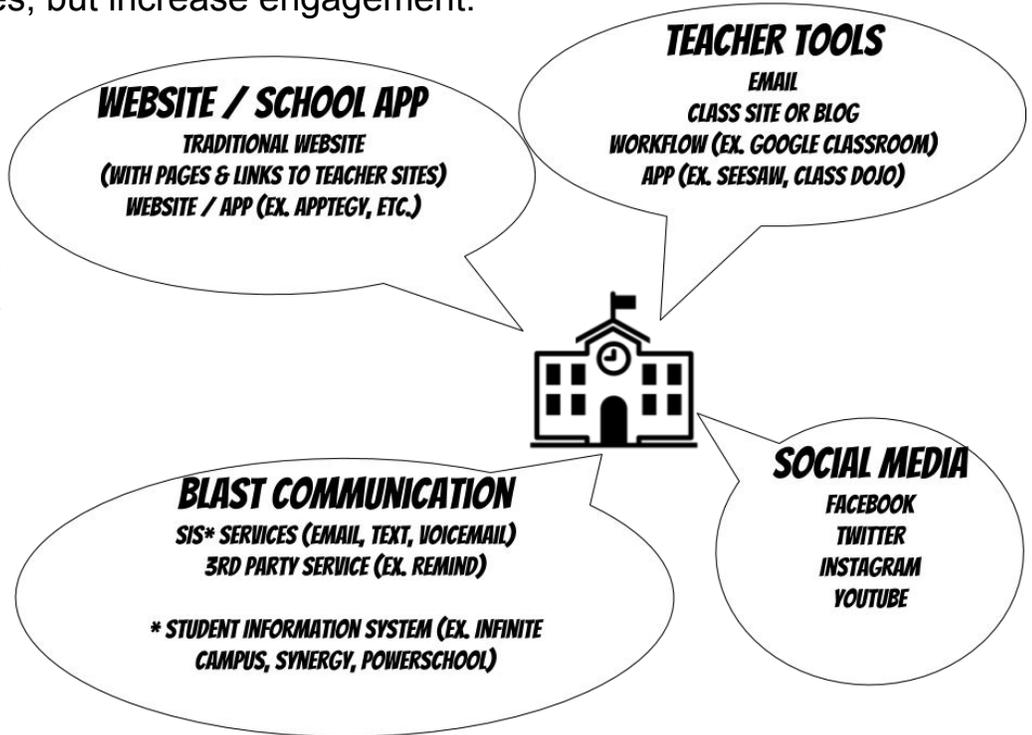
[@mistergraham4](https://twitter.com/mistergraham4)

Lay of the Land - How
Schools Communicate
A Little Bit About Me...
The Village Times
Make a #Resolution...
Staff Shares vs.
Community Communications
Students as Communicators:
3 Examples
From the Bookshelf

LAY OF THE LAND: HOW SCHOOLS COMMUNICATE

School districts, administrators, teachers and others connected with schools communicate through a variety of means. In conversations with superintendents, webmasters, classroom teachers, technology coordinators and so on, there is common agreement that communication is vital for any school. There is also an understanding that there is no “one size fits all” model, which leads to a lot of different approaches and tools being used across the state. While having a website and email is part of everyday life, there is an increased interest around integrating social media and classroom communication apps to not only share information with families, but increase engagement.

School boards and school administrators often develop policies for communications. However, technology is ever-changing and policies do not always account for these changes. For this reason, it should be stressed that individuals seek out district and school policies around communications and work with administration if they are unsure of these.

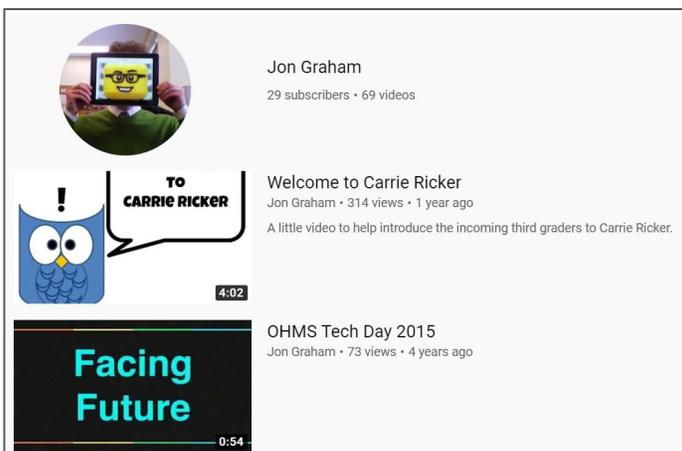


- AOS98 uses Apptegy to offer an app in addition to their website.
- Princeton Elementary (AOS90) leverages Google’s GSuite and Sites for their website development.
- Skillin Library (South Portland Schools) shares content via Instagram

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ME...

"WHAT EXPERIENCE WITH SCHOOL SOCIAL MEDIA DO YOU HAVE?"

When I was working at Sebecook Middle School, I had a level of responsibility for the school's website, I used my experiences there and working on the (old) Google Sites platform when I transitioned to RSU4 to build all the school district websites. Serving as a webmaster was as rewarding as it was challenging. These websites ran their course and I gladly let some else in the tech department build our websites using the service SCHOOLinSITES. In time, we shifted again, this time to Edlio, so I have worked on multiple platforms in various capacities. In addition to the school websites, I was a contributor on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Youtube](#) accounts that were used in different ways to share, communicate and engage our families.



What you publish on the Internet does not easily go away! Hopefully my videos from my RSU4 days will bring people joy in the future!

"WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE A SCHOOL WEBMASTER?"

As a webmaster, I received a lot of questions and feedback from not only administration and staff members, but parents and school board members. I would always keep three things in mind:

1. Safety

Be very thoughtful and deliberate about information on your website (and other social media platforms). For example, be very clear about which students cannot be published and have multiple people on the lookout.

2. Simplicity

Having a lot of information on a website is fine, but ask your families what they most want and need and design your website accordingly. No one wants to spend time searching for a lunch menu!

3. Style

Your website and social media presence should be engaging. Having necessary information is important, but cute videos, funny pictures and other media are the pieces that will lead to "liking" and "sharing" and more traffic.

Are you doing something amazing at your school that you believe I need to know about?

Contact me anytime -

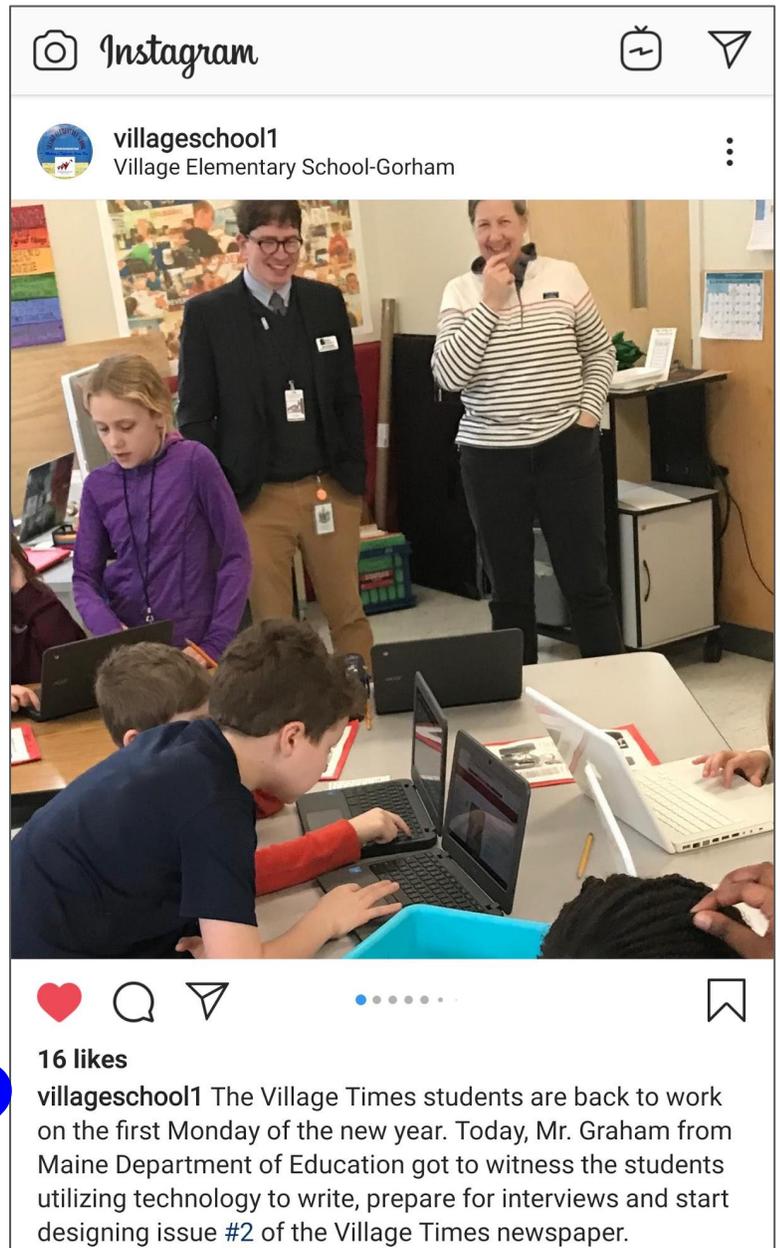
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THE VILLAGE TIMES: DEVELOPING A NEW GENERATION OF JOURNALISTS

To the average citizen, Daralyn McColl's classroom may have appeared to be loud and chaotic. However, it was buzzing with activity as more than thirty fifth and fourth grade students were fulfilling their specific roles as part of creating the latest edition of the Village Times. McColl, who heads up the Gorham Village School's alternative education program, was bouncing from group to group, looking over checklists, taking pictures, asking and answering questions and all while maintaining her soft-spoken demeanor. Students worked on Acer Chromebooks or refurbished MLTI Macbooks to build their pieces of the newsletter. McColl, whose background is in graphic design, shifted from using Adobe Illustrator to Google Slides, so students had the necessary access



Maine's 2020 Teacher of the Year
Maine's 2020 Teacher of the Year, Heather Whitaker sits down with the Village Times staff Charlotte Wallace and Kaitlyn Wallack, 5th graders for questions.
Videographers: Mateiah A., and Addy R. 5th grade



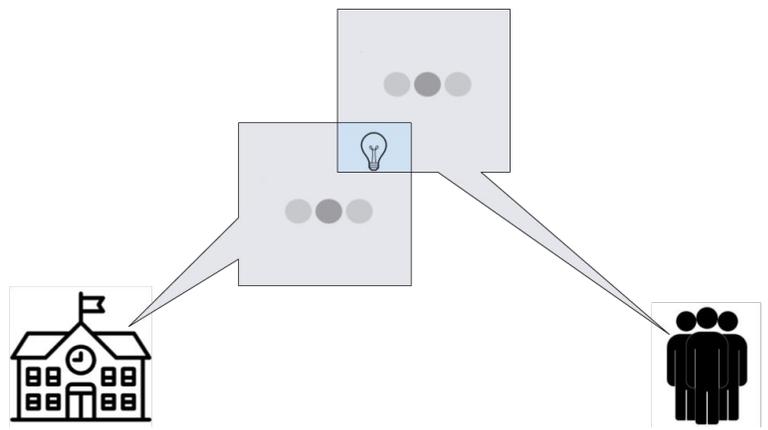
across platforms. The Village Times has everything one would expect in a newsletter - school news, recaps of events, calendars and general information. It also has an assortment of writing contributions by students and many videotaped interviews performed by students. Although the student staff develop within their roles, they are also

Fifth graders interviewing [Maine Teacher of the Year Heather Whitaker](#) (from Gorham Middle)

THE VILLAGE TIMES

(CONTINUED)

encouraged to try new ones, students shadow one another and ultimately collaborate to produce a Village Times for everyone. While the world may be turning away from traditional print media and public opinion about the media in general is at a nadir, McColl feels obligated to empower her students to “find their truth” and share it through this multimedia platform. Her staff is a cross-section of students, but any differences amongst them are set aside to work on this one common goal. This goal is most apparent when they are hard at work editing their writing, tweaking photographs, planning interview questions and seeking feedback. Joanne Gauley, the technology integration coach for Gorham’s elementary schools, is hopeful that the success of the Village Times will spread to the other schools in the district, whether it is through teachers at Narragansett and Great Falls hearing about this success or the Middle School inheriting a capable group of journalists,



MAKE A #RESOLUTION OF BETTER COMMUNICATION AND MORE ENGAGEMENT

The New Year is a time for reflection and goal-setting. While we might do this as individuals, it is also important for organizations, departments and leadership to do this work as well. For schools, it is the midpoint of the school year, so reevaluating those initiatives is logical. This year, reconsider your communication with families.

- What vehicles are you using to communicate with families?
- Who is in charge of those means of communication?
- Do your staff and families feel comfortable using these websites and apps?
- Is some training required for staff and families to navigate these platforms?
- Is your school only pushing out information to your families?
- Are there avenues for dialogue that will lead to genuine engagement?
- Can your communication tools be leveraged to bring in volunteers, collect donations or access resources and services from your community?

Village Newsletter

The Moments of Silence

A sensory writing,
by Kennedy Peary, 5th grade

I walk down the street. I can hear the slightest sound of the wind blowing. I walk into the woods. The ground makes a loud crunch under my feet. I take a bite of my sandwich and walk out of the woods enjoying my moments of silence. I see a bird flying high above me.

You can tell it's fall because the leaves are red, orange and yellow. I see a tree has fallen so I walk on it across a stream. I hear the water flowing. I try to imagine I'm in the ocean, traveling the seas. I run like a flying seagull. As I walk out of the woods the loud streets of Maine fill my ears.

Crossing Guards

By Abigail McCrillis, 4th grade
Who's guarding you?

Are you a walker? Do you live in fear of speeding cars and buses? Well, never fear!! We have two experienced and kind crossing guards to guard **your** safety!



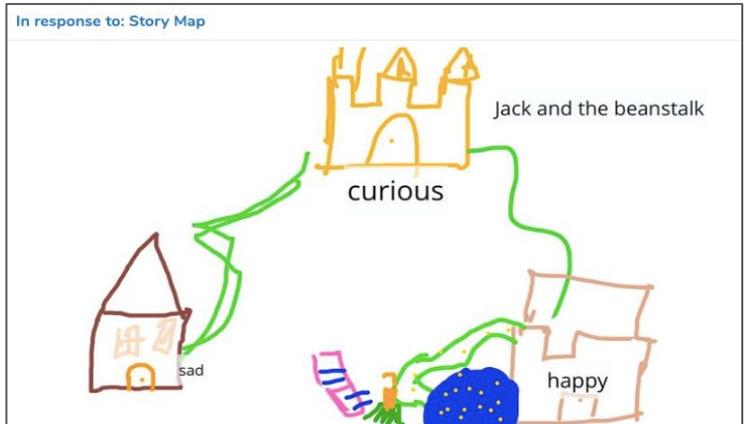
STUDENTS AS COMMUNICATORS: 3 EXAMPLES

ClassDojo is a communication app best known for its behavior management features, but they have grown into much more. Third grade teacher Diane Whalen (Carrie Ricker School) uses the app to communicate with parents (she starts before the school year even begins!) and to have students share their school work with their families. She also uses the “Class Stories” feature to send out a classroom level blast communication with just a click!



One of the aspects of **SeeSaw** that teachers love is the ability to have students capture their own work for sharing with their families. Second grade teacher Megan Smith (Yarmouth Elementary) was one of many from the field that have been relying

on SeeSaw for years. “My students post a wide variety of their own work, and I am easily able to send pictures and slideshows from our days at school. It provides families with valuable information about their children's progress between report cards and conferences.”



A story map that one of Megan Smith's students was able to capture and share with his family.

Podcasting is a medium that many students are not familiar with, so it provides a freshness that can engage students. As part of a [journalism unit](#), fifth grade teacher Andrea Bretschneider (Williams-Cone School) had her students create short podcasts that include happenings on the playground, product reviews, author profiles and sports.



The WCS Recording Studio provides opportunities for students to turn their writing work into audio in the form of a podcast!



STAFF SHARES

VS.

COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS



The Internet has provided new challenges and new opportunities for educators. The pervasive nature of access via email might spring to mind. However, the opportunities afforded to teachers by being able to curate content online has growing potential. Resources like Pinterest and TeachersPayTeachers have allowed educators to “cut out the middleman.” Educators now have the benefit of being able to widely distribute and even monetize their original work. Furthermore, they are able to build a professional reputation, which can lead to new chances within their field.

In one sphere are “Staff Shares.” These might be internal memos that are shared with one person directly to staff members. Many technology departments and technology integrators generate this type of content: step-by-step sheets with screenshots, a screen capture video or even a full-blown training resource.

Laurie Delaney (MSAD6) has created her “[Techie Tuesday Tips](#)” that she has designed for her staff at two buildings, but has made it publicly available as well. Her target is small, but it is an approachable resource for elementary educators.

In another sphere are “Community Communications,” which can take on a variety of forms and account for a range of audiences. It may be as simple as reporting out on activities or demonstrating a process. For tech-oriented educators that utilize Twitter, they know how commonplace these two are from the feeds of both specialists in the field and companies highlighting their products.

Delaney's Techie Tuesday Tips 10-29-19

Mentimeter
Mentimeter is a great polling/surveying tool! Let's try it out! Go to menti.com and enter 80 48 52 to participate in a poll about tech integration. Reach out if you would like to see the results of this poll and support using Mentimeter with your students!

novel effect
Novel effect is such a cool way to engage your students in your read alouds. Students will be amazed by the perfectly timed sound effects and background music! Simply select a book from the app, set your iPad or phone down, and read from the physical copy of the book. It's fun & simple!

Breakout EDU
Did you know that we have our very own Breakout EDU kit? Thanks to Mr. Gleason, our students can now participate in fun and engaging problem solving games! If you are interested in learning more, reach out to me so that we can plan a learning experience together.

Introducing Breakout EDU

Breakout EDU

September 3, 2019

A Look Inside Our KCS Lab

As the school year kicks off, we'd like to give you a virtual tour of each of our four elementary school STEM spaces. This week, we'll start with the lab at Kennebunkport Consolidated School.

KCS's STEM lab moved to a beautiful new classroom over the summer, and is a space the students can be proud of. From the 3-D design and printing area, to loads of shelving to store ongoing projects, to student success criteria clearly on display, our young scientists and engineers will surely have great success (and fun) while exploring, learning, and collaborating!

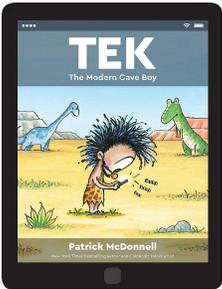
Denise Dupuis and her STEM Team in RSU21 have a “[STEM Happenings](#)” blog that captures the great cross-disciplinary work happening across four elementary schools. These updates, easily shared, by teachers and administrators, provide a helpful narrative for explaining their work.



FROM THE BOOKSHELF



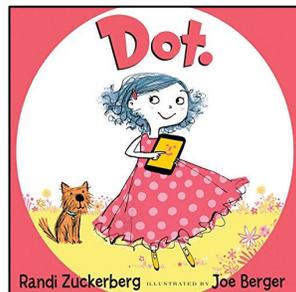
With this month's focus on social media, it seems appropriate to recommend some children's books that explore excessive screen use as well as healthy and responsible social media use. Here are four picture books to consider.



- *Tek: The Modern Cave Boy*, the silliest of the bunch, focuses on a screen obsessed

caveboy who is unable to disconnect until a volcano intervenes. The tablet design of the physical book and the comic strip art by Patrick McDonnell (*Me... Jane*) make this book stand out on a display.

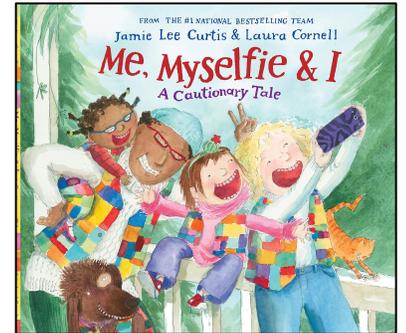
- *Dot.* by Randi Zuckerberg (the very accomplished sister of Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg)



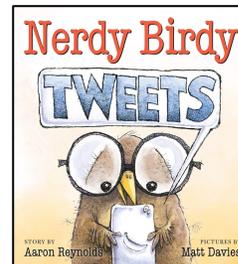
depicts a girl who is consumed with tech, but is able to unplug, so she can "Reboot! Recharge! Restart!" and then is able to be empowered by finding a balance between the two. This book has even been adapted into an animated series by the CBC and airs on Universal Kids in the US. Both books offer a similar message and are ideal for read-alouds.

- Children's books authored by celebrities can be a mixed bag, but Jamie Lee Curtis and Laura Cornell have been a successful team, producing a dozen books for HarperCollins. *Me, Myselfie & I - A Cautionary Tale* is their most recent and focuses on a mother who is gifted a smartphone and becomes fixated on taking selfies. As time passes, selfies are happening

in situations with increasingly disinterested individuals. She is snapped out of it by her kids and they decide



to "selfie again on some special day." The focus on a screen-loving parent, rather than a child, might lend itself to important conversations.



- *Nerdy Birdy Tweets* by Aaron Reynolds (*Creepy Carrots!*) focuses on the perils of placing online relationships above real-life friendships. It is a follow-up effort to *Nerdy Birdy* by Reynolds and illustrator Matt Davies (*Ben Rides On*) and has a healthy dose of humor that children of all ages could appreciate.

Know of a good children's book that focuses on issues of screen time and social media use? I'd like read them!
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MAKING CONNECTIONS



One of the dimensions of my position at the DOE that I am most excited about is celebrating the good work that is happening in the field and encouraging “Teacher Leaders” to share. That can include presenting at conferences, sharing on social media and visiting other schools.



Tech Integrators/Coaches

If you are a tech integrator, coach or tech-oriented educator, I would urge you to join [ACTEM's Google Group](#) operated by MSAD6's Susie Simmons. It is a locally-sourced group of helpful individuals!

#HABITS

“Success” on social media for a school is different than for other organizations, businesses or individuals. However, there are some rules that transfer - having current and complete information, including plenty of visual content, informing yourself with your analytics and so on. The most important one though has to be consistency. A school should try to send out communications on a regular basis. If it is a monthly newsletter you are sending home, try to send it at the same time of the month. If it is posting the menu on your school Facebook weekly, try to do it on the same day. If you push out reminders about school events, try to do it the same number of days prior. Schools are going to use numerous means of communication, but being reliable and regular with those communications is what will make them successful with your school community.

Upcoming Conferences and Events

3/7 - [Maine 3D Printing Design & Challenge Expo](#) (Fairfield)

3/10 - Maine Tech Integrators/Coaches (Topsham)

3/13 - [CMERC](#) (Dover-Foxcroft)

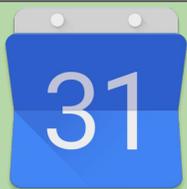
3/20 - [WMEC Rendezvous](#) (Farmington)

4/4 - [Maine Student Film & Video Conference](#) (Waterville) **6-12**

4/16 - [Reading Round Up](#) (Augusta)

5/12 - Maine Tech Integrators/Coaches (Auburn)

5/21 - MLTI Student Conference (Orono) **6-12**



Technology Integrators
Calendar (PD & Events)
[CLICK TO ADD](#)

Know about a conference or event that folks should know about?

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Fun Social Media Hashtags

#MondayMotivation #TechTuesday
#TipsTuesday #WellnessWednesday
#ThankfulThursday #FridayFun
#MondayMemories #TakeMeBackTuesday
#WaybackWednesday #TBT
#ThrowBackThursday #FlashbackFriday



RAISING THE BAR



As I find contest, challenges and opportunities for educators and students, I will share them here.

Upcoming Competitions, Contest & Challenges
[NASA's OPSPARC Missions](#) - Coming in Early 2020
[NSTA/Toshiba ExploraVision](#) - 2/10
[Odyssey of the Mind \(Maine Chapter\)](#) - 2/15
[InfyMakers Awards Contest](#) - 1/8 - 2/24
[Maine 3D Printing Design & Challenge Expo](#) - 3/7
[NPR Podcast Challenge \(5-12\)](#) - 3/24
[Wonder League Robotics](#)
[Destination Imagination Maine](#)

Know about or taking part in a challenge for elementary educators and students? Please share!
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HIGHLIGHTING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CONTENT

1. ["Teachers Have Difficulty Engaging Families"](#) (from The Journal)
2. [Parent Communication App Review](#) (from Classroom Snapshots blog)
3. [Parent Survey](#) (from Becky Dalessandro's research study)



Technology Integration Scouting Report Archive

bit.ly/TechIntSRArchive

TEACHER ACTION RESEARCH STUDY



When a former coworker shared a screenshot of a research study they were conducting within their second grade classroom, I immediately reached out for more information. Becky Dalessandro (Libby-Tozier School) has been using the app SeeSaw for several years and made it a focal point for graduate work around teacher research. Conducting before and after surveys, she found that her families were highly receptive to the app and that it created more transparent communication between the teacher, the student and the home. One of the goals is that increased parent engagement will lead to academic growth. There was, in fact, some improvement in STAR Percentile Scores within this short window and with a small group sample. Becky was kind enough to share the [parent survey](#) she used for this project as well.

If you are interested in this research study or facilitating your own version within your classroom, school or district, I can be reached at the Maine Department of Education at (207) 624-6835 or by email at jonathan.m.graham@maine.gov.

Do you have a book, website or other resource that fits with an upcoming topic? Send it my way!

jonathan.m.graham@maine.gov

QUESTIONS FROM THE FIELD



Are the risks worth the reward for my school to use social media?



Any engaged citizen knows the dangers that social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook can pose, but for schools these methods can be an effective way to connect with a segment of your population. In talking with schools, I have heard a variety of perspectives. Recommendations like not allowing (or just limiting) comments on a school page, moving away from classroom or club level pages and limiting the number and variety of social media tools are sensible places to start. Curiously, the key to adopting successful communication approaches seems to be communication itself. Prior communication where consensus can be reached by stakeholders is vitally important in the long run. The rewards of sharing student successes, developing a healthy school-community relationship and building a positive perception of your school should never be undermined by the potential of rude comments, negative feedback or even miscommunication.

As I visit schools, attend events and exchange emails, I am often asked some fantastic questions. I will use this platform to give more detailed answers, provide examples and share resources and articles.

Should teachers be able to choose whatever communication app they like or should they only be able to use vetted apps?



This takes me back to Philosophy 101 with Thomas Hobbes's dilemma of freedom versus security. Many teachers value their freedom, especially those who tend to be risk-takers and innovators. If they find a new app that they want to try out, they do not want to be restricted by an approval process. Administrators and tech departments have a different perspective, placing the protection of student data, the reputation of a tech company and the potential of cybersecurity threats above the "bells and whistles" an app may present. I have worn both hats and I have worn them at the same time. The challenge here is balance. If teachers have free reign, there will inevitably be problems at some point, especially if they are not working with administration and their tech folks. Conversely, if everything is locked down, it stifles innovation and excitement around using technology. Schools have policies that should be followed or modified, if need be, through the proper channels.

WHAT'S COMING



DOWN THE ROAD?

In the coming months, I will be making connections with educators, gathering content, visiting schools across the state and finding examples around a variety of topics. **I need your help!**

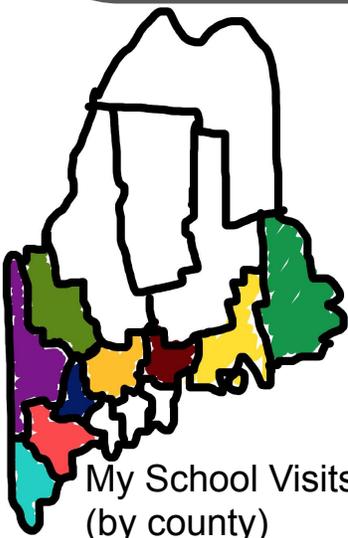
NEWSLETTER TOPICS FOR 2020

GREEN SCREENS

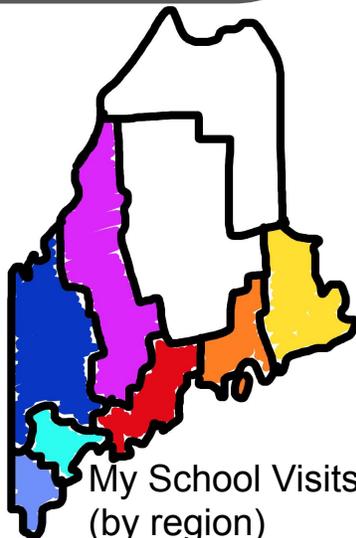
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

ROBOTICS

AND MORE...



My School Visits
(by county)



My School Visits
(by region)

Help Me Fill in
My Maps!

NEXT EDITION LITERACY & READING WITH TECHNOLOGY

- What are you doing for the #ReadtoME Challenge?
- What reading activities are your kids doing that utilize technology available?
- Who has students making book trailers or doing book reviews?
- Does anyone capture students reading out loud for reflection and/or sharing with families?
- Does your school have a digital adaptive or guided reading program that you like?
- How does your library tie together reading with tech?
- What digital libraries are being used?

Tell me what you, a colleague or someone you know about is doing that you think the DOE's Elementary Digital Learning Specialist should know about!

Let me know -

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Thank you to those educators mentioned within this newsletter:

ANDREA BRETSCHNEIDER

(MSAD75 - Williams-Cone School)

LAURIE DELANEY

(MSAD6 - Hollis & George E. Jack Elementary Schools)

BECKY DALESSANDRO

(RSU4 - Libby-Tozier School)

DENISE DUPUIS & THE STEM TEAM

(RSU21 - Kennebunk, Kennebunkport & Arundel)

DARALYN MCCOLL & JOANNE GAULEY

(Gorham Schools - Gorham Village School)

MEGAN SMITH

(Yarmouth Schools - Yarmouth Elementary School)

DIANE WHALEN

(RSU4 - Carrie Ricker School)

Thank you to those who have shared many different perspectives about communications and social media use within their district, school and/or classrooms:

MIKE ARSENAULT, ELIZABETH BIANCHI, APRIL CLIFFORD, MICHELE COCHRAN-BARNES, AMANDA DOHERTY, ARIKA GLAKOWSKI, NICOLE GLEASON, KRISTIN GOULD, JEF HAMLIN, MICHAEL LAMOREAUX, NICOLE LESPERANCE, ANNE MACDONALD, ABBY MANAHAN, MARK MILLER, MIKE MUIR, WILL PIDDEN, SUSIE SIMMONS, RICHEY VICKERS, DEB WHITE, JOSH YOUNG AND OTHERS I FORGOT TO NAME HERE.

(I think I connected with people from *almost* every county)



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