Improving Communication with students and parents through technology.

Reflection

Description

I use various forms of technology to improve communication with parents and students.

Google Voice allows me to hand out a telephone number without compromising my own personal phone. Parents and students can call, leave messages or text me directly. Google Voice allows teachers to require people calling to identify themselves so that they can decide whether to accept the call or let it go through to voice mail. Messages in voice mail can be transcribed giving important documentation. I also have the possibility of banning some numbers from calling should difficulties ever arise.

Remind 101 lets me send out messages to parents’ or students’ phones. People sign up and therefore express their willingness to receive this form of communication.

JotNot Pro allows me to instantly scan documents or pages of books and transfer to my Google Drive. I can send documents then via email to students who are out of school or notes to help students who are having a hard time understanding. It also allows me to scan and send hand written notes.

Impact

I feel more in contact than ever before with students and parents. Many students do not tell their parents when there are quizzes or tests or what work is due. Sending messages through Remind 101 has helped considerably, particularly with 9th grade students who can sometimes be overwhelmed and not ready for the responsibilities of high school.

Google Voice has also been very helpful. The days of having to use the one school phone in the workroom with colleagues and passing parents/students listening to your conversations are gone. There are no longer complicated school messaging systems, parents complaining that teachers do not get back to them. It is so easy to maintain contact when you can do it whenever and from wherever. Students also appreciate being able to send text messages.

JotNot Pro has helped considerably with instantly uploading a document that I am referencing in an email and sending it alongside the email. I can easily get work to students or scan something that I need a parent to see.

I like the way voice messages will be saved in my Google Voice and that I can also have transcriptions of the messages.

I am convinced that educating a student is a team effort – parent, teacher, child. New technology is helping make this possible. Many parents do not read emails
frequently. The parents of all the students I teach have cell phones and respond much more quickly to text messages or voice messages – especially when they can call me personally to my Google Voice.

Intent

I will continue to look for more methods to improve communication while be careful not to bombard parents unnecessarily. One of my children’s teachers always sent out voice messages to home phones. It was a nice idea but became very annoying over time. It would be certainly a major imposition if every teacher did the same.

I will continue to use Google Voice, JotNot Pro and Remind 101. It will be easier this year as anything like this needs really to be implemented from day one of the school year when everyone is fresh and motivated.