MDS/BAS 495 Undergraduate Capstone
Projects

Student Research

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Technology in the High School Classroom

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Abstract

With the increase of technology being used in the classroom, rural school districts can struggle with finding a platform that is easy to use and cost effective for the school district. Ease of use and availability are two of the main factors in choosing a platform.

When I began the MDS course a few years ago I had no idea about what my capstone project might entail. Then the COVID pandemic happened and seeing how the effects of the pandemic had on my colleagues and students made it evident that our school district needed to decide on a technology platform that could be used in every classroom in the high school. The use of technology was always up to the individual teacher in each classroom, this led to students having to become fluent in multiple platforms and made it more difficult for teachers and students to be able to assign and submit their assignments.

The decision for my capstone became to research and come up with a platform that could be used in every classroom and streamline the process for both teachers and students. To help with the start of the project, I sent surveys out to every teacher and student in the high school. Some of the basic questions that I asked of the stakeholders was, their comfort level with technology, what they most commonly used, and their availability to having internet at home. Upon reviewing the data from the surveys, it became obvious that I was going to need to create a committee that was made up of individuals that represented each class of stakeholders. Some of the challenges that we were faced with was, each teacher was using a different platform in their class, while some departments in the high school used common platforms, there were a multitude of platforms being uses. Some of the obstacles that we identified in our committee were, cost of

implementing a school wide platform, training of teachers and students, and ease of use of the new platform.

As a group we concluded that we would move forward with using Google Classroom as our platform. This decision helped to achieve one of our obstacles, using Google Classroom would come a very minimal cost to the school. The only cost of the platform was going to be the training that was going to be required of the teachers and the students, which was another one of our obstacles that we identified at the beginning. To help with this obstacle the members of the committee, that was made up of one administrator, two teachers, and two students, signed up for the trainings. Our goal was to help each one of them to become an expert in a certain part of the technology and then that person would be responsible for training others on the technology. By having teachers and students as some of the experts in the training, it helped with the training of other teachers and students. I must admit that the training of the students went quite well, I believe that the use of technology is something that they are accustom to dealing. The training of the teachers took more time than the students and is still a work in progress. The teachers have been very open to the change and are working to help streamline the process.

In conclusion, when I started this project, I wanted to help to develop a system for both the students and teachers to be able to excel in their classes. I believe that our group of stakeholders did a great job of looking at what options were available and which one would be the best platform moving forward and how could we keep improving our use of technology. Our choice to help with this was to create a how-to manual that could be used by the students and teachers to help with trouble shooting any problems that could arise. Myself, not being an expert in graphic design, am using the expertise of some of our students to help develop the guide. While we are still working on the manual, hopefully it will be ready by the start of next school

year, it is hopeful that we can share the manual with each student and teacher to help with the technology next school year.