21st Century Teaching and Learning
Professional learning facilitators: Leveraging technology to support student learning
Greater Essex County District School Board

[TEACHERS, SCHOOL LEADERS AND STUDENTS IN CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOLS]

[MUSIC]

TEXT ON SCREEN: 21st Century Teaching and Learning… Innovation in Ontario

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Greater Essex County District School Board

NARRATOR: Teachers in the Greater Essex County District School Board are engaged in professional learning and are being introduced to different online tools.

KELLY MOORE: If I click on that it's going to bring me to what is essentially, my virtual filing cabinet on the web.

NARRATOR: This program, set up by the Board, allows for every teacher to be released for half a day, in order to grow their digital skills.

JOHN HOWITT: So this year with the CODE funding, we decided that we really needed to take a look at what we've learned in the first three years, those pockets of innovation, and we wanted to get a foundation of understanding across our whole system.

NARRATOR: Kelly Moore travels to schools across the Board to facilitate these sessions. Along with tools like Office 365, she's also introducing the SAMR model to educators.

KELLY MOORE: It really is a valid one to remember because it talks about the different ways to use technology in your classroom to kind of bump up the level of student learning.

JOHN HOWITT: We really like in the SAMR model, the modification and redefinition stages, where it's leveraging the technology to do things that just quite simply are either very, very difficult or impossible without technology.

NARRATOR: Moore then explains how the online tools found on Office 365 can apply to SAMR, to enrich blended learning in the classroom. She says the sessions are all about collaborative learning and instilling a growth mindset for educators.
KELLY MOORE: Teachers need to know what’s available. So we have tools, we have devices we have software. Teachers just need time to delve in and have some time hands-on and learn the different ins and outs on how to use it and to talk with colleagues about how have you used this in your classroom? What works for you?

TEACHER: So if I want to share with another person I just hit share and just add?

TEACHER:(off camera): Ya, and then they can come and join the conservation.

BRENDELIN QUINN: I think it’s helpful for us to talk it out and learn together and then that way you may pick up little tidbits from others that I may not have known.

00:02:05.78 Narrator: Superintendent John Howitt saw a need for this kind of professional learning day, as technology becomes an integral part of classroom learning.

JOHN HOWITT: We’ve been working on trying to get the teachers to have that confidence that they’ll explore they’ll try again.

KELLY MOORE: Some of them come in a little anxious. You know, “I’m not a tech person so I’m a little nervous about this.” And I feel like for the most part when people leave they say, “You know what? That was good. I learned how to do this. I learned how to click here and I’m not so afraid and I’m going to pursue it.”

NARRATOR: To ensure every teacher in the Board received this release time without planning, the Board developed an innovative structure. They hired a team of 14 occasional teachers to form a Digital Learning Team.

DIGITAL LEARNING TEAM TEACHER: Four fingers and a thumb, something that you learned this morning.

STUDENT: No sharing your password.

NARRATOR: As Kelly works with the teaching staff the Digital Learning Team works with those teachers’ students, introducing digital citizenship through interactive lessons.

JOHN HOWITT: So we’ve worked really hard on focusing on the tasks and allowing the students to use whatever technology they have access to to arrive at those goals.

NARRATOR: Teacher Consultant Chris Knight says it’s important to have the whole school community involved in the technology conversation, including senior leaders.

CHRISS KNIGHT: In our schools we see our administrators as our instructional leaders. And so it’s really important for a principal and a vice principal to
understand the SAMR model, to have a good understanding of how we want to use technology. And also as an administrator, it’s really important to model the use of these tools and the matrix that OSAPAC provides for that is a really good guideline.

NARRATOR: The goal is to have teachers leave understanding not only how to use the tools, but how to leverage technology to enhance student learning.

BRENDEN QUINN: For the students, they’re growing up in this new age where technology is just omnipresent. So it’s best that we understand how to use it so that we can support their understanding of how to use it as well.

JOHN HOWITT: If a teacher now explores and clicks and starts to integrate and is using technology more than they were yesterday, then we feel that the project has been a success.

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TEXT ON SCREEN: “We wanted to get a foundation of understanding across our whole system.” - John Howitt, Superintendent