

NASDAP e-learning Tour 2014

The NASDAP e-learning tour was perfectly timed. Our school is contemplating BYOD for year 9 in 2015 and we were about to get SNUP'd and ultrafast was about to be laid. It was a wonderful opportunity to see how other schools coped with the e-learning challenge. We were also treated very well with flexi-flights, very comfortable accommodation, beautiful food and our own chauffeur. Bliss!

I certainly gained a lot of practical knowledge about what works. Advice such as ensuring the infrastructure is seamlessly working before implementation so that it avoids frustration and will help to ensure e-learning is used effectively. It appears that many schools are questioning the use of their LMS preferring instead to use microsoft 365 with the application of one-note. Botany Downs has used one-note successfully to help gather evidence for RTC's. The use of printers has been significantly decreased by Orewa College as they move to a truly cloud based system including submission of assessments. Allowing students to choose their own device and even to use a variety of devices was witnessed at Ormiston. However it was suggested by Hobsinville Point that laptops seem to be more useful and Epsom Girls suggests that the device should have a full operating system. The schools also suggest that teachers should be free to use the applications they find most useful. Youtube, Facebook, e-portfolio, APPs were all used in different ways depending on the need of the subject/teacher. Students were not confused with the multitude of applications. Having one main communication system overseeing all of these applications is probably useful (365, google docs or an LMS). It was surprising to see students at Orewa college with "deflated bags" as they only needed to bring their device and their lunch! The policy at Orewa to have "device free" lunchtimes (for junior year 7 and 8 students) was also a good idea. When students were questioned it appeared that they felt no need to use their devices during break time.

The lasting effect, for me was the challenge of professional learning. What comes first; the device or development of teacher capacity? I now think it begins with the device. Without it, a teacher will not be able to make progress with e-learning. Epsom Girls use the SAMR model to explain the development of teacher capacity and have found that teachers can easily identify with it. Technology is a very effective way that learning can become personalized and this is the true benefit from e-learning. Ormiston and Hobsinville Point had many good examples to learn from. Ormiston use weekly learning guides along with a variety of e-learning applications to ensure personalised learning. The calculus teacher uses an APP called Doceri to record small lessons so that they can be flipped. Both of these schools also use academic mentoring to ensure students are achieving their goals. They have also abandoned the traditional deaning and faculty systems so that collaboration and pastoral care is expected by all teachers. At Botany, a science teacher shared his development of student resources using onenote - he also reminded us that simple things such as photos added to a onenote notebook is much better than a diagram! Because these notebooks are collaborative the teacher can view a notebook at any time and include a comment when appropriate. The inquiry cycle and the use of PLGs enable teachers to explore e-learning in small steps in order to change their practice. Sharing and building in time for deep discussion is a key way that leadership can support this to occur. The e-learning community on TKI is full of resources and the VLN is an effective portal for PLD.

The tour was a wonderful opportunity to view the current practice in other schools and to network and discuss issues with other Deputy Principals from around the country. It also helped to confirm that the direction that our own school is taking. It has helped to strengthen resolve and to confirm direction.

Thank you to CORE and NASDAP for the opportunity and my touring colleagues for the wonderful discussions.

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