Cecelia Courter

ED 486

Issues in Educational Technology

Safety, Security, and Privacy Issues

April 18, 2011

In early childhood technology isn’t widely used with the students. In fact, technology use is controversial for preschool-aged children. However, when used appropriately with preschool children, technology can be an excellent enhancement to the curriculum. As far as Internet usage, there are several different websites that are geared towards preschool education and kindergarten readiness. Most computers have the ability to set up parental controls that keep children off of inappropriate websites. This allows the children to “surf” the Internet for developmentally appropriate educational websites without the possibility of stumbling upon inappropriate content. With preschool-aged children, safety and privacy is not much of an issue and very simple to control. However, teachers have to role model appropriate Internet usage as well. Sometimes this is where the problem can take place within the confines of a preschool.

The policies at the school that I run do not allow for the teachers to be on the Internet for personal use during work time. The computer is in the classroom to allow the teachers to integrate computer software and internet into their instruction, communicate with parents, type necessary documents, and use for curriculum planning. Teachers are not closely monitored to ensure that the policy is being followed; they are just trusted to make mature decisions. The teachers are strongly discouraged from allowing parents access to their personal email or social networking pages. This rule is in place to protect the teacher’s privacy against unnecessary judgment from the parents of the school. Although the teachers do not “friend” parents on social networking sites, they are still trained over appropriate and inappropriate content to place on the sites when you are a professional educator. Luckily, there have not been very many issues that have popped up regarding Internet usage or abuse at the school. The only issue was a teacher that was caught accessing Facebook on her cell phone during work hours. The teacher was terminated, but not only due to this infraction. There were other cases of insubordination that led to that decision.

The school that I am the director of does not use very much technology for student information. The owner is very “old school” and prefers to do everything by hand. Unfortunately this is not the most efficient way to store information, but sometimes change takes place slowly. Just last week, we were able to use funds raised from a fundraiser to purchase a computer for all four elementary classrooms and one laptop for the preschool classrooms to share. I am hoping to slowly make changes to the private school that help increase the use of technology in the curriculum and within the data storing systems.