

Individual Teacher Technology Assessment Narrative

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## INDIVIDUAL TEACHER TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

Mrs. Caviness is a second and third-grade special education teacher at Taylor Elementary School in Gwinnett County. This year is her second year as a teacher after graduating college. At the beginning of the school year, she expressed interest in learning more about technology and how to utilize it in her classroom. She was asked to complete two technology surveys to see how comfortable she already was with technology. Because Mrs. Caviness is a special education teacher, she uses assistive technology, and it would benefit her students if she knew more about other online resources.

### **Assessments**

The first survey that Mrs. Caviness took was the Levels of Technology Use (LoTi) Survey. When asked if her students use technology to apply, analyze, evaluate, or create she answered that the students are applying what they know. When talking to Mrs. Caviness about this, she stated that usually students are doing an activity, but they are not using what they know to solve a real-life problem or evaluate content (personal communication, February 19, 2018). Together we discussed that by learning more about technology she wants students to do more activities that require them to go more in-depth with their learning. This concept is something that not just Mrs. Caviness but many teachers at my school mentioned. They feel that students are using technology to play games to learn, but they are not applying what they know or evaluating what they do online. Mrs. Caviness also talked about how at Taylor Elementary the Assistant Principals are calling for more teachers to differentiate using technology and the special education teachers should be the first ones to work with students to do this (personal communication, February 19, 2018). She talked about how special education teachers need to differentiate with every assignment and every activity that is completed in class due to the population of students that she has. When questioned about using technology to differentiate,

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Mrs. Caviness believes that technology can be such a strong tool as long as you use it the correct way and encourage critical thinking as well as know how to use the tools. She uses technology when she is teaching by using PowerPoints and online videos but wants to go further with using technology to help students dig deeper into their learning.

The second survey that Mrs. Caviness took was an adopter survey. When taking this survey, she was asked what factors stop her from using technology, and she replied that she did not have to time or the training to use technology. When asked to elaborate on this she stated, “I end up just not using technology because I don’t have the time to figure it all out. I wish we had more training on using eClass and other tools so that I felt more comfortable with it” (personal communication, February 19, 2018). After looking at the other teacher’s replies to the survey, they felt the same way. It is essential to use teacher’s opinions to guide instruction, and it would be beneficial for teachers to have some training on eClass and other Web 2.0 tools that are available to them. After looking into the results of this survey that Mrs. Caviness took, I found that overall there is not a lot of technology collaboration going on at Taylor Elementary. She answered that she almost never collaborates with other teachers about the technology uses and may mention technology tools in passing when she finds something that she likes in her classroom. This finding shows that teachers need to have some formal training and time for collaboration about technology to share what they use and learn more about the tools that other use.

### **Interview**

At Taylor Elementary, teachers have access to many forms of technology. Mrs. Caviness can schedule computer lab time in one of the two computer labs that are available as well as book time to use the laptop carts (four carts with eight laptops each) or the iPads (five buckets

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with five iPads each). She also has access to SMART Boards if needed and all teachers have three laptops in their room. Mrs. Caviness also has access to Moby Max and Imagine Learning paid for by the school. Mrs. Caviness' perception of coaching is positive. She said that she is "excited to learn new technology" and she is "willing to try out anything with her students that will help them work with the AKS in a more meaningful way" (personal communication, February 19, 2018). As we talked, the only concern she expressed was about her population of students. Because they are special education students, she was nervous some of the technology might be too difficult for them. Mrs. Caviness also stated that she wanted to be sure that she learned enough about the technology that she was comfortable with it. She discussed the fact that she spends too much time trying to plan and figure out how to use technology, which makes it a waste of time for her. She said that she hopes the technology sessions would help with this feeling (personal communication, February 19, 2018).

When talking to Mrs. Caviness, we also discussed the fact that there is not a lot of technology collaboration going on at Taylor Elementary. As shown in the survey many teachers feel like they would like more training on this subject to help them reach this digital age of students. Mrs. Caviness expressed that another reason she wants to learn about technology is so that she can eventually help others at the school. She is a part of the technology team for special education, and she feels that learning more she will be able to work with the other teachers at a higher level. She stated that she wanted to be more of a technology leader at Taylor.

### **Needs Statement**

When asked about technology training needs, Mrs. Caviness said that she would like to know more about eClass and Web 2.0 tools that can be embedded on eClass. eClass is the Learning Management System (LMS) that is used in Gwinnett County Schools. We are

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encouraged to use it as much as possible. Throughout the coaching process, we will use the co-teaching model. Since many of Mrs. Caviness' students are in my class for math, we will create a math lesson using technology. The goal is for Mrs. Caviness to be able to develop differentiated groups and use Wizer.Me as well as embedding videos and content into her eClass page for the students to use in math. Once she learns to use the tools, we will create a lesson that I will model for her class. During the modeling time, Mrs. Caviness will fill out an observation form that we will talk about together when the lesson is complete. This form will show what she noticed about the experience and what she still has questions about. Once we have discussed the observation, together we will create another lesson that will be co-taught. After this process, we will again collaboratively explore the data together. We will then do an After-Action Report so that we can reflect on the coaching. This time will be for her to discuss how the lesson went and her future needs in technology training. We can do this process as many times as needed until she reaches a point where she feels comfortable with technology and how it is used in the classroom. At this point, she will be able to help the other special education teachers using this approach to meet her goal of being able to be a technology leader for them.

This step-by-step process is discussed thoroughly by Knight (2007) saying that instructional coaches should use modeling for the teacher, observing, exploring the data, supporting the teacher's needs, and then reflect on the coaching to show the high-quality implementation of best practices (p.109). The partnership approach will help Mrs. Caviness feel more comfortable with using technology to ease her into using it and show her that it does not take a lot of time to plan once you know the process.

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### **Resources**

Knight, J. (2007). *Instructional Coaching: A Partnership Approach to Improving Instruction*.  
Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.