



Building our Classrooms to Facilitate Student-Centered, Teacher-Sustaining, Tech-Supported Education

The Study:

This article was written in the summer of 2020 when COVID put challenges on teachers to support middle school students' social, intellectual and relational opportunities (Marlatt, 2020). The authors offer guidance to teacher teaching during times of crisis.

Actively Problematize Pedagogy and Tools



- During a crisis, it's more important to be even more critical about how we engage with students, the privacy of the platforms we use, and our navigation of human connections in digital spaces (McDermott et al., 2019).



- When interacting in a digital world, we need to question ownership and intellectual property of content we created.

- We need to question what data is collected when we leave digital footprints with digital tools and apps.

Prioritize community



We need to support middle school students in a post-pandemic society.

Administrators, counselors, course designers, and curriculum specialists should form a "village of support to help teachers with course design and delivery.

Prioritize Humans First (Smith, 2020)



- Simplify and be flexible
- Don't assume people have reliable tech, or understand how to use it

- Look for ways to build community
- Don't be afraid to crowdsource ideas
- Keep the big picture in mind

Learn with students



- Focus on student inquiry and interest
- Intentionally empower students to interpret and make meaning in online informational contexts

- Empower students to become not only readers, but also writers of new media

*Collaborative learning and play-oriented instruction enables teachers to learn with students.

And lastly, explain the why:



1

Explain purposes of all virtual and multimodal activities.

2

Explain reasons for texts, activities, assessments, tools and procedures.

Reference: Garcia, M., Marlatt, R., McDermott, M., & O'Byrne, W. I. (2021). *Today Is the Tomorrow We Should Have Prepared for Yesterday: Rebuilding Our Classrooms to Facilitate Student-Centered, Teacher-Sustaining, Tech-Supported Education*. *Voices From the Middle*, 28(4), 21-25.

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