OLTD 511: Assignment 3 - Blenderizing your own Learning Environment
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Guiding Question: How do I adopt a blended approach in my own learning environment with potentially limited supports or infrastructure?

❏ **What is your original/starting learning environment?**

-I am currently teaching in a F2F, brick and mortar dual track school, French/English of 300 students from K to 6 in a town of approximately 5000 people, in the geographical center of BC, in the town of Vanderhoof.

-My class is composed of 30 students. I have 12 grade 5s and 18 grade 6s. This is a French Immersion class where students started in Kindergarten.

-I teach all subjects except for PE.

-I am assigned an LSW (Learning Support Worker) 30 minutes x3 per week first thing in the morning. Then 45 minutes daily before lunch. I also have an Aboriginal LSW, 60 minutes x2 per week. Many times, I do not benefit from this extra help as these people are pulled from my class to support in other classrooms or there is no one to replace them when they are absent from school.

-On Mondays and Wednesdays from 1 to 2 pm, 8 of my 12 grade 5s have band class at the high school across the street.

-On Mondays and Wednesdays from 1pm to 3pm, 3 of my students (2 grade 6s and 1 grade 5) have hockey academy at the local arena.

-Every second Monday from 11:00-12:15, 2 of my 3 hockey students participate in a power skating program at the local arena.

-On Thursday mornings from 8:45-10:30, 10 of my 18 grade 6s have band class at the high school across the street.

-I have 12 iPads, 9 ChromeBooks and 2 desktops in my class.

-Students work with technology everyday in reading, math and language as well as use tools to show learning in other subject areas.

❏ **What problems you are trying to address by making this change?**

-I have 3 identified students on Individual Learning Plans which need help reading, writing and math. All 3 require technology to complete work. They are working on being more independent at completing tasks with the technology but often need my help when learning a new tool to complete their work.

-I have students who need one on one support in reading, writing, math who are not identified with a plan but to whom I am offering adjudications by providing technology to complete work tasks.

-I want my students to be independent learners so I can be more free up to check in with each of them. I can't depend on the supports that were assigned to me.

-I find the group to be very diverse and large to keep tabs on each one in a timely manner.

-I struggle with having students away during band and hockey because I am not to teach anything new. It was suggested that I do Fine Arts during these blocs. I believe 5 hours and 30 minutes per week of Fine Arts is a bit much. Because they are learning a second language, they need the time in class to practice speaking and hearing French. The activities such as band, hockey, PE, Library, Carrier Language are not offered in French. They only speak French when they are in class.

-I am hoping that by going to a blended learning model it will allow me to cover the regular curriculum all the time, and not just when all my students are present at school. It would also provide opportunities for my students who are at other activities to complete the work at other times during class or at home.

-It is very rare that my whole class is present every day. I can have between 2 to 5 away on a regular basis. Offering a more blended program might have students not want to miss the flexibility of the school day or to take the opportunities of working from home.

-We are a school of many "oh, this is happening next week", "so and so needs to leave early", "I have to get my haircut at 9:30 this morning.", and so on. Having a more flexible schedule and activities would allow me to take a breath and not stress about these things come up and have me have to change my lesson or schedule.

❏ **What would you like students to control (Time, place, path, pace)?**

Time

-I'm thinking of having a set time per day for the teaching component. For example, the what to dos for the day. I'd love to then offer a bloc of time for independent work, not restricted to bells, or recess.... This would allow students to work on whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted during the day. If I had a rotation schedule where I would make myself available for check ins or working with a small group, others would be choosing between the set activities to work at independently or with partners/small groups. (i.e. Reading, Mathletics, writing workshop, art,…)

A possible schedule for myself could be as follows. This way, I'm starting with everyone in the am and pm to go over the tasks and questions they may have. Then, I'm freed to check in to their chosen activity and to take students individually to check for understanding and support. This also allows them to have more flexibility in what they want to work on and in what order. The small group time could allow me to teach or regroup the students who are showing the same struggles or strengths.

Time	9:00-9:30	9:30-10:00	10:00-10:30	10:45-11:15	11:15-11:45	11:45-12:15
Mme Atwood	Whole Group check-in	Check-ins (individuals)	Working with small groups	Check-ins (individuals)	Working with small groups	Check-ins (individuals)
Time	1:00-1:30	1:30-2:00	2:00-2:30	2:30-2:56		
Mme Atwood	Whole Group check-in	Check-ins (individuals)	Working with small groups	Check-ins (individuals)		

- I could even have students book a time to see me in the check in spots to make sure I didn't forget or miss that check in.
- I can't use this exact format daily as I have prep, library, Carrier Language and other things happening on different days.

-I'd love to offer recess at other times and not have to conform to the set times but I don't have enough adults to spread around to make this happen.

Place

-Our school has limited options for space. I'm pretty flexible with allowing students to work in the hallway and in different places in the classroom. On nice/warm days, we've worked outside. We've also made videos of snowshoeing in January last year so I'm pretty open to options. My only rule is that there needs to be an adult close by or with the group if they wanted to go outside of the school grounds to do some field work.

-I use tables in my class. Students are assigned a different table to sit at each week so that I can get them mingling with other people than their friends. I also have a couch, a comfy chair and a bench. My back counter is the tech cafe and students can sit at the windows to work with the tech. I have a patio table for 2 with 3 office chairs the students can sign out to sit on.

-I do have my room set up so their is a clear view of the Smartboard and white boards..."the front" of the room. I"d like to change that.

Path

-I would provide clear work goals for each subject area, core competency skills to consider and create a rubric of expectations with the group.

-I often tell the students that we all learn in different ways so I am always excited to see how they can show me their learning. Making a list of how to show what they know is fun for them. For our recent science project, one group did the presentation orally while another videotaped it for me to review. Other groups used Power point because they are comfortable and have used it before but I managed to convince some to transfer their power points to Google Slides.

-As in many jobs, there are "to do" that you can't get away from so I think having a few "to do's" on their list would be appropriate. Some students like the predictability of the assignment or task, so until they'd be independent enough, I'd provide options.

-Students use technology for each/some assignments or work tasks.

Pace

-As for the pace, I think brainstorming ideas for acceptable completion time and opportunities for feedback and improvements are important. Being flexible and considering students needs as individuals is important.

-Like the path, when you have a job or responsibilities in real life, there are deadlines. I think if they are part of the decision making, they are more able to respect them or learn how to negotiate for extra time!

-Those who are away or at the other weekly activities outside of school may choose to complete their expected work differently than those who are there daily. By participating in programs during school time or being absent doesn't mean you don't need to do the work you missed or do extra but will hopefully teach them about making choices and showing responsibility.

Considering these 4 components, I could possibly do this model 3 days a week and do a more structured day (Station rotation) 2 days a week. This way, I'm offering flexibility, choice, personalization and a blend of activities as well as staying connected to the group.

❏ **What is the role of the teacher?**

-I am really excited to see myself as a helper/guide/facilitator. I think with the schedule proposed above, I'd have more time to be present with each student.

-I really want to get into screencasting mini lessons, examples or explanations. I currently have a "ketchup" folder system for students who are away. I write their name on the pages they'll need at their return and put it in their folder. It is their job to look in the folder and to complete it. The often come to me to ask what to do. I don't always have time to explain the whole lesson. Screencasting would help!

-Offering new ways of showing learning is another one of my goals. Students often want to show what they know and use what they've already used to show learning. Giving them options and ideas would help to individualize and provide options for creativity.

-Personalizing the learning to maximize time on task is another one of my goals. Hooking the struggling learners to tasks and activities where they are going to improve and feel successful is important.

-Also, pushing the strong students to go even further with learning. Many of my students are academics and do their job every day. I want them to dig deeper and to think outside the box by thinking critically.

❏ **What changes to the physical environment will you make?**

-Let the students choose where to sit according to the work that needs to be done. As mentioned above, I have changed my classroom to offer different learning spaces as well as flexible seating options.

-Ask students for feedback on how to organize the room. They love the flexible seating options but because of my number large number of 30, we needed to make up a rotation usage system to make sure it was fair.

❏ **What software or hardware might you use?**

-I would use my iPads, Chromebooks and 2 desktops. I also have a Smartboard available for use.

-I am going to use our Fresh Grade, because it is approved by our school district, to house work, videos and lessons. Students can also post work for parents to see.

-I will use a mix of screencasting options such as Screencast-o-matic, Screencast-o-fy, to record my videos as well as offer imovie options to my students.

❏ **How will you mix/balance online and F2F modalities?**

-I will use Fresh Grade or Google Classroom to house the assignments and have students post work to share with me and their parent.
-The students will get to view/access the site from home and work there by viewing videos or completing work.
-In the F2F setting the students will have options to work independently with check ins from myself, have opportunities to work independently, in partners or with a group to problem solve or to extend the learning from the work completed or videos viewed at home.
-Students will have options to use devices to work by accessing different tools to show learning

❏ **How will the different modalities provide an integrated learning experience?**

-The importance of blended learning is not to have students repeat the online/home activities with the F2F experience. It's important to build on each modality.
-Students will watch videos at home and apply the skills at school. For example, students watch a math video on fractions and come to school to apply problem solving skills using fractions such as cooking, building, creating an art project, etc.
-Students could have tasks to complete at home, enter it in Fresh Grade or Google Classroom and then complete the extension activities at school with a partner or with a group and post in Fresh grade and present to the class.