Technology Integration and Change

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“Everybody is talking about technology integration, but few practicing teachers profess to know exactly how to proceed. The fact is that real integration requires change…”

I agree with this statement, especially since I am in the middle of this change at my school. When technology became a major focus for the school as it was being built, I thought (naively) that after a week long course on ways to implement the technology that everyone would be so excited to use it. We had the first part…everyone was/is talking about it (not always in a positive manner). We were and still are working on the second part “the how to proceed,” but the fact was we missed the “change” part. I am not talking about the purchasing and training, but the paradigm shift in thinking. Several of the change models we have been discussing address this. In my opinion this is the “Why?” If teachers don’t understand why technology will change their teaching and students’ learning for the better, they are not going to embrace it. I have a variety of levels that my teachers are on as far as their technology use. My job is tricky in that I have to be careful that I help the teachers where they are currently, but also provide the why it is important, the instruction on how to do it, and possibilities for the teacher to take ownership. For some teachers, I can just send them some ideas and they can run with them. For others, I plan with them and stay with them during the entire technology integration project. This way they have it modeled for them. Sometimes I am criticized for this “hand holding,” but the criticizers don’t understand that some teachers need to be comfortable before attempting anything on their own. This takes time, and so does real change.