Ed Tech Weekly Podcast - Episode 112

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Podcast Hosts Info: Ricky Zager - Host of the show.

Introduction

[Intro Music][00:00]

Ricky: [00:06] This is Ed Tech Weekly, I am your host Ricky Zager and this is episode 112. Tonight, we'll look at active learning in higher ed, entrepreneurs solving ed tech problems, a school district's ed tech grant, and 4 educators that are transforming their teaching with ed tech.

Kristy is off again, I'm hoping for my sake she'll be back next week.

Changing the format a little bit, those of you who have been listening to the show for awhile are no strangers to that, trying to continue to improve based on listener feedback… breakdown is going to be where we either break down an article and give resources or choose a topic to breakdown and also give resources. Part of this is to keep the show in the 10 minute range so it is perfect for shorter commutes and we

also want to commit to giving more helpful resources to hep improve teaching and learning... and it is possible that I created an intro sound byte for the breakdown session and it could be terrible, so stick around for that… but let's get started with the news of the week in the rundown…

The Rundown

[Rundown Intro Music][01:33]

Story 1

Ricky: [01:37] We begin with an article commercial integrator.com brings us that explains the higher ed tech scene is all about embracing active learning spaces. They say that higher ed is trending away from larger lecture hall spaces and more towards rooms set up for small group interactions to engage with the content. I think this is a trend that started in K-12 with the flexible classroom setups so these smaller group activities could be easily done. As someone who works in higher ed, I am skeptical that this is really happening on a large scale but I do see it happening is some STEM areas so hopefully it will catch on. My biggest wish is that education as a whole can move away from the lecture format and move towards active learning.

Story 2

Ricky: [02:28] Second story... Govtech.com tells us that a California school district has received an ed tech grant. The Burbank Unified Schools district has received about a half million dollars to expand and maintain its career-technical education programs. The purpose of these programs is to to expose students to as many career options as possible. Some of the areas students can explore include animation, digital

media production, retail marketing, digital manufacturing, construction, and culinary arts.

Ricky: [03:04] I really love this, giving exposure to as many career paths as possible is a great way to help get students interested in learning and motivate them to pursue a career path whether that involves college or not. the path to educational and career success isn't always college... hopefully I don't get fired for saying that as an higher ed employee.

Story 3

Ricky: [03:24] Next story, An Education Week article explains how ed tech problems open doors for entrepreneurs to solve them. One of the biggest ways they think entrepreneurs can make an impact is by having empathy for teachers. You may have to have teaching experience to truly understand how painful grading can be... but even if you don't, realizing the painful parts of teaching can be a great starting point for entrepreneurs to help create solutions that will be successful. They highlight a few companies that have successfully done this and CommonLit is one of those companies. Michelle Brown created CommonLit and it is a free resource for teachers to get individual lessons and resources to help improve literacy for students.

Story 4

Ricky: [03:58] And our final story, Ed Week.org highlights 4 educators and how they are using ed tech to transform their teaching. The teachers are Abigail French, who is improving student engagement... Buddy Morales, working with differentiation... Whitney Lawrence, who is improving assessment... and Sophia Garcia-Smith who is improving her communication with parents.

Ricky: [04:28]I love highlighting these teachers for transforming their teaching through ed tech and I am going to reach out to these teachers to hopefully talk more about what they've done. We are making this our breakdown segment where we'll highlight the resources they are using so you too can transform your education in those areas. And now... the moment everyone is waiting for... the new intro for the breakdown segment… I'm scared to hit the button.

The Breakdown

Ricky: [04:47](reaction to audio) Well, let's breakdown our first teacher... Abigail French who has transformed student engagement using ed tech. One of her main focuses was to get away from the traditional lecture format, which automatically makes her one of my favorites. She tries to look at her relationship with students as a team. She leads this team by allowing them to demonstrate their learning with creative video projects like "notecard confessions" which use a series of notecards to tell a story in a video format and the students can add some of their own creativity to the video as well. I'm thinking that Adobe Spark would be the right tool if you wanted to add this type of activity to your class.

Ricky: [05:20] The next featured educator is Buddy Morales who has used ed tech to help with differentiation. He works with students who have moderate to severe disabilities and he has used forums on Google Classroom to conduct in class discussions. He has found that entering text has been freeing for students that normally wouldn't have the confidence to participate. This could be an interesting way to approach class discussions, especially of you have Google classrooms.

Ricky: [05:20] The third featured educator is Whitney Lawrence who has used ed tech to help innovate assessment in her classroom. She uses tools like Kahoot, EdPuz-

zle, Nearpod, and Google Classroom to give students formative assessments. Not only has she found that she is able to track her students performance much easier and with much less manual grading but she has also found that her students are much more aware of their knowledge and grades and why they have that grade. So if you haven't used tools like Kahoot, EdPuzzle, Nearpod, or Google Classroom for assessment, you should look into it. I really believe in the realtime feedback those tools can provide to both improve your students understanding and your teaching.

Ricky: [05:20] And finally let's look at Sophia Garcia-Smith and her improvement to parent communication. She uses Seesaw which shares student work and can message families as well. The really cool part about this is it translates the messages into more than 50 languages. Of course this is extremely helpful in areas where there are students with non or limited english speaking parents but it also improves the process of sending letters home and hoping someone even gets the letter, let alone be able to understand it. If parent communication or work sharing is something you think needs improvement in your classroom, take a look as Seesaw.

Social Media

Ricky: [09:13] And if you want to follow the show on social media look for edtech-weeklysho with no W at the end on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. And feel free to follow me @4techteachers. And you can follow Kristy @kristymwarren and remember our show is available wherever you listen to your podcasts and now it is also available on Spotify. And if you listen on iTunes, please give us a review.

Show Ending

Ricky: [10:31] That's it for tonight's show. We'll see you next week on Ed Tech Weekly!

   [Outtro Music][10:32]