A STUDY OF THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN HIGH SCHOOL BUSINESS EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Getting the most value from available resources and trying to insure that all students have the opportunity for equal education across all areas of a school system are two difficult tasks. This research-in-process looks at various schools to compare aspects of their technology programs within the business education programs. The outcomes of this study may provide information that could help schools and districts develop the most effective technology programs for the resources that are available.

Keywords: Technology, high school, business programs

INTRODUCTION

Technology appears to be a continuously expanding factor in education but not all high schools are taking advantage of it. By comparison to colleges, U.S. high schools have very little technology (3). There has, however, been a nationwide push to bring technology into the classroom. Administrators from several states are working to bring computers to more classrooms and to ensure that both students and teachers know how to use the technology (1). The goal, of course, is not technology for the sake of technology (2) but to provide students with the enhanced education that technology may provide.

BACKGROUND

This research-in-progress is a study in the use of technology in high school business education programs in one mid-central state. Because of the nature of school funding programs and the level of technology skills mastered by high school business education teachers, a possibility exists for a wide disparity in both levels of instruction in high school business education classes and the characteristics of the technologies that are available in these classes. The goal of this research is to determine the current status of technology use in high school business education classes and to study the implications of the outcomes.

RESEARCH ISSUES

Among the issues being researched are: how the programs are being supported in terms of funding and grants, the frequency of changes in terms of software and technology, the varieties of software being used, how the software is chosen, the size of the programs in terms of number of students, the percentage of program time that is spent on technology, the sophistication of the technology configuration, how the technology is chosen, the instructors'

level of experience with technology, the instructors' level of confidence or comfort when working with technology and the instructors' level of satisfaction with their current situations. This study is accomplished through the construction of a survey, distribution of the survey, tabulation of responses and analysis of the results.

The survey will provide an in-depth look at the programs and technology provided throughout various schools in one mid-central state. An analysis of the data will help to answer questions such as: how do school districts compare in their technology programs, is there a significant difference between large and small school systems, is there a difference between metropolitan school systems and school systems in more rural areas, is there a common technology configuration across the schools, what technology programs have worked and how would instructors like to see improvements made. Also of interest is the question of what is the minimum level of technology programs that is considered necessary to accomplish instructors' goals. Additionally, another question of interest is to determine whether environments and lifestyles affect school districts' ability to expand their technology programs.

OUTCOMES

The outcomes of this research may provide a model for comparison when reviewing high school business education programs. Administrators and instructors may draw ideas that, when implemented, could improve the efficiency of their own systems. The outcomes of this study may provide information that could help schools and districts develop the most effective technology programs for the resources that are available.

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