Building Blocks for Remote Learning

Education during this day and age requires from teachers to take more risks, experiment more, and be open to change; and, with the constant change these are crucial atributes that we need to embrace as educators; but, how do we guarantee a good education? How do we facilitate communication? How do we make students active participants? And How do I maintain the bond with our students? Let´s check the ABCs for remote learning:

Assess: In a regular classroom setting we know how to assess our students, but how do I assess a student that is behind a computer screen?

- Focus on creating- generate activities that show their knowledge in an authentic way, i.e. projects, write poems, act, produce a play, etc.

- Lean on rubrics- use rubrics to guide students learning, make them concise and simple.

- Formative assessments are your friends: check the progress of your students, this is what matters most.

- Provide constant feedback.

Bonding: Maintaining that bond with your students is crucial, regardless of the setting in which you are teaching, but how do I do it virtually?

- While working in a whole-classroom activity, meet your students in small groups through breakout rooms

- Schedule "virtual office hours" for your students and parents

Communication: Keeping an open communication is important, as well as, making yourself available for your students; however, while working on a blended environment the lines between your home and work life become blurry.

- Provide specific, consistent, and clear communication routines (i.e. announcements, emails, reminders on scheduled day). This will help you set healthy boundaries and make students and parents aware that they need to respect your time.

- Keep all your resources, announcements, activities, and instructional materials in one place, in case you need them.

- Use a Learning Management System to consolidate all your information, simplicity is key!

- Use different forms of communication to help your students and parents (i.e. audio, written messages, images, and video) Use the digital communication tools available at your institution

Dialogue: One of the biggest questions that we often ask ourselves as teachers is how can we make sure that the students participate? And not just sit quietly behind the screen.

- Establish rules (i.e. raise your virtual hands, cameras on, microphones muted, one person speaks at a time, no getting out of your seat without permission)

- Provide guiding questions for your students, so they can be ready for classroom discussions.

- Use exciting activities to get students wanting to participate
  (popcorn reading, digital or home-based scavenger hunt, small break out rooms to solve a problem)

THIS IS A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY AND CONSTANT CHANGE, ONLY YOUR DETERMINATION WILL HELP YOU NAVIGATE THIS NEW EDUCATIONAL ERA. **STAY ADAPTABLE!**

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