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ENHANCING CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION VIA
CLASSROOM WEBSITES

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Education:
Instructional Technology

by
Vanessa Marie Hetzendorfer
September 2003

Enhancing Classroom Communication Via
Classroom Websites

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

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September 2003

Approved by:


Eun-Ok Baek, First Reader


Thom Gehring, Second Reader


Date

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ABSTRACT

This project was created to ensure the most effective means of communication with parents, students, and teachers. Through websites, communication can be enhanced electronically. This project explains how to design a web page for each teacher at your school site to enhance communication. Each website should have a consistent layout, clarity, and theme. Literature was reviewed in order to find what is appropriate to have on a school site both visually and aesthetically. Parent and teacher surveys will be conducted to ensure the important aspects are included in the site to help communication.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND

Introduction

Since this is the information age, it is only appropriate for each district to provide a means of communication via the Internet for families to view pertinent information. The Alta Loma School District established a webpage for each of their eight school sites. The website for the schools list the basic information that is typed up and printed at the beginning of the school year for each parent to review. There is important information that is missing from the school sites. Under the school staff link there is a list of the entire educational faculty on staff at our site. This site has no other purpose than to list the names of the faculty on staff at the school site. Better use of the faculty page would entail a link under the teacher's name to display the teacher's website template created for his/her classroom.

Statement of the Problem

The problem was to address the integration of technology as a means of communicating. Communication is vitally important to the educational establishment.

Communication can be increased via the Internet with email and websites.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the project was to develop a website that will enhance communication with parents, teachers, and students via a web page. Websites will be created for each teacher at Deer Canyon Elementary School in Alta Loma, California. There is a website for the school site, yet it does not have links for teachers to have their own website to convey information. The site will be created and the teachers will be able to add information to their individual site which will enhance communication.

The research questions that will be addressed are to identify types of information that is essential for an effective classroom website. What is essential information? What is an effective classroom website?

Significance of the Project

The significance of the project was to create an easier way to communicate between parent/teacher relationship. Since it can be burdensome to call the parent or send letters home via the student, hoping the information reaches the parent, a website would be able to relieve the teacher of those problems. A website would

show or explain new and upcoming projects, dates, and other important facts the teacher would like the parents to know. If the teacher explained the website would be the place all school news will be displayed, parents would be able to find what they need instead of relying on their children to bring the information home.

Limitations

During the development of the project, a number of limitations were noted. These limitations are the following

1. The school surveys will only be conducted at Deer Canyon Elementary.
2. All information that will be gathered is for the sole purpose of finding what would be useful to put on a teacher's website to enhance communication.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as they apply to the project.

Communication: is the exchange of information from parent to teacher and vice versa.

Designer: the person who created the site for Internet use.

Viewer/visitor: refers to the person viewing the webpage.

Webpage: refers to that one specific page that can be viewed within the site.

Website: referring to the entire site encompassing all links and webpages.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Literature was reviewed explaining how communication can be enhanced using the Internet. The appropriate sources are discussed to explain design elements, what content is valuable to an educational website and the importance of having staff development training to educate the faculty on their new web page.

Benefits of School/Classroom Websites

Kapust (1997) is an educator at Roosevelt High School in Casper, Wyoming. Kapust used the Internet as a means of communication years before school districts found it to be essential to student and parent involvement. Kapust used a strong argument that, "Using the Internet can put a school in better touch with its local community. Making student projects and information about school activities available to the community through Web pages helps foster a stronger community-school relationship" (Kapust, 1997, 24). He supported his claim by stating that some students feel more comfortable communicating through email to their professors as opposed to talking face-to-face. He continued to say with email many students respond to their

teachers in ways teachers never expected because it is a more comfortable way of communication. Why is this way more comfortable? Kapust explained that students are part of the computer/TV generation and play Nintendo by the hour. As they use this information, students are able to incorporate more of this type of technology in the classroom.

There are many resources to use to find information today. When people use the Internet as a venue for finding information, they want the information to be retrieved immediately.

Shiffett, Murdach, Meschke, and Megginson (2001) took a different approach regarding the influence of enhanced communication via the Internet, in their article "A Presence on the Web." The authors emphasized the direct effect communication has had on educators. Professionals can send email and receive a document immediately, which gives a greater exchange of information among colleagues. Shiffett, et al., referred to the Internet as having "volumes of information on nearly every topic imaginable" just a click away. This type of information that is at the teachers' fingertips is beneficial to all aspects of teaching.

Shiffett, et al. discussed how important a school website is to communication. If the information is up-to-date on the site, and lists "snow days and holidays, the school's calendar, and special events" the information would be valuable to parents (Shiffett, et. al., 2001).

Designing the Website

Lindsay (1996) wrote how a web page should be designed. First, she explained the creator needs to plan and write out a definition of who, what, and how the pages should be designed. Second, she suggests the pages should be easy to navigate. Third, the designer should make the web page viewable with text or graphics. The fourth step should be for the designer to make the pages readable.

Lindsay offered several steps for a website designer to start with the creation of a website. However, she listed the steps one after another with no explanation of how to accomplish this step. Lindsay's information is useful, yet without comments on how the information can be applied it is ineffective.

There are several more steps Lindsay (1996) suggests a web designer to consider. Before the page is designed the designer needs to know the purpose of the website. Second, what is the organization of the site going to look

like? Third, what graphics will be continuous on each page? Fourth, what basic elements are on each page? Fifth, how will the site be maintained? Again, these are useful questions each designer needs to ask and answer before designing the web page. However, without a brief description of each question the designers will not know if they are following the guidelines Lindsay laid out.

Lindsay's information is useful as a starting ground for website design. However, it is lacking in many necessary details that should be addressed. For example, the first thing the designer needs to consider is what type of software should be used to create the website. Lindsay could have given a list of the pros and cons of the different web making software. Though there are many elements that could be added to enhance the overall effectiveness of the literature, Lindsay offered good suggestions for a web designer.

There are several guidelines that are necessary to follow when designing a web page. If the designers of the web page follows the guidelines Lindsay (1996) laid out, they are almost prepared to create a pleasing site. Yet, there are many more principles that need to be studied once the site is sketched out. According to layout design, the site needs to have a pleasing visual aim.

Luck and Hunter (1997) offered several principles to consider in web page construction in their article "Visual Design Principles Applied to World Wide Web Construction." Luck and Hunter began by stating the goal of visual design.

"[T]he primary goal of visual design, those being to: ensure legibility; reduce the effort required to interpret the message; increase the viewer's active engagement with the message; focus attention on the most important parts of the message" (Luck and Hunter, 1997, p. 14).

These goals are accomplished according to the type of web page being designed.

Luck and Hunter (1997) explain important principles that each site must contain. The opening site, called the Billboard, should have "aesthetic appeal, clarity of content and purpose, and ease of access to linked information." They explained this appeal as the good use of color, pattern, and arrangement of visual elements. The authors suggested pages have colors that draw the viewer's eye to various parts of the page. Objects are aligned with a pattern so the users' eye can follow the page easily and find the information they need with ease.

The Directory or Index page should reduce the "effort required by the user to find information" (Luck & Hunter, 1997, p.3). This is a good point to keep in mind when creating the web page. There should not be a long list of information that the viewers have to scroll through to find what they need. If the page is organized in a consistent manner, the Index page will be very useful to the viewer.

The most important point the authors of this article included was to make sure the graphics are of quality size and design. If the graphic takes a long time to download, the viewer will not have much use of the page. Eyes are drawn to graphics more than text, yet the graphics need to be a good size and quality. Luck and Hunter emphasized the importance of using the proper format for graphics. Either Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG) or Graphics Interchange Format (GIF) formats should be used when creating graphics. JPEG is for subtle changes in color or transition and GIF graphics are created for large sections of solid color. If the wrong format is used the graphic can change in banding or it will expand to a larger file.

This article clearly explained all that is needed for visual clarity in website design. It gives the required elements for an appealing web page. The authors stated

what is needed and go through the process of explaining each principle individually for added clarity. Though visual clarity is not the only important aspect in web design, it is an important one. One important element in this literature is missing. Luck and Hunter did not give cover what is considered to be too many visual effects or visual animation. Further research will need to be conducted on whether animation adds to the site or takes away from its presence. It would be important to know if too many graphics cause the viewer to feel overwhelmed when the site is visited. Though these elements are missing, Luke and Hunter (1997) covered the key issues to creating an aesthetically pleasing web page.

Website Content

There are several key ideas to add to a web page. Many have been explained above yet, there are some ideas that are still missing. Chamberlain (2002) gave her idea of what a web page needs in her article "Evaluating Website Content." She began by stating the website needs a purpose. The creator of the site needs to ask, "What are your needs and expectations?" (Chamberlain, 2002, p.15). Once the designers are able to answer this question they can move on to the second aspect of a web

page. The second design principle is the author's purpose. This is where the author needs to decide what he/she is trying to communicate to the audience. The author needs to decipher if they should relate this information in a serious way or a formal manner. Step two includes evaluating the target audience to ensure the page is appropriate for the viewer.

Chamberlain (2002) discussed the importance of adding the author's name to the site. She wrote, "In a high-quality web page, the name of the author is clearly stated in a prominent place." If the author's name and email address were displayed, this would also give the viewer the ability to contact the designer if there is a problem with the page. In addition, the viewer could relate if links are not working or if there are empty files on the page. Having contact information on the page will allow the viewer to give feedback, which will ensure your site is working more accurately.

Page design is the most important aspect when creating web pages. Chamberlain (2002) summarized it the best when she wrote, "The best designs maintain a reasonable balance between image and text and do not require visitors to traverse several layers of pages before finally reaching the textual content" (p.17).

Chamberlain (2002) offered several good ideas to keep in mind when creating the website, yet did not go deep and discuss what is required for a useful website. The author just touched the surface with basic points. Yet many of her ideas are useful to the creation of an effective web page.

There are two suggestions Weinschenk (2002) offered for web design that have not been discussed. These elements need to be included in the designing phase of the website. First, the site needs an appropriate audience. Second, the site needs to convey to the audience, in basic terms, what it does. This means the site needs to have a clear explanation of what the institution does and how it benefits the viewer.

"Redesigning Your School Web Site" by Cavanaugh (2003) is an excellent source of information on the content of the web page. Similar to what Chamberlain (2002) explained, Cavanaugh listed the purpose of the site and what information it should hold.

"Purposes of school web sites include:
recognizing student achievement, posting
collaborative student projects, organizing
curriculum resources for teachers and students,
organizing information for staff, introducing

visitors to the school, introducing prospective students to the school, providing information to parents" (Cavanaugh, 2003, p.14).

The technology team should decide what information is vital to their website. After seeking the help of parents and teachers in the design process, a final decision should be made as to what pertinent information will increase communication.

Staff Development Using Technology

A school website that offers teachers to create and implement their own webpage is vital to communication. However, most teachers do not know how to use or even create their own webpage. Staff development in this area is vital to ensure the success of communication within the school site. Schools need to offer and train teachers how to create their own webpage so the goal of enhanced communication can be reached.

Several articles on staff development identified current trends school districts are implementing that have been beneficial to educate professionals in technology. Shaw (2003) the Director of Technology at Dwight Englewood School in New Jersey has found several ideas for staff development in his article "Making it Work for Learning."

Shaw suggested finding the unique needs of the teachers and then forming the staff development around those needs. Once the needs are found the training should be focused to meet the teacher's needs. If the district will integrate the teacher's needs in the staff development the training will give "meaning and value, creating a bridge between the mastery of the skill and a clear, immediate classroom application of it" (Shaw, 2003, p.39).

The most beneficial trend in staff development is to recognize that all teachers are at different levels of knowledge about the subject. Since this is the case at all school districts Shaw (2003) suggested "a variety of different models, each meeting the needs of different teachers and achieving different types of learning objectives."

A current trend that most school districts try to provide is the momentum to continue. Once a teacher attends staff development training the excitement for the topic might continue a day or two after the meeting. It is up to the district to keep the expectation level high as well as the enthusiasm for the topic according to Anderson (2003).

The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) created standards for staff development which are the foundation

to make decisions about technology related staff development. The standards help regulate face-to-face training and learning online (Killion, 2002).

Online learning has become a popular method of training teachers. Killion, the director of special projects for NSDC, suggested districts use a comprehensive plan for professional development. Killion explained a comprehensive plan contains a vision for staff development determined by the district. The vision should be based on student achievement and the needs of educators. Once the vision is in place and the comprehensive plan has been developed, effective planning should be in progress for staff development training.

The most important quality teachers need to have in staff development training is flexibility (Killion, 2002). Educators need "flexibility for adjusting content to meet the unique needs of their schools, districts, and individual educators" (Killion, 2002, p.40). For staff development to be successful, the training needs to be aligned with current goals for learning and the educator's performance expectations (Killion, 2002).

The effectiveness of electronic staff development has been linked to the ease of operation. Individual learning plans could be developed by the educator and stored for

review. Teachers can also use electronic portfolios where they document what they have accomplished and any work they have completed (Killion, 2002). These types of activities are more easily developed if the educator is taking staff development classes online as opposed to face-to-face instruction.

Though online staff development has been successful it has not been proven to be the best form of training. Unless the "technology supports high-quality learning for educators" online training could be considered useless (Killion, 2002). With effective training and planning, online staff development will be successful for educators.

Holcombe is a professor at the University of North Carolina and a grant writer for Guilford County Schools. In her article "Are You Ready?" (2003) she proposed, "a new form of technology staff development has become a popular alternative for many school districts and teachers." Holcombe suggested, to the ease of learning at the teachers's specified time and comfort of their own home, online learning has become more popular. "Online learning, by the nature of its design, offers adult learners advantages not commonly found in traditional course formats" (Holcombe, 2003, p.50). The teachers were able to work at their own pace and even in the middle of

the night if they chose to. The only drawback the teachers identified was the amount of online reading they were required to do.

Holcombe developed a Planning Guide for Effective Online Technology Staff Development to "help both technology leaders and teachers more productively plan for and participate in online technology staff development courses" (Holcombe, 2003). The guide listed five main points that must be carried out in staff development planning. The first step is identifying knowledge resources. Step two is to create an advisory team; step three identify training resources; step four evaluate and select courses; step five is to create a plan. Holcombe used this plan to help districts develop online staff development training. Though there is not any research to show whether teachers learn more from online training or face-to-face training, the teachers "enjoyed the online experience more than they would have enjoyed sitting in a four-hour workshop for five days after having worked with students for seven hours" (Holcombe, 2003, p.51).

Pardini (2002) suggested an entirely different method of motivation in staff development. She researched three separate school districts to see what major concepts they all embraced. Pardini found that the districts delivered

staff development in a variety of ways. Since teachers have different levels of interest and expertise it is wise for the school district to allow different opportunities or methods for staff development rather than listening to the tradition lecture for four hours at a time (Pardini, 2002). The Director of Technology at the Clark County School District in Las Vegas, Nevada, challenged her staff to find multiple ways to deliver staff development. The teachers brainstormed and came up with several different suggestions that came from the different learning styles.

The first suggestion was to have teachers train their peers. Instead of professionals who do not have experience with the students they would get suggestions from the teachers who have been successful in the classroom. Anderson (2003) author of "Creating Tech-Savvy Teachers" agreed with Pardini. Anderson stated "Teachers prefer to learn from their peers, those they know and trust." Pardini's second suggestion was to have lesson plans already created for the teachers to take back to their classroom and implement right away. Though many school districts currently supply teachers with manuals or instructional materials at the staff inservices, many more districts do not. It needs to be a current practice of

school districts to provide teachers with materials they can use when the staff development is over.

Summary

Communication is vital to a supportive learning environment in the classroom. If each teacher had a classroom website and updated it frequently, communication would be enhanced between the teachers and parents. In order to have an effective website, educators need to be trained with staff development over the new technology they will be using. If effective staff development is not utilized, the website will not be of any use to the parent or teacher.

CHAPTER THREE

DESIGN

Introduction

There are several steps that go into developing a website for each classroom. These steps will be assessed using analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation.

Analysis

There are many different aspects to add to a teacher's website. Evaluation of these aspects explains the most important facet to add to a teacher's website is consistency. All pages must have consistency in design layout and graphics. Once this is achieved, the website needs to have clarity of instruction. The purpose of the website must be understood from the home page. Heinich, Molenda, Russell, and Smaldino (1996) gave examples of what the goals of visual design are in their article, "Instructional Media and Technologies for Learning." Heinich et al. suggested having legibility, focus attention on the most important parts of the message, and reducing the effort to interpret the message.

The teacher's websites were created using these details. Careful analysis was given to the layout,

graphics, and content of the website. Once the site was evaluated by the teachers and parents their suggestions were added to the site to ensure it was user-friendly.

Design

The web page will be created using the software by Macromedia© called Dreamweaver©. Attached to the main web page for the Alta Loma School District is a link to Deer Canyon Elementary. Under this link is a description of the school and its faculty. To view all of the faculty the visitor can click on the link and see a list of all personnel at Deer Canyon Elementary. There is no other information added to the site, except a list of room numbers. This project will add a link to the teachers' name to their own website created specifically for their classroom.

The first page, after the teacher's name is clicked on, will show a welcome note to the viewer and display the teacher's name, room number, school phone number, and email address. The index page (or first page) will have the school name in the top left corner and the school address. This page will also have several links titled important dates, classroom schedule, standards, web resources, and contact information. Those links were

added to the site in response to what the teachers requested. The teachers filled out a questionnaire (see appendix B) regarding what they would like on the website. Each teacher at the school site will have the same index page to create consistency within the site. The links will be created for the teacher to add content that is most useful for the parents to view. The added content is based on what the parents requested by filling out the questionnaire (see appendix C).

Development

There are several important pieces of information that need to be included on the template site that have been requested by the parents and teachers of Deer Canyon Elementary. The information requested was based on a questionnaire sent out to all parents and teachers (see Appendices B & C). The home page for each teacher will include the basic information: teacher's name, grade taught, best time to reach the teacher, school phone number and address, and email address. On the teacher's home page there will be links that connect the viewer to important dates, class schedule, contact information, the state standards, and web resources. Since this is a template site, the teachers will have to add the

information specific to their room to each of the links listed above. Deer Canyon Elementary will provide a day for all teachers to enter in the information they would like to convey to their viewers. At the beginning of school the website Uniform Resource Locator (URL) will be given to all parents for them to use throughout the year. The teachers are encouraged to update the site weekly or monthly.

Implementation

A questionnaire was sent out (see Appendix B) after the template site was created in order to get the teachers' opinions and feedback on what links they would like the site to have. When all the surveys were turned in, the website was edited using a majority of the suggestions from the teachers. Once all the sites were edited and viewed by the teachers, the researcher surveyed parents to get suggestions on the content (see Appendix C). The primary goal was to ensure the parents were able to get more information from the site hence, better communication with the educators. At the beginning of the school year the students will be introduced to the teacher's website to be informed of changes or specific dates. The first time the students are in the computer

lab, they will have an introductory view of their teacher's site. The students will learn what the site is about and how it can help them. They will also be able to tell their parents about the site and show them how it works. All students will be able to navigate the site. Both parent and student will use the site and the teacher will be updating the site weekly if there are changes that need to be made.

Training will be provided for all teachers to learn how to edit their website when the site is introduced. Training will be provided by the Director of Information Technology at Alta Loma School District and by myself.

Evaluation

The site was on the Internet and it was tested with parents and teachers. The teachers evaluated the site to ensure the links were ones that could benefit their classroom. The page was presented to the teachers with the design elements in place, yet the content was missing. Since each site was designed for one specific teacher, that particular teacher is required to add his/her own content to the web page. This would be the information they want their parents to view and keep checking to see if there are any updates. Many teachers began adding

content to their sites to prepare for the next school year. Other teachers will add the content later.

Out of the 31 teachers at Deer Canyon Elementary School, 29 of the teachers were willing to use the site as a means of communication with the parents.

There were 42 parents survey using the teacher's website. Out of the 42 parents, 35 parents feel the website will be useful in helping communication with the teachers. The most common question the parents had was regarding the number of times the site would be updated with new and current information. Since this varies from teacher to teacher, they were directed to ask their child's teacher this specific question.

Summary

Webpages can enhance communication between parents, students, and teachers. Effective communication is essential to provide an effective foundation for learning. Teachers can provide parents with the important details by using a website that has been created for them. The website only needs to contain the information that will benefit the parent or students. Information that is essential to a website is the type of information that can be broadcasted over the Internet to save the parent from

making a phone call or writing a letter to the teacher to explain the event. Excessive graphics and animation on a website can take away from the pertinent information. The site should have a consistent theme throughout all of its pages. This information will be applied to the website to make the site more effective. The teachers' and parents' comments will be reflected in the site to ensure it is addressing everyone's needs.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Included in this section is a presentation of the conclusions gleaned as a result of completing the project. Further, the recommendations extracted from the project are presented. Lastly, the Chapter concludes with a summary of the entire project.

Conclusions

The conclusions extracted from the project followed:

1. Teachers need to be involved in the process of making a classroom website for their use.
2. Using technology via the Internet is an effective means of communicating with parents.
3. Parents are growing more accustomed to communicating online, therefore this form of communication needs to be implemented in each school.
4. Communication can be enhanced using the Internet. If the site is updated weekly, it will increase the information that parents need to know.

5. Teachers are willing to add information to their website, however they need to be taught how to use the program or add the information. If they are not taught, they will not use it.
6. Parents want to know what is going on in their child's school. If they are able to look at a website and obtain the amount of knowledge they need to know to keep up on important events, they will be happier with their child's education.
7. If the designer allows the teachers to have some input in what they are going to have to use (i.e. the website) they are more willing to use it and overall their attitude is generally positive.

Recommendations

The recommendations resulting from the project followed:

1. Use a consistent theme when creating classroom websites. The layout, design, and content needs to be similar for all teachers. It is vital that the site has an ease to its navigation. If it is difficult to find information or if it is

complicated to find what the viewers are looking for, they will not return to the site.

2. Seek the expertise of teachers and parents to ensure you are creating what they would like on the site. Most teachers are very creative and they have a vast amount of expertise: seek their advice and questions about the project.
3. Use a technology team to help create the teachers' sites.
4. The site needs to be tested before it is used by the public. A representative sample needs to poll the site to ensure all elements are added to the site.
5. If the teachers are required to use the site, they need to be educated on the operation of it and how it works. Teachers are more willing to use something once they have had training on the item. If there is no training, the site will be of no use.
6. Seek the advice and counsel of the principal of the school. He or she needs to have input regarding the design, layout, and content of the site. Permission needs to be granted from the principal before the site is designed.

7. Always begin researching other school website to obtain the most amount of information about other school sites. This will give the designer more ideas about what they would like or not like added to their site.

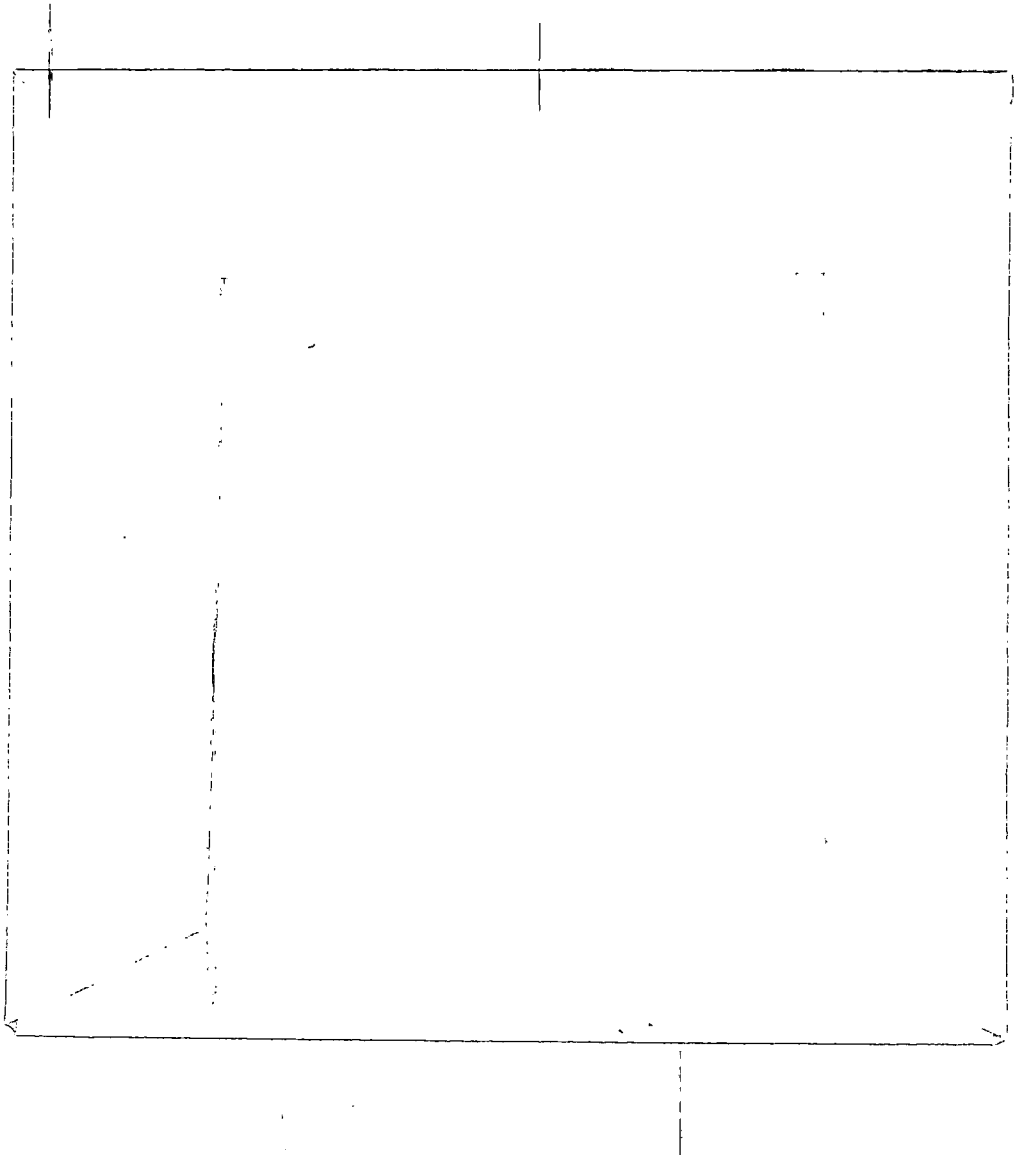
Summary

Teacher to parent relationships are beneficial to an effective education of the child. The biggest problem is lack of communication. This problem can be remedied if the teachers would communicate with the parents on a weekly basis using the Internet. Many dates, events, and problems can be posted on the teacher's website for the parents to view. Informing the parents of future events and projects is beneficial to their child's education and will enhance learning. Therefore it is critical to have a better form of communication with parents than the occasional note home.

Schools are recommended to have a website for the teachers to use at their discretion. A simple layout that conveys what the parents want to know is vital to enhancing communication.

APPENDIX A
CD OF PROJECT

CD on this page



APPENDIX B
TEACHER CONSENT AND
QUESTIONNAIRE

Consent Form For Teachers
Enhancing Communication Via Classroom Websites

You are invited to be in a research study of teacher's websites and how they can enhance communication with parents. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a teacher at Deer Canyon Elementary. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Vanessa Hetzendorfer a student at California State University, San Bernardino under the supervision of Prof. Eun-Ok Baek, Department of Science, Math, & Technology.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to get the teacher's feedback on which web links they would like added to their website.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Fill out the questionnaire and return it for evaluation. The questionnaire should take you approximately five to ten minutes to complete.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

The study has no risks.

The benefits to participation are selecting the links you would like on your website and better communication with your student's parents.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with California State University, San Bernardino. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is: Vanessa Hetzendorfer. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact her in room 32, or 909-948-9753, or vhetzendorfer@alsd.k12.ca.us.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), contact Dr. Eun-Ok Baek, Professor at California State University, San Bernardino and advisor of the research.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Unique Identifier: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

Deer Canyon Elementary Teacher's Questionnaire

Please put an X in the box of the links you would like on your site. If there is one you would like to add, please do so at the bottom of the page.

- ☐ Important Dates - this link would take the viewer to see the school calendar as well as any field trips, parties, or other information you would like to put on the calendar.
- ☐ School or classroom schedule - this is where your daily schedule would be displayed or just the school bell schedule would be shown.
- ☐ State standards - I would create a link to your grade level's state standards.
- ☐ Teacher's Vita - this is where you would put up the years you have taught, where you went to school and what degrees you hold.
- ☐ Contact information - school phone numbers, email address, and school address will be displayed here. I will also display the best time for parents to contact you.
- ☐ Student's work - this is where we could scan the exemplary work of your students and put it on the site.
- ☐ Web resources - your favorite websites and those that would be helpful to parents or students.
- ☐ Homework - you could list the daily homework or attach any files to which you want the students or parents to have access.

APPENDIX C
PARENT CONSENT AND
QUESTIONNAIRE

Consent Form for Parents

Enhancing Communication Via Classroom Websites

You are invited to be in a research study of teacher's websites and how they can enhance communication with parents. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a parent at Deer Canyon Elementary. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Vanessa Hetzendorfer a student at California State University, San Bernardino under the supervision of Prof. Eun-Ok Baek, Department of Science, Math, & Technology.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to get the parent's feedback on how communication can be enhanced via a website.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Fill out the questionnaire and return it for evaluation. The questionnaire should take you approximately five to ten minutes to complete.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

The study has no risks.

The benefit of participation is enhanced communication with your child's teacher to ensure a better learning environment.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with California State University, San Bernardino. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is: Vanessa Hetzendorfer. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact her in room 32, or 909-948-9753, or vhetzendorfer@alsd.k12.ca.us.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), contact Dr. Eun-Ok Baek, Professor at California State University, San Bernardino and advisor of the research.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Unique Identifier: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

Parent Questionnaire

1. What aspects of the website do we need to keep?
2. What do you like most about the teacher's site?
3. What do you like least about the teacher's site?
4. What link would you like added to the teacher's site?
5. Do you feel the teacher's website enhances communication? If not, how could it?
6. Any other comments you would like to make?

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