the JOURNAL
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BYOD | Viewpoint

7 Myths About BYOD Debunked

Lisa Nielsen, the author of "Teaching Generation Text: Using Cell Phones to Enhance Learning" and "The Innovative Educator" blog, believes it is time to shatter a few myths about students bringing their own devices (BYOD) to school.

- By Lisa Nielsen
- 11/09/11

More than a decade into the 21st century and we are still keeping learners and teachers prisoners of the analog past by enforcing outdated mandates that ban and block them from using the digital resources of their world.

Fortunately, today's students are standing up, speaking out, and, in many cases, using the technology and websites they do not have access to in school to do so. It's time to listen to the students (and many of their parents and teachers) and shed light on misconceptions by dispelling common myths about bringing your own device (BYOD) to school. When we do, we can begin to move past the ignorance and toward breaking the ban.

Myth No. 1: BYOD deepens the digital divide.
The digital divide exists whether we allow students to bring the devices they own to school or not. It is illogical to prohibit those students who have devices from using them in a desire to achieve a sense of equity rather than to provide devices for those who need them. Tim Clark, district instructional technology specialist with **Forsyth County Schools** (GA), explains that in his experience with BYOD, "Students who do not have personal technology devices have greater access to school-owned technology tools when students who bring their own devices to school are no longer competing for that access."

Myth No. 2: BYOD will result in lessons geared toward the weakest device.
In his blog post, "BYOD--The Worst Idea of the Century?" Gary Stager asserts that BYOD diminishes the otherwise enormous potential of educational computing to the weakest "device" in the room. Teachers who have worked in successful BYOD environments know that Stager is wrong. While teachers may know that cell phones can be used as tools to read a book, write an article, or serve as a free student response system, they may not realize they can be used as tools that enable students to create podcasts or digital books. The shift in a BYOD school is for teachers and students to come together to discuss and discover the limitless possibilities that a tech-rich environment provides, and then work together to think about how to best pursue learning goals.

Myth No. 3: BYOD will cause students to be distracted.
Teachers across the globe are finding that with the right strategies and building blocks in place, learners are much more engaged in connected classrooms. Strategies include incorporating technology into learning plans and updating learning goals to meet the needs of today's students. Building blocks