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BEDUC 425

Internet Safety Plan

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Blogging in the classroom

 After doing a little research I found a few blogging websites that would be suitable for blogging in the classroom. Blogger and Edublog are my top two choices. I like Edublog because it allows multiple options for teachers and students; however, these additional options come at a cost. For the cost of $3.33per month or if purchased in bulk $4 per year, Edublog provides the option of Edublog Pro; a blogging site prefect for individual teachers or entire classes. Edublog Pro features absolutely no advertising and the ability to turn off the ads on 50 free blogs, 10GB of storage, allows 50 student blogs to embed videos, widgets, and more. Students are required to have an e-mail address to post to an Edublog site, but thanks to Google, this can be done easily and safely. A teacher is able to create an e-mail for all students that is linked to a personal gmail account create by the teacher. For example, Gmail ignores anything in the first half of an email address after a plus sign, so if an e-mail with the format username+studentname@gmail.com all e-mails will be sent to the inbox of username@gmail.com. This feature allows students to post to a blog without any security risk and teachers are able to moderate all comments and post being made to blog. While Edublog does not offer privacy settings, Edublog Pro does. Unfortunately, to see the privacy setting for Edublog Pro I have to purchase an account. Without making a purchase, the only bit of information that is giving to me it that Edublog Pro comes with “Powerful privacy and security functionality.” I am assuming that given this is a website designed for student blogging “powerful privacy” indicated that there is a way to block all outside viewers from seeing the blog page, but of course I can’t be certain of that without purchasing an Edublog Pro account.

 Before implementing a classroom blog, I would need to send home a permission slip for parents to sign. Along with the permission slip would be a copy of the instructions and policies/procedures students are required to follow. Parents and students will be required to sign the sheet and return it to school the next day. I would inform parents to keep a photocopy of instructions near-by for students to refer to them if needed. The instruction sheet will also inform students that they are not to post any personal information about themselves that could lead to others determining who they are, where they live, what school they attend, who their friends and family member are, username, passwords and/or any other pertinent information that could lead to a dangerous situation. Students will not be allowed to use their last name whatsoever and it is preferred that they use a pseudonym for their first name, especially those with a unique first names. Along with students learning what NOT to post on a blog about themselves, I will make it clear that they are NOT to post any of the information previously mention about any other classmate. I don’t want students to put themselves or anyone else in a dangerous situation. I will also make it clear in the permission slip that it is necessary for parents to accept responsibility for learning about internet safety.

 Lastly, before entering the digital world, I will need to teach my students what it means to be a good “digital citizen.” Students will learn what it means to constructively contribute to our classroom blog. Students are expected to contribute to every assignment, following detailed handouts about assignments. Along with the detailed assignments, students are expected to treat each other the same in the “digital world” as they would in the classroom. Classroom expectations, such as being respectful to other classmates’ ideas and suggestions, are the same for blog posts and comments. As in the classroom, inappropriate speech is prohibited in all blog posts and comments and consequences will follow if this guideline is not followed.