

Building 21st Century Skills Via Student Activities Program Using Web 2.0 and Google Tools

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Introduction

Technology in education is growing faster and faster each day. Teachers and students are trying to catch up to this change in learning. The workforce is looking for graduates who are strong in what they call 21st century skills - Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking, and Creativity. On one end, teachers are teaching these skills by implementing technology into classrooms and their curriculum. On the other end, teachers and students do not always know how to use the numerous Web 2.0 tools out there effectively. This can be true not only in the traditional academic classrooms, but also in extracurricular programs such as a Student Activities Program.

There are a plethora of ways to incorporate technology into a Student Activities Program however there is practically no information available on how to do it. The purpose of the project was to create a website where Student Activities Directors, teachers, and student leaders could go to one place to seek out creative ways to approach their year. Specifically, to create a website that teaches them how to use Web 2.0, Google Tools, and applications to make their program more efficient and successful.

Objective

One objective was to create a website for Student Activities Directors, teachers, and student leaders to build their 21st century skills by integrating technology into their Student Activities Programs. The objective was accomplished by the creation of the website *Student Activities 2.0*.

Furthermore, another objective was for the researcher to be proficient in using Google Tools and to be able to compile an easy to use collection of Web 2.0 sites and applications. This was accomplished through the tabs carefully chosen for the website *Student Activities 2.0*. The researcher previously did not have much experience or exposure to the use of Google Tools or many Web 2.0 sites and applications. Through the project the researcher was able to create a website that included six tabs. Under each tab there was at least one Google Tool that was demonstrated and used. Also, because of all the research, the author was able to include recommendations of different Web 2.0 sites and applications that the author would not have known about before if it was not for the project.

Lastly, one of the main objectives was to discover the needs of Student Activities Directors and leadership students. This was achieved by constant communication with people all over California and the United States. The author networked by engaging in Twitter chats, email, and attending meetings. The researcher took their feedback along with the author's own problems at the target private high school in the San Francisco Bay Area and created the website to answer the questions and alleviate frustrations.



Conclusions

Typical academic classrooms are not the only places where technology can be integrated. Extracurricular programs such as a student activities program can be an excellent avenue to teach student leaders 21st century skills like collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking. Unfortunately, there is no information that exists on technology and student activities programs.

With the creation of the website *Student Activities 2.0*, there is finally a resource that can be a guide to student activities directors and student leaders in middle schools and high schools across the country. At last there can be a place for these groups of people to communicate and share best practices specifically about technology and what it can do for their programs.

The website will open the eyes of student activities directors and student leaders to ways to do what they used to do, even better and in a whole new way. The modernization of the activities program through the help of the website will foster 21st century skills in the teachers and students, inspire teachers and students to want to learn and create more ways to integrate technology into their programs.

Student Activities 2.0 Website

The website *Student Activities 2.0* was created in order to meet the need of Student Activities Directors, student leaders, and educators. It is a resource that teaches different ways to integrate technology into a Student Activities Program. Schools are starting to transition from paper ballots and paper poster making to electronic ballots and digital posters. This trend is slowly working its way into being the new way of student activities. Unfortunately, there is hardly any information or resources on how to use technology in these programs and to achieve this. The use of these digital tools can enhance these programs and make them more efficient. Elections, promoting events and brainstorming creative ideas are all very common in these types of programs. As an example, *Student Activities 2.0* teaches how to create election ballots using Google Forms, how to create digital posters to post on social media, and includes an outlet for student activities directors and student leaders to share best practices. It is meant to be a non-intimidating resource that someone who does not consider themselves tech savvy can use and learn from.



Website Content

*** Each section includes ways to integrate technology

- Section 1 : Introduction to "Student Activities 2.0"
- Section 2: Communication
- Section 3: Voting
- Section 4: Surveys
- Section 5: Community Service
- Section 6: Best Practices
- Section 7: Resources

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For further information

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Student Activities 2.0 Website
<http://studentactivities20.weebly.com>

