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Essential Condition: Standards and Curriculum Support

I believe that technology integration and skills needs to support all subjects in the classroom. This needs to happen for all student populations (general population, special populations, economically disadvantaged populations, etc.) Our text states, "Therefore, it is critical to situate technology skills in content-area curriculum in ways that support both the subject-area content and the technology skills" (Roblyer & Doering, 66). While I see technology in use in the classroom and integrated with other subject areas, I think technology skills in classrooms needs to be more in depth and more integration with other subject matter needs to happen. After witnessing SBAC and APAC (Alternative Performance Assessment for California) testing this past year, I see a need to introduce basic computer skills to students at a younger age.

While the SBAC and APAC are good in that they start differentiating in the test so that the test can meet the needs of student on their level, the new state testing is all computer based for all student populations. If students have not been introduced to basic operations of a computer (clicking a mouse, writing within a text box, listening to computer narrated directions through headphones, etc.) or have limited computer use (once a week for half an hour with their class in a school computer lab), the test is overwhelming and downright frustrating. Without the basic computer knowledge, whether or not the student has learned the grade-level standards is irrelevant because the student cannot use the computer appropriately to show he/she knows the content. There are many reasons I saw that the test was frustrating for students, but for one example, several students were frustrated because they could not write a proper answer. They did not know how to use the computer to punctuate properly so their answers were almost unreadable (for an example a response may read like this: "the first story is about dogs dogs and cats are different one meows one barks"). I know the student could punctuate when writing handwritten papers.

Third grade is when the students start being tested. Fifth grade is when they start using technology to turn in class assignments (i.e., make PowerPoint presentations, websites, word processing more). At least in my current district, students need to start using computers for more than educational games before the 5th grade if we want these students to be prepared to live in our increasingly technological society. They need to be able to show what they learned by using technology skills.

I'm not against the SBAC and the APAC being computer based because I think technology is important for students to learn and our society is moving towards a more technological life. I want all students to be successful in using what technology has to offer.

Reference: Roblyer, M., & Doering, A. H. (2013). *Integrating Educational Technology Into Teaching* . Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.