



Florida Digital Educator Program

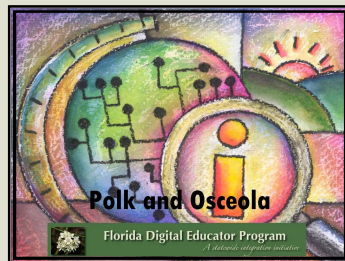
A statewide integration initiative

What is the Florida Digital Educator Program?

Special points of interest:

- What is the Florida Digital Educator Program?
- Orientations
- The Teachers Are Going to Summer Camp
- Tech Coaches for the Tech Coaches
- **Best Of eXample**

Cheryl Brannen



The Florida Digital Educator Program is a Florida Department of Education initiative sponsored by the Florida Center for Instructional Technology (FCIT). According to the FDEP website, *"The Florida Digital Educator (FDEP) Program supports the integration of technology across the K-12 curricula through collaborative experiences with new technologies and digital tools."*

The Florida Digital Educator Program is funded through a competitive Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) grant awarded to efforts of the

Polk and Osceola School District together with the purpose of improving student academic achievement through the use of technology in elementary and secondary schools. The Polk/Osceola initiative is designed to make an impact on each campus throughout both districts. Two hundred teachers were selected to become Florida Digital Educators (also known as tech coaches) from schools in both Districts.

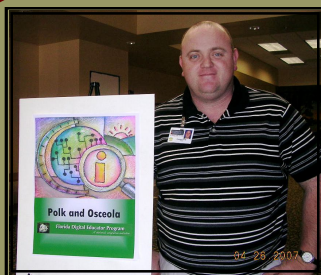
First and foremost, being a Florida Digital Educator means that the teachers are concerned about making an impact on the students by using technology as a tool. All teachers have agreed to mentor one more teacher (the collaborating teacher) to help him/her become an effective facilitator of classroom technology integration. The Florida Digital Educators (tech coaches) will receive a

state-of-the-art laptop and projector for classroom use. The collaborating teacher will be able to earn up to \$800 in technology incentives to encourage the development of curriculum which can be shared with other teachers on his/her campus and educators across the state of Florida.

Tech coaching has been proven to be an effective means of helping teachers to sustain new technologies learned by practicing, collaborating, modeling and sharing experiences. This newsletter, the P.O. BOX, will provide progress reports and success stories of the Florida Digital Educator in Polk and Osceola Counties.



have agreed to support their tech coach throughout the year and are coming to camp for one day also. Each tech coach will mentor one other teacher at his/her school for a total of 400 teachers making an impact on learning. The next newsletter will include the stories of Camp 1!



Tom Turner from Lake Marion Elementary is excited to be a Tech Coach in Polk County.



Seven orientations were held during April in Polk and Osceola.

Orientation x 7

Seven orientations were held over three weeks for the teachers chosen to become the Florida Digital Educators for the 2007 - 2008 school year. Teachers and their administrators learned all aspects and responsibilities of being part of a statewide initiative. All teachers agreed to participate in an intensive

six day summer camp. Four of the trainings days include digital audio, digital video, Podcasting, project-based learning, presentations and electronic collaboration opportunities. Two days of the camp are dedicated to learning the protocols and practices of being a tech coach. The administrators

We are the tech coaches for the tech coaches! We are your guides, mentors and advisers through this adventure.



Cheryl Brannen, Bartow Middle School, Polk County

Cheryl experienced being a collaborating teacher this past year, working with tech coach, Tom Turner.



"I really had no knowledge of technology, basically a computer and email is all I knew. As a science teacher, it opened up a door for me like you would not believe. Being a middle school teacher, I didn't have the chemical and lab stations to do experiments. I didn't even have a science classroom. So I was able to do virtual labs, to take my kids to places they have never been. I am able to use video clips instead of showing a whole 45-minute video. I was able to use my classroom time better and discipline problems dropped dramatically. It's made my job so much less stressful. I don't worry as much because I plan much better with technology. I created a curriculum map, embedded technology right into it and all I have to do is walk in each morning and click, click, click, it's all there: my videos, my websites, my worksheets. It's all right there!

If I don't teach my kids this technology, somebody else will. It may not be the kind of technology their parents would want them to use, so I'm trying to teach them firsthand how to use technology educationally to open the doors they may have never seen outside their bedroom."

Technology & Learning Institutes



**June 3-9
July 15-21
July 22-28**

The Teachers Are Going to Camp!

Three summer camps for the Florida Digital Educators are being hosted on the beautiful Florida Southern Campus in Lakeland. Many of the teachers from Polk County and nearly all the Osceola teachers are living and learning "dorm" style. Teachers who are boarders arrive on Sunday evening to get settled in the dorms. Commuters and boarders will meet in the cafeteria between 7:00am - 7:45am and then report to class in Edge Hall by 8:00 am. After a morning of intensive introductory training, the teachers will eat lunch in the cafeteria and return for an afternoon training until 4:00pm. The "dorm" crew can set the evening pace to meet their personal taste. Dinner is served between 5:00-7:00pm. Teachers

have the option to just hang out in the dorms with their new Polk/Osceola connections, walk the beautiful campus and/or Lake Hollingsworth. They may even choose to continue playing with technology in the evenings in the "Hubs of Learning." Informal sessions will be available including topics such as: Podcasting, mp3 players in the classroom, iTunes for education, unitedstreaming, DIV (Digital Interface Vehicle) exploration, BlackBoard investigations and more.

Day 2, 3 and 4 follow the above pattern with dedicated project creation time on Wednesday. Teachers will be able to get their hands on video cameras, digital cameras

and to experiment with any tools of technology that they are eager to try. Master Digital Educators will be "guides on the sides" for the teachers as they try new software and equipment.

On Friday and Saturday, the pace of camp slows down a bit, as the teacher learn the essential elements that make technology happen: tech coaching skills. There will be no Friday evening Hubs of Learning and teachers will be encouraged to explore the Lakeland area shops and restaurants. Teachers will be "dismissed" from camp on Saturday afternoon by 4:00pm.

The next PO BOX newsletter will contain the tales from the teachers from Camp 1.

