

Nov 20, 2023

Dear Senate Committee,

I am writing to discuss the Professional Development provided by the district for teachers. So far this extra time has not been beneficial and I would like to focus on one main area of where this has not helped teachers.

This school year (2023-2024) the district has brought in Canvas as a new LMS (Learning Management System) replacing Google Classroom. This is the technology hub where all assignments and grades should be posted for teachers and students, but ultimately all grades go into our universal grading System, Skyward.

According to the district, this year teachers are only "required" to use Canvas for grading purposes. All grades from Canvas will sync into Skyward nightly. Teachers were given a 3 hour PD the week before school started with representatives from Canvas. Teachers were expected to be able to use this platform the very next week.

I feel very comfortable speaking about the teacher training of a LMS because during the pandemic I was a core member of the team who helped to facilitate training for teachers to learn how to use Google Classroom to be able to teach with this platform to teachers at the secondary level. I taught the basics of posting assignments, using forms and slide decks to grading and syncing grades to skyward plus more enhanced activities.

My issues with this roll out of Canvas are two fold:

1. Canvas was rolled out to teachers with the expectation that it was supposed to **only be used for grading purposes this year**, This still means you had to enter an assignment, even if students were turning it in on paper, into Canvas, to grade it. It would then Sync with Skyward overnight automatically.

a. But alas, that was not the case. We soon found out that the Sync overnight button had to be turned on, which hardly anyone in the district knew about **because of our lack of training.** In addition, there was an additional step that was there to set up a correlation to our weighted categories to Skyward. This step ensured that our grading categories were properly syncing to Skyward. There were so many teachers at the secondary level that they had to send out a science teacher leader to show people how to do this procedure. The teachers who had not done this correctly, and to my understanding the list was extremely long, grades did not match their grades in Canvas so many students' grades DID not match during the progress report time. This was fixed for "most" teachers just a few days before the end of the quarter 1 grades closing.

i. *Once I understood this process I made a quick tutorial video and sent it out to my colleagues to help them with this process. Many learning types, some needed step by step written instructions, some needed to be shown, others needed to each it being done to complete the task.*

2. Additionally, more importantly, teachers were under the expectation that they were only using Canvas to grade with BUT quickly it became a requirement from Social Studies and ELA that assessments MUST be taken through Canvas.

a. These assessments had to be imported through Mastery Connect or Commons and Graded on Canvas.

i. If you think I am speaking another language to you, that is how teachers felt. This is a new platform where we received three hours of training and we are getting emails with directions on how to take these tests and administer them.

As an educator of students and a trainer of adults, I know first hand you can't send directions in an email and expect teachers to understand how to do this procedure that is somewhat complicated on a platform that is very complex. Teachers, very much like our students, have many different learning levels. They are coming from and need

differentiation. Requiring them to give these assessments in Canvas is fine but not without the proper training.

Since the beginning of the school year there has not been ONE training session on Canvas for teachers. We had 3 hours before school started yet our entire life revolves around Canvas. Grading is an integral part of what we do. For teachers giving these assessments and for all the teachers living off the results, let alone working with the data from the DMG groups, it is imperative that they run correctly.

To this day teachers are STILL asking for help, still not able to post assessments, grades and other things. Teachers are BEGGING for training.

*To note there was a self paced module on Canvas that teachers could go to, during their own time, to learn Canvas. This is not high quality instruction that we would expect for our students, so why would we give it to our teachers?

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Canvas Foundational Framework Badge K-12

Google Certified Educator Level 1 & 2

Kami Certified Educator Level 1 & 2

