

# So You're Doing BYOD At Your Schools, Now What?



5

## Strategies for your BYOD Success



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When K-12 schools and districts inaugurate BYOD policies that allow students to bring their devices from home, it falls to the technology director to ensure that all devices are secured and work well together on the districts' networks. Early adopters have best practices to share with districts starting down this path.

By Annie Galvin Teich

It is usually after your district decides on a BYOD policy that implementation challenges start to emerge – beginning with the fact that students often have multiple devices that now require support. This is in addition to the devices that are already in each classroom such as laptops, document cameras, printers, and scanners. And by the way, no one thought to include professional development for teachers in the new technology plan, and you are now also responsible for data security and ensuring that all the different operating systems play nicely together on the network. Of course, none of these new responsibilities come with additional tech staff.

The good news is that you're not alone. A study in May 2013 revealed that 44% of K-12 schools are using some sort of BYOD deployment. Here are five best practices to help your technology team get the most out of your BYOD initiative.

### 1. Playing Nicely in the Sandbox

BYOD networks need to support different devices and platforms such as iOS, Android, Windows, and Chrome. But how do you support your legacy technology while onboarding emerging technology and keep everything running smoothly?

Network tools and software must be device and platform

#### About the Author

Annie Galvin Teich has worked for more than 25 years in K-12 publishing with broad experience in audience development, sales, direct marketing, and customer communications. She now works with education companies to develop shareable content such as case studies, white papers, newsletters, eBooks, web articles, social media, and webinars.

agnostic and devices need to efficiently communicate with the management system without disruption. Most schools have an installed base of older devices they continue to use while adding newer tablets, smartphones, iPads, netbooks and eReaders. For a BYOD program to be successful, you need a system that can help bridge the gap between old and new technology. Your goal is to harness and direct the technology, but most educators caution that it is not just about the technology. That must serve the curriculum's learning goals and not the other way around.

### 2. Make it Easy for Teachers to Manage

Expecting a classroom teacher to be technology proficient is not realistic. More often than not, teachers do not receive enough professional development to be effective users of technology much less managers of classroom technology. This is critical for successful BYOD.

Matt Riordan, director of technology for Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy, a prep school in Ohio serving grades 7-12, says his school is typical of many Chromebook early adopters. They were attracted to Chromebooks because of the low price point, but also because Chromebooks put teachers in control of the devices in their classrooms by allowing them to easily monitor what students are doing, share screens, lock screens and define website access. By choosing a user-friendly system that is easy to manage, you are giving teachers the tech support, training, and confidence they need to manage their part of the BYOD program inside the classroom.

### 3. Addressing the Fear of Big Data

There are multiple security issues with BYOD of which the protection of student identifiable data is the most important. Fear of unauthorized access to student data has resulted in

district refusals of federal Race to the Top funds as they opt out of sharing student data with the Department of Education.

With student data, there is a justifiable concern with cloud-based storage as this information leaves the district and resides on a public cloud where it is vulnerable to third parties. Student data is more secure when it remains on school or district servers.

#### 4. The Distractions of New Shiny Objects

Teachers are also concerned about their ability to keep students on task when every student has a mobile device.

In this blog post on managing mobile devices in the classroom, Jennifer Carey advises that the best way to ensure that students are not getting distracted by their devices, “is to walk around the room, look at the work they are doing, discuss and engage with them about their progress.” Seeing the teacher move around the class is the most efficient way of keeping students focused on their tasks.

Other teacher-tested practices include keeping devices face down on students’ desks when they’re not being used and a simple “screens down” command when it’s time to focus on the teacher.

#### 5. Who Got the Memo?

Communication between the district and individual schools can be challenging. How will you know whether or not the BYOD initiative is improving over time and that everyone remains in the information loop?

Communication, or the lack of it, is one of the most frequent complaints about technology implementations. The tech team doesn’t talk to the teachers...the district doesn’t explain what they are doing before it happens, and so on. By setting a timetable for regular review of your BYOD implementation, and then communicating the issues to all parties concerned, you can often address problems before they occur.

<sup>1</sup> Source: *Governing.com*, September 3, 2013

<sup>2</sup> Source: *Syracuse.com*, September 15, 2013

<sup>3</sup> Source: *Law/Fordham.edu*, December 12, 2013

<sup>4</sup> Source: *Edudemic.com*, March 3, 2014

## Conclusion

Simply allowing or installing mobile devices in schools does not achieve teaching and learning goals by itself. If you use these educator-tested best practices for effective BYOD implementation, you will be able to optimize the available technology to support your district curriculum objectives. Remember that technology should always serve instruction and not the other way around. Knowing the district’s learning goals and objectives allows technology directors to make sensible decisions about the type and number of mobile devices to put on the school’s network and how to manage it all effectively.

### About NetSupport School

NetSupport School is the leading classroom software solution for classroom instruction, student monitoring, and classroom management across all platforms including Windows, Chrome, Android and iOS. NetSupport School provides the ability to deliver lesson content, simultaneously monitor all student devices and work collaboratively, ensuring that complete student attention and focus is maintained at all times. For more information or to download a free trial, please visit [NetSupportSchool.com](http://NetSupportSchool.com)

### About NewBay Media

This white paper was produced by Tech & Learning’s marketing services arm, NewBay Plus. Tech & Learning is the premier publication and leading resource for education technology professionals responsible for implementing and purchasing technology products in K-12 districts and schools. NewBay Plus provides content marketing and other services in NewBay Media’s five markets: Education, Music, AV/Pro Audio, Video and Broadcasting, and Consumer Electronics. For more information, contact Joe Braue at [jbraue.nbmedia.com](mailto:jbraue.nbmedia.com).

## Manage Your BYOD Implementation with NetSupport School

In order to help schools manage the creation and management of networks that host both legacy and emerging technology, technology directors are turning to NetSupport School for both their BYOD and school-owned device implementations. NetSupport School provides:

- A more effective method to deliver computer based teaching.
- Greater control of students in the classroom.
- Enhances ability to monitor and assist students.
- Simple functions for students to request help.
- Features tools to demonstrate issues and key points online.
- A greater return on investment and lower Initial cost.

For more information or to download a free trial, please visit [NetSupportSchool.com](http://NetSupportSchool.com).