**Q2: BYOD Bring Your Own Device**

Q: The Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) model is becoming more prevalent in K-12 education.  What are the pros and cons associated with implementing this model in the K-12 environment?  Do you feel that this model is feasible and should be implemented?  Cite all sources referenced in your answer.

A: The Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) concept is a revolutionary approach to using technology-based forms of education.  Using the BYOD system, classroom digital devices would not only be purchased by the school district or system, but also the students would have the option to use their own smartphones and tablet computers to complete class projects or access learning resources while at school.  Most school districts considering this approach have begun by involving the parents and community leaders in the planning stages.  They also prepare surveys to send to parents and provide to students to determine the support from parents and the experiences that students already have with technological devices.  Schools typically ban devices among younger students but allow older students to bring their electronics to class.  The BYOD option typically is introduced somewhere between eighth and tenth grade.  Georgia's Forsyth County Schools is a pioneer in BYOT - Bring Your Own Technology, and has successfully implemented this innovative approach in twenty of the district's schools.

Schools usually have developed very specific policies for the respectful use of electronics in the classroom.  They also have specific guidelines for the materials that may be accessed by students.  In addition, the practice of good digital citizenship requires each school district to have in place a set of rules and regulations that are taught, learned, and implemented by the students.

**The advantages and benefits of BYOD**

1.  Educators who are in favor of BYOD believe it promotes greater participation in the classroom than more traditional methods.  This can be seen due to how often our students are in constant contact with technology. They believe when new technologies are incorporated into everyday learning, students become more interested in the material and, therefore, their chances of success are greater.

2.  Schools considering to be ahead of the curve in innovation find that the BYOD program helps provide a more positive image in the community and can help attract more students.

3.  Economics also play a key role in the case for Bring Your Own Device.  When the price of the devices that rapidly become obsolete is considered, the school district can allow students to bring their own and not have to invest money in so many tablets or laptops.  That money that is set aside for technology can be used for other technological advancements.

**The disadvantages or concerns about BYOD**

1.  The main concern among teachers and educators is that the use of so many electronic devices in classrooms will promote distractions by students.  Even though certain online sites may be blocked, some students may be able to access them anyway.

2. Educators are concerned that if BYOD is implemented within their school this will increase the divide between higher and lower income families.  Most schools allow lower income students to check out laptops or tablets, it is easy to see which students have their own and which students are forced to borrow from the school.

3.  Another significant concern is the amount of teacher training that must be provided if the BYOD system is put in place.  Teachers would need to know how to implement learning activities using technology in their own academic discipline.  This will be another hurdle for the school system or district to overcome.

**Bottom Line:**

The Georgia Forsyth County School System recommends these 7 Steps to BYOD when considering implementing this technology.

1.  Think carefully about your goals.

2.  Survey students about what gadgets they own.

3. Get parents and the community to "buy-in".

4.  Determine rules for personal devices and make sure everyone is clear on them.

5.  Test connectivity by inviting students to bring in their devices.

6.  Ask students about their experiences with their own devices.

7.  Plan how you can use BYOD to develop fun, challenging activities for students