

NC TOOLKIT for
Digital Readiness

Session 5 Instructor Guide

Interacting with Students' Education Online - Two Groups

Session 5 - Interacting with Students' Education Online

OVERVIEW

Session Time

(2 hours)

A Note about Two Groups in this Session:

This session's plans are based on adults and students meeting together. If you are able to combine the groups for the full two hours, the Combined Group plans are recommended. If that is not possible, this document includes two alternatives:

- An abbreviated combined session, and one hour for adults and students to learn together.
 - An alternative one hour of activities for students only. (Adults use the abbreviated combined session plans.)
-

Description

For most people raising children today, technology has changed quite a bit since they were in school. In this session, we will explore some of the new kinds of technology that are being used in the classroom and their educational potential, as well as options for communicating with the school using that technology. Students and guardians will work together to complete hands-on, interactive lessons on classroom technology.

Objectives

Adults will be able to:

- Access various methods of online communication with their students' school
- Choose an appropriate method of communication when contacting the school
- Write an efficient email to their student's teachers
- Identify specific technologies their students use in learning



Students will be able to (ISTE Standards 1d, 7a, 7c):

- Describe and demonstrate technologies they use in learning
- Assist adults in learning new technologies

Preparation

- Work with a school media specialist and technology staff to tailor this session to the specifics of the local school district.
- Print adult handouts
- Customize slides with relevant announcements, Wi-Fi password, etc.

Just Before Session

- Open slideshow on presentation computer and prepare any technology being used.
- Place sign-in sheet near entrance.
- Talk with assisting facilitators about how you would like them to roam among participants and field individual questions. Answer any questions.



Session 5 - Interacting with Students' Education Online

Abbreviated Combined or Adult Session Outline

Arrival | 10 Minutes

All participants sign in. Use this time to make sure each family brought their device, they can sign into their device, it is charged or connected to an outlet, and connected to Wi-Fi.

Agenda, Introductions, & Icebreaker | 5 minutes

Explain the structure of the workshop. Set expectations for communication during session. Introduce facilitators present. Have each participant introduce themselves and answer the discussion question as they do.

- Discussion Question: Name one way the school communicates information to you.

Communication Methods & School Website Overview | 10 minutes

Discuss benefits and drawbacks of various communication. Consider how you might get information from the school in a given scenario. Highlight useful parts of the website and social media, if applicable.

School Apps | 8 minutes

- Demo: How to use school apps to see student grades, assignments, etc.

Ed Tech | 17 minutes

Adults will have a chance to interact with the kinds of educational technology being used in their students' school.

Wrap-Up | 5 minutes

(Further Resources & Exit Surveys)



Session 5 - Interacting with Students' Education Online

Abbreviated Combined or Adult Session Script


Italicized words are instructions and notes to you, not to be read aloud.

Highlighted text indicates that participants should complete those instructions on their devices along with your demonstration.

Arrival | 10 minutes

- *Allow some time for participants to arrive and get settled so everyone can start together.*
- *Each participant who arrives needs to sign in (both the adult and the student).*
- *Use this time to make sure each family has a device that is charged, connected to Wi-Fi, and signed in.*


Agenda, Introductions, and Icebreaker | 5 minutes

- Before we get started, let's all introduce ourselves in case we haven't all been together before. So please say your name and:
-  Discussion Question: Name one way the school communicates information to you.
- *Give an example by saying your first name and one way the school communicates information, like posting information on the website or by automated call.*
 - Today, we are going to start by talking about the ways we can find information about your student's school online and use the internet to communicate with the school. Then we will spend some time with some of the technology your student might use at school.

Communication Methods & School Website Overview | 10 minutes


- On the screen are a few ways the school might communicate information, some of which you mentioned.
- Let's talk about some pros and cons of each of these methods.



 Discussion Question: Which is the most and least:

- Efficient
- Private
- Interactive
- Convenient for the school
- Convenient for you


- Hopefully, when the school shares information, the school chooses a method that fits the needs of the information being communicated depending on each situation.
- Now let's think about how you seek information from the school and communicate with them.
- Together with your student, consider this scenario:

 Discussion Question: Your student says they will be receiving an award at school but they lost the paper about the event. What's the first, second, and third way you would try to find that information?

- *Give families a minute to discuss and then ask them to share briefly.*
- As a first step, I recommend spending five minutes looking for the information you need on the school's website or social media. If the answer is there, this will be much quicker than contacting anyone or the school.
- *Demonstrate how to reach the school's website and social media (preferably via a link from the website or from Google).*

 Discussion Question: Which parts of the website do you think are the most useful?

- *Navigate to the parts of the website that are mentioned in the discussion so everyone can see them on the screen.*
- Checking here first might save you and the school staff some time.

 Discussion Question: Why might an email be a good option for contacting the school?

- *e.g. You can send a message when you have time and they can reply when they are available. Saves you time trying to get a hold of someone. Be sure information passes directly between you and the teacher without the student.*

 Discussion Question: Why might an email be a bad option?


- If it's a complicated issue, you might use an email to set up a phone call or in-person meeting.



- If it's urgent, for example if your student needs to get home a different way today, consider that a teacher may not be able to check their email while students are in their room.
- What information should be included in an email to a teacher? (e.g. *your student's name, the information you have, and the information you need*)
- Many teachers are unable to reply to emails during school hours, so you might expect a reply within a day or two.
- Any questions or thoughts about the different ways you might communicate with the school?

School Apps | 8 minutes

- *Go over the apps your partner school uses to interact with families, for example, Homebase/PowerSchool, Remind, Here Comes the Bus, etc.. If possible, a school representative could demonstrate the apps and/or help families create accounts for them.*

 Discussion Question: What are the pros and cons of apps your school uses? Has anyone found them useful in the past?

ED TECH EXPO

17 Minutes

Adults will have a chance to interact with the kinds of educational technology being used in their student's school. Please work with a school staff person to plan some hands-on time and demos of the kinds of technology students might use in their school classroom. Engage students in demonstrating and teaching about technology. Make sure parents get a chance to try the technology themselves. If you are unable to collaborate with the school, a list of activities is available.

Wrap-Up | 5 minutes

(Further Resources & Exit Surveys)

- Before you leave, I want to point out one resource on today's handout. Common Sense Media has great articles about the kinds of technology students might use at school or as a part of their homework. They also have suggestions and reviews for homework help websites and apps.
- Please take tonight's exit surveys and then you're free to go.



Session 5 - Interacting with Students' Education Online

Alternative Student Session Outline

Agenda, Introductions, and Icebreaker | 5 minutes

Explain the structure of the workshop. Set expectations for communication during session. Introduce facilitators present. Have each participant introduce themselves and answer the discussion question as they do.

- Discussion Question: Name one way the school communicates to you at home.

Communication Methods & School Website Overview | 10 minutes

Discuss benefits and drawbacks of various communication. Consider how you might get information from the school in a given scenario. Highlight useful parts of the website and social media, if applicable.

How to Email a Teacher | 7 minutes

(Group Activity)

- Demo/Activity: Write an email that a teacher would like to receive.

Thinking about Classroom Technology | 18 minutes

Students will choose a kind of technology they use in learning at school and plan how they would teach adults about it.

Wrap-Up | 5 minutes

(Further Resources & Exit Surveys)



Session 5 - Interacting with Students' Education Online


Alternative Student Script

Italicized words are instructions and notes to you, not to be read aloud.

Highlighted text indicates that participants should complete those instructions on their devices along with your demonstration.

Agenda, Introductions, and Icebreaker | 5 minutes


- Before we get started, let's all introduce ourselves in case we haven't all been together before. So please say your name and:

 Discussion Question: Name one way the school communicates information to you at home.

- *Give an example by saying your first name and one way the school communicates information, like posting it on the school website or via automated call.*
- Today, we are going to start by talking about the ways we can find information about your school online and use the internet to communicate. Then we will spend time with some of the technology you might use at school.

Communication Methods & School Website Overview | 10 minutes


- On the screen are a few ways the school might communicate information, some of which you mentioned.
- Let's talk about the pros and cons of each of these methods.

 Discussion Question: Which is the most and least:

- Efficient
 - Private
 - Interactive
 - Convenient for the school
 - Convenient for you
- Hopefully, when the school shares information, they choose a method that fits the needs of the information being communicated, depending on each situation.
 - Now let's think about how you seek information from the school and communicate with them.




- Find a partner and consider this scenario:

 Discussion Question: You are given a paper about receiving an award at school that you're supposed to take home. The paper is lost and your guardian wants to know the information from the paper ASAP. What's the first, second, and third way you would try to find that information?

- *Give students a minute to discuss and then ask them to share briefly.*
- As a first step, I recommend spending five minutes looking for the information you need on the school's website or social media. If the answer is there, this will be much quicker than contacting anyone or the school.

 Go to the school's website or social media page.

 Spend five minutes now looking at the school website. If you use the website often, try to find something new that you don't usually look at.


 Discussion Question: Which parts of the website do you think are the most useful?

- *Navigate to the parts of the website that are mentioned in the discussion so everyone can see them on the screen.*
- *Add other relevant info to the discussion.*
 - *The website might include a calendar, attendance policy, handbook, directories, and contact information, etc.*
 - *Social media might host event calendars, announcements and updates, and pictures.*
- Checking here first might save you, your parents, and your teachers some time.


How to Email a Teacher | 7 minutes

(Group Activity)

- If you can't find the information you need about this award on the website, an email to the teacher is another option.

 Discussion Question: Why might an email be a good option for contacting the school?

- *e.g. You can send a message when you have time and they can reply when they are available. This saves you time trying to get a hold of someone. Be sure information passes directly between you and the teacher without the student.*

 Discussion Question: Why might an email be a bad option?

- *If it's a complicated issue, you might use an email to set up a phone call or in-person meeting.*



- *If it's urgent, and you need the teacher to have the information right now.*
- A good email can save both your family and your teacher time and confusion. Let's talk about what kind of email a teacher would like to receive.
- First, we need a recipient email address. Who should we send this to? (e.g. *homeroom teacher or teacher in charge of award*)
- Where can we find their email address? (e.g. *website*)
- Next, we need a subject line that gives the teacher an idea of what this email is about.
- What can we use for an email about this award? (e.g. *Award Question*)
- Now for the email message. How should we address this teacher? (e.g. *Hello Mr. Smith*)
- How long should this email be? (*Just a few sentences. Stick to the facts and keep it to the point.*)
- What information should be included? (e.g. *your name, the information you have, and the information you need*)
- At the end, include your name and contact information so they can reach you.
 - Example email:
 - Hello Mr. Smith,

This is Jack Jones. I lost the paper about the award I am getting next week and I haven't been able to find anything about it on the website. Can you give me any information about this award for my parents?

Thank you,
Jack Jones
jackjones@gmail.com
- Any questions or thoughts about the different ways you might communicate with the school?

Thinking about Classroom Technology | 18 minutes

- ❓ Discussion Question: What do you think school was like when your parents were your age? What do you think has changed?
 - *After a few answers, make sure the conversation touches on technology.*
- ❓ Discussion Question: What are some specific technology tools you use at school?
 - *Follow up on the answer "Computers" by asking "How do you use computers? What do you use computers to do?"*



- *e.g. Googling questions about school work, using Google to find pictures of something you've never heard of, learning from YouTube videos, using Chromebooks during class, interactive class activities like Kahoot, emailing teachers and other students, creating digital art, etc.*
- Find a partner for this activity. With your partner:
 - Choose a technology tool, app, or website you know might be used for educational purposes.
 - Imagine you're explaining that tool to your parents.
 - Name two pros, two cons, and one example of when you would use it.
 - *You may want to make sure everyone has a different topic.*
- *Give students a few minutes to work on their answers and then share with the group. You could ask the rest of the students to ask the sort of questions their parents would have.*

Wrap-Up | 5 minutes (Exit Surveys)

- Please take tonight's exit surveys and then you're free to go.

