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CAHS

What Role Does Social Media Have in Today's Educational System?

The use of social media is a trend that has gained widespread popularity around the world and is one that plays an influential role in our daily lives. From Facebook to Twitter, social media networks are used as a platform for many people to connect with others both near and far away in a matter of seconds. They are also used to post videos and pictures of daily events as they occur around the world and much more. The educational system is no exception in the use of social media. The educational system that exist today is evolving and becoming more dependent upon the use of social networks for teaching and learning purposes. Three roles that social media play in today's educational system are: it is useful in getting team projects and assignments completed, it connect the classroom to the rest of the world, and improve student awareness of events shaping the world.

An important skill needed in school as well as the work force is teamwork. Social media is a very helpful tool that can be used when working on team projects or assignments. Blogs, podcasts, and image sharing through Snap Chat or Flickr fill the gap between group members who may not have the time to meet in person but need to get a project or an assignment completed. Social networks such as Facebook or Whats app allow students to hold conferences or meetings to discuss and complete group assignments without the inconvenience of having to arrange a central time and place for all group members to meet in person. For example, Facebook and Whats app are currently being used as an effective communication tool by students in the AP Language & Composition class at the Charlotte Amalie High School with students from the

Haderslev Katedralskole in Denmark as they work together on a collaborative Virgin Islands Centennial Project. Students from both schools are also using these social networks to plan for the upcoming visit of the Danish students to the United States Virgin Islands in February 2017. As a result of their collaboration or teamwork via these social networks, students not only get to complete their task, but they also develop new friendships that may otherwise not have been possible.

In addition, social media break down barriers in terms of time and distance and allow learning to happen from anywhere. For instance, Facebook connects the classroom to the rest of the world and enables students to communicate with other students from around the world for free. For example, the students mentioned earlier at the Charlotte Amalie High School have created a Virgin Islands Centennial Project page on Facebook. This Facebook page allows them to post and share their research findings on the project with the students from Denmark and vice versa. The use of Facebook is also a handy tool for teachers who are willing to explore different teaching styles and conduct peer teaching via the internet. Of course, a major advantage of using this social network is that it eliminates the cost of travel expenses since students can connect with each other through video chat without leaving their homes or traveling to another place. In addition to Facebook, YouTube is another social network that is becoming increasingly popular in the classroom as both a learning and teaching tool. For example, if a teacher wants her students to understand how a telescope works, she can easily pull up a video demonstration on YouTube. Likewise, if a math student wants to know how to solve a quadratic equation, he or she can look at a step by step video demonstration on YouTube. For students and educators, the use of social networks such as Facebook and YouTube provide an opportunity for teaching and learning to occur beyond the pages of the textbook and the walls of the classroom or school.

Blogging or image sharing also plays an important role in increasing students' awareness of past and current events or issues shaping the world today. Through these forms of social media, students can receive the latest updates of worldwide events at their fingertips. As students become more aware of what's happening around them, it helps to shape their views about world events. It also helps them connect the past with the present and influence their decisions about the future. From politics to social and economic issues, social media give students a forum to voice their opinions about events impacting their lives. For example, during this year's presidential election, many students across the nation were able share their views about the candidates and even conduct classroom debates and discussions. As students become more aware of what's happening around them through daily blogs and image sharing, they can become active participants in their own education and lives.

In the technologically advanced world that exist today, it is no surprise that social media has become a vital learning tool in today's educational system and have changed the way teachers teach and students learn. Social networks such as Facebook, Snapchat, and YouTube, not only connect students to the rest of the world, but it helps to build teamwork as well as awareness of current world events. The use of social media in today's educational system helps to expand students' knowledge and awareness beyond the textbooks and provide learning opportunities beyond the classroom. Social media serve as a positive avenue for making the whole world a giant classroom. Due to social media, learning can happen at anywhere and anytime of the day. Education is now limitless!