SUPPORTING TEACHERS TO USE VIDEOGAMES IN THE CLASSROOM

Games are often perceived as a powerful educational tool because they are engaging to students. Playing to Learn sought to better understand how teachers could be supported to use games in their everyday classroom environments. This included studying the impact of a two-day professional development session.

"We need the technical support from our IT department to be on board to get things installed or fix any glitches immediately. If there's delay, the drive or willingness to move forward just dwindles."

"We need workshops. We need workshops to, one, introduce us to the game [and two] so we know that it's there."

"Our school doesn't have much. I mean [we have a] computer lab and a really bad netbook cart. I would to do more tablet based things, but we don't have those."

"As a first-year teacher in this grade, it's difficult to go through all that work to get an app on the iPad, have it approved, have it loaded on and then not to have it work. If there was a little more of a guideline of what suggested programs to use, that would be helpful."

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Many teachers who participated expressed interest in using videogames in their classrooms but stressed the need for different kinds of support. Those supports included:

Technological resources

- more technology in the school
- increased regular access to technology when devices are shared amongst classes
- up-to-date equipment and software
- reliable access to the internet
- gaming-focused hardware such as Xboxes and controllers
- access to licensed games and installed applications

Professional development opportunities connected to game-based learning

- training on specific apps and games
- training on how to use games in the classroom in a meaningful way, including implementation strategies, creating assessments, and producing learning goals
- workshops and modelled lessons

Knowledge of and access to a wide variety of games that are engaging, cross-curricular, and pertinent to the curriculum.

Time to play games, time to read through the accompanying resources provided with a game, and time to develop curriculum that includes games.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

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- McKnight, K., O'Malley, K. Ruzic, R., Horsley, M. K., Franey, J. J., & Bassett, K. (2016). Teaching in a digital age: How educators use technology to improve student learning. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education,* 48(3), 194-211.
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