**Part 3: Educational Research and Innovation**

**What innovations are you most excited about and why?  What is their application to learning?**

I think that the thing I am most excited about is using the IPads. There are just so many different applications and ways that they can be used in a classroom. I love that they get the students engaged and excited about learning. I also love that there is a great variety of apps that help to teach and practice just as many skills.

**How will you stay current on educational research and innovation?  How will you share this knowledge with teachers in your building?**

I believe that the best way to stay current is to maintain my PLN. We are lucky to have information and access to all the research and innovations right at our fingertips by using the internet and it’s various tools. For example, I get the newsletter from Classroom 2.0, and I have quite a few people that I like to follow on Twitter. Obviously on my own I am unable to keep up with how quickly educational innovations change, but when you network there are so many more channels of information available to you.

As far as sharing my knowledge I think that a couple good resources are the principal and e-mail/blogs. I know that if I tell my principal about something that I am using or have heard about that could benefit lots of teachers she would be more than happy to spread the word and help promote it. I also know that our school has a blog that was created especially for teachers who have IPads in their classrooms. Its purpose is for teachers to share what they are doing with their resources and help give ideas to other teachers as well. It would be easy enough to share what I have learned on this blog.

**What technology tools will you use to effectively improve productivity and student learning? What technology tools will be the easiest to promote in your building?**

I think there are a great many tools that I would like to use in my teaching. Many of them I have already begun using in my classroom. For example, I love using the 5 IPads that I have been given by the school. They really get my students excited about doing simple mundane tasks that otherwise would have been the most boring thing in the world. For example, there are some really fun handwriting apps. My students hate handwriting, but when they are doing it on an IPad they are on cloud nine.

Another tool that I would really like to begin using is the Early Childhood Clickers. I loved having them for the assessment assignment that we did. Unfortunately they are also very expensive and I haven’t found many grant opportunities to get the funds. One of the hardest parts about teaching Kindergarten is having the time to assess each child accurately. In the past this has had to be a one on one task, and while there are still many situations one on one is still necessary, using the clickers cuts down on a lot of time used in assessment.

I also think that promoting both of these tools would be fairly easy at my school. The IPads are already being introduced and integrated in the school community. I think there is still a long way to go though. I think it would be harder to promote the clickers though. Even though our school already has a set of the normal (non-early childhood) kind. I think that they scare the teachers a little more.

**What technology tools will be most challenging?**

I think a lot of the apps and websites that we have learned about in class would be pretty challenging to use. For example, IMovie is a great tool and I definitely learned a lot about some great ways to use it in a classroom, but it is completely unpractical for Kindergartners. There are ways to adapt it, yes, but I only have a half day and the district has already mandated every minute of that day. The same thing goes for a lot of the tools we learned about. Anything that requires reading and independent work is hard to adapt to Kindergarten.