Is BYOD A Good Thing for Students?

Faced with tight budgets, getting technology into classrooms can be financially challenging for schools or school districts.

One of the ways being explored to tackle this issue is Bring Your Own Device (BYOD). BYOD involves models in which students bring personal devices to so they can learn. These technology models involve the use of mobile devices such as laptops and tablets, where portability is key.

The notion of BYOD in the classroom can be beneficial for teachers and students in many ways.

1. It is easy for teachers to connect with students because they are using technology they are already familiar with.
2. Teachers are encouraged to deliver material flexibly as they can also bring their personal devices to the classroom.
3. Students can take ownership of their learning to improve their performance as they are encouraged to acquire more information.
4. Applications such as Dropbox can be used to share files, homework, presentations, and quiz questions, etc. rather than completely relying on print.
5. For students with disabilities, BYOD is a plus because they can bring their assistive technologies to the classroom.
6. Carrying multiple textbooks can be taxing for students, but the BYOD concept encourages digital storage of content on portable devices.
7. Due to the availability of different technologies, teachers have more tools available—for both teaching and assessment.
8. Overall, letting students to bring their own devices in the classroom has the potential to increase collaboration and prepare students for higher education.

This is not to say the concept of BYOD only has advantages; the adoption of technology by children at an early age is generally not well-received.

There are, in fact, disadvantages when talking about BYOD in the classroom setting.

For example, financial affordability may be an issue as some parents may not be able to purchase mobile devices for their children. Technology can also be a distraction and potentially increase the possibility of cyber bullying among students.

As well, theft could be a concern that can, however, be overcome by schools through the introduction of strict rules and policies. There may be concerns about wireless bandwidth to support all students’ devices, which goes back to the affordability issue.

As technology is increasingly embraced, many schools may have no choice but to adopt the BYOD phenomenon.