Common Patterns of Participation on Twitter

It can be difficult to believe that meaningful professional development can actually occur in Twitter, a social media service that limits messages to 140 characters. To build confidence in the value of joining the Twitterverse, for a few weeks, consider monitoring the messages that any educator using Twitter is posting, and then complete this handout.

Type of educator you will monitor: _____

Name of educator: _____

Dates of monitoring: _____

(Feel free to choose any educator using Twitter whose work better mirrors your own. Include his or her name, a direct link to his or her Twitter stream, and a short description of his or her professional work.)

Looking for suggestions? Consider following the streams of one of the following educators.

Nicholas Provenzano (http://twitter.com/thenerdyteacher): High school English teacher with interests in the classroom integration of technology

Eric Townsley (http://twitter.com/erictownsley): Middle school principal in Iowa with interests in educational technology, school leadership, assessment, and pedagogy

Steven Anderson (http://twitter.com/web20classroom): Instructional technologist at a middle school in North Carolina with interests in the role that social media can play in teaching and learning

Nancy Blair (http://twitter.com/blairteach): School improvement consultant with interests in middle grades education, English and language arts, and literacy.

Types of Activities Observed
(Check all that apply.)
- ☐ Sharing knowledge and resources
- ☐ Monitoring educational news sources
- ☐ Tracking important conferences
- ☐ Encouraging reflection
- ☐ Gathering instant feedback
- ☐ Mentoring colleagues
- ☐ Other: _____

Frequency of Posting
- ☐ About once a week
- ☐ About once a day
- ☐ Several times per day

Questions to Consider

1. What trends do you notice in the patterns of participation for the educator that you've been monitoring? Are certain behaviors more common than others? Are there certain behaviors that seem more valuable to you than others? Which ones? Why?

2. Did you learn any lessons that will be valuable in your primary work while monitoring the Twitter stream of this educator? What were they? How did this information help you do your job better or make your work easier?

3. Did you learn any lessons about networking in social media spaces while monitoring the Twitter stream of this educator? What were they?

4. What questions about common patterns of communication on Twitter do you still have? What excites you about building your own network on Twitter?

5. How do you intend to build on this learning experience? Will you study the Twitter streams of additional educators? Are you ready to start your own Twitter account?