

Ukulele Music

Keith: Welcome to the LeeCoSchools Edcast #16, with Kasey Bell! now this is our episode we were supposed to have do this at the ALET conference that's right for those of you don't know ALET is

Kyle: Alabama Leaders in Educational Technology

Keith: that's right and so Kasey Bell was one of our keynotes while we were there yep her schedule was unable to to accommodate chatting with us but luckily we got her to call us and talk to us on the phone so you all get to enjoy her great knowledge and so tell us a little bit about Kasey

Kyle: yes so Kasey is she's fantastic she her whole deal is shake up learning she's got a book she's got a podcast she's got a website and she's her goals are to innovate in the classrooms using technology it's not about the technology it's about the way that you can use in your classrooms and so she was fantastic at ALET her presentation was great we were really glad that we were able to get on her schedule for today and get to be able to talk to her

Keith: yeah great so if after listening to this episode if you find yourself any questions, comments, complaints, criticisms, compliments, colloquialisms, conundrums, or concerns, you can find us on the web at www.lee.k12.al.us/EdCast, on Twitter @LeeCoSchools, on Facebook at facebook.com/leecoschools, on Instagram @leecoschools, on the Lee County App, or by email at edcast@lee.k12.al.us Kyle...

Kyle: shake it up learning

Funky Transition Music

Keith: so to get started let's just have you introduce yourself a little bit describe your personal journey

Kasey Bell: I started off in education as a middle school language arts teacher and worked in the Austin (Texas) area for a while and knew I wanted to pursue possibly some other things and get my master's degree but I really didn't know what that was as I as I started out but I began to realize that I really had an affinity for for using technology in the classroom and I discovered a program and to get a master's in EdTech and this was quite a while back so there weren't really a lot of those back then and so I went to get my master's degree in educational technology and I I moved on into an instructional technologist position first School District and loved it felt like I had kind of found my niche and you know I really loved working with with the kids and and that middle school is rough but I really enjoyed it but I really felt like I was much more passionate about what I was doing when I moved into and you know helping teachers learn how to use technology in their classroom and so kind of grew from there I I moved on and moved actually to a different city most of the Dallas area to become an online course developer and trainer in a regional position for Texas and still still maintain that

position here in the Dallas area so I work for the region 10 education service center and we are sort of a liaison between what the Texas Education Agency gives us and to help schools implement different programs and things like that so I get to do a lot locally and then I also have a special agreement that allows me to travel and get to work with other educators and that's how I met you guys when I got to travel to Alabama and and do all that and so along the way I started blogging and podcasting and doing some other things and really becoming more active on social media and trying to get connected

Kyle: that's really cool yeah when we saw you at ALET the the big phrase that you used was shake up learning and so can you tell us a little about what that means

Kasey Bell: yeah so when I decided to start a blog it was really important to me when I was trying to you know choose a domain name and everything I didn't want it to be KaseyBell.com although I do technically own that one in case I ever need it

Keith: that's a good call cuz a lot of people make the mistake of not doing that and really regretting it later

Kasey Bell: yeah yeah you never know it's like real estate grab it when you can so no I didn't want the blog to be about me and I didn't want to actually really be about technology either so I purposely tried to come up with a name that was really about my mission and what I wanted to do and and and that that's it you know I really want to help teachers learn how to do things differently how to make meaningful strides in whatever it is they do using whatever tools they have available both technology and and non you know technology their analog resources that they have as well and so it really just sort of became you know my motto my mission and I just wanted to make sure that I could make it about what was important to me and not just about me myself and I

Keith: so did you have a sort of monkey touches the monolith moment that puts you on your mission to shaking up learning and and what in your experience means that education needs that good shaking

Kasey Bell: in my position now and even when I was you know even still at the district level I work with so many teachers who just don't get it and a lot of administrators who don't get it and a lot of school districts who don't get it and I've just seen so much money wasted either on technology or on other things that really should never have been purchased not really making any strides towards you know meaningful learning and you know I get a lot of questions on social media and other places that really just illustrate to me how much of the world is not quite on board yet and you know like when I go to an EdTech conference it's like I'm with my people and everybody understands it and we all get it we're all excited and then I go and I work with a specific school and oftentimes you know it's sort of a mandatory situation where everybody has to come to my training or whatever and it's a completely different situation you know there's so much resistance at every level that you know the the classrooms look so much like they did 100 120 years ago in many many places and there's no reason for it you know the Industrial

Revolution is just a long time ago and we're not we're not training kids to work in factories anymore so why are we still you know teaching them the same way

Kyle: that's right yeah I definitely get what you're saying about being with your people ALET is one of those times that I'm really I feel like grow a whole bunch professionally because I get to hear people who are fighting the same battles I am and fighting next door and so one of the things that you said made us think we we interviewed our Teacher of the Year and she made a comment about people administrators and school district leaders spent buying the thousand-dollar pencil you know it's a SMART Board or this but they're still using it in this old style of teaching and learning and it's not really doing anything that is creating change

Kasey Bell: yeah for sure it it's unfortunate and you know a lot of times it's not even just that they're still using it to you know for their pencil or their paper it's that it's sitting in the room collecting dust because teachers never received any training on it so you know there's there's a lot of give-and-take and a lot of pieces that have to fall into place for all of this to happen and and just throwing money at the problem just throwing technology at the problem is not it you have to have a mission you have to have a vision you've got to have support at all levels and you definitely have to have that teacher training aspect to ensure that it actually gets anywhere

Keith: yeah and I'm here at Lee County we've I think we're doing a pretty decent job of that we've got what's called the spark initiative where we have teachers from all the schools come up here periodically and we have our tech coaches who train them in the different technologies and different strategies and things and then they also go out to the schools and help teachers develop lesson plans and things like that so I think that a lot of what your what you're talking about I think we're doing that in Lee County pretty successfully

Kasey Bell: well that's awesome it sounds like I need to come visit

Kyle: please do love it

Keith: come on you're from Texas you understand southern hospitality

Kasey Bell: oh yeah and let me tell you Alabama does it best you have the friendliest state that I have ever visited and that is including Texas because let me tell you we got a lot of people moving into Texas that didn't grow up

Keith: so if there's a teacher out there who is still clinging to that old industrial style of teaching which frankly when I was growing up I was okay with just because that's just my personality but what what is the best way to get them to begin integrating technology into their lessons

Kasey Bell: so I have found that to get teacher buy-in you really have to show them that technology is not gonna be one more thing that it could actually take some other things away that are on their plate so I almost always will start with those reluctant teachers

and try to give them something that's going to save them time and whether that's just you know saving time in some kind of productivity tool or actually saving them time with their students in the classroom as soon as they can see that light you got them they're gonna they're going to begin to listen to more they're gonna begin to hey maybe this girl's got something that I can use and you know I also have to remind teachers to not walk in with those limiting beliefs that you know how many you know there's always one in a training that's like I have to and they'll tell you at the beginning they'll say I'm just not good with technology you know and they act like that it it's like this skin that they wear and that they have to say that and then they can't have any control over and that's a mindset issue and you know there's there's if you walk in with that attitude you're not open to any new ideas and guess what you're gonna pass it on to your student and so we have to keep in mind that that all of those things are always about doing what's best for our kids

Keith: mm-hmm yeah the kind of teacher you just described those are what we like to call the life of the party

Kyle: so if you're going to showing them this way to sort of like alleviate some of their time constraints how how technical will you get with that you know they're just learning what do you suggest them using early on

Kasey Bell: simple and a lot of times it's like just getting them to use Google Chrome be a huge step but half my battle is just getting people to stop using Internet Explorer so

Keith: take your cursor away from the blue E enough of the blue E

Kasey Bell: mom don't ever touch the blue E I've installed this little rainbow over here always touch this one don't use that other one it messes stuff up once they get into chrome - that's when I can show them like hey check out this really cool extension it's gonna save you like 20 clicks every time you use it you know and so it can be something really simple like that I definitely don't start out with anything complicated because you're gonna lose them pretty quickly

Kyle: right well and so once they get once they get started they start to feel comfortable you know how do you sort of help them tie the needs of students to a particular technology because like you said there's there's almost a paralysis of choice there's so many options and so many things you can sort of get bogged down in how do you sort of help them choose something that's going to help a student or help a class

Kasey Bell: I think that's that's another reason why I'm such a fan of Google because the tools easily translate to the skills that teachers already have and so you know naturally we're going to start at a substitution level and even if it's substituting you know one tool for the next tool you know they can at least understand okay so instead of doing this in PowerPoint we're now going to learn how to use slides oh but there's this little share button over here this works a little bit differently so there's gonna be an

advantage so you just incrementally just start showing them you know how these tools can be used in a more dynamic way you know a way that can engage learners and tap into those 21st century skills that we're always talking about and moving away from the one and done assignments and the really you know static and substitution types of traditional assignments

Kyle: now you mentioned substitution sound like you're familiar with the SAMR model

Kasey Bell: yeah I don't mind talking about it I don't like teaching it well I don't actually support it um I think it's pretty flawed okay and I think it's missing a major piece because none of those pieces actually talk about the learning goals and so that's really what I come back to and in my book I really just wanted to make something a little bit more practical because I've noticed so many teachers being intimidated by the SAMR model that they feel like they have to reach that that highest level and I don't always think it's always about being at that highest level because if that highest level doesn't help you reach your learning goals and it's pretty much useless so I just want to encourage teachers just begin to push the boundaries and if they're ready you know if they're already you know hitting the redefinition level and doing all these amazing things that's great they can keep going with that but at the same time you know like I said there's so many teachers who still like that's just way too complicated and they they've really just I mean just trying to get some teachers to understand that the same assignment that you did on paper or even the same assignment that you did in PowerPoint doesn't really translate to everything else that you have to not only think of the tool but you have to think of the types of assignments that you give because that totally changes everything you know I had an example that I believe I shared when I was in Alabama and it's in my book about missed opportunities is what I like to call I want to put a positive spin on it but you know a lot of teachers don't see the opportunities before them with these tools and so these are opportunities to for dynamic learning and you know I had a teacher who really wanted to blame the tool for students cheating you know that it was too easy to cheat and that wasn't really the issue you know yeah it's super easy to cheat now and pretty much anything you use you can't expect to translate what you did you know ten years ago into an assignment today and get the same results it's just we have to move away from those cookie cutter assignments because the the things that can be duplicated will be duplicated and so we have to we have to move into student choice and helping students to create original product type

Keith: okay so what you're saying is being a teacher is not like a video game where we don't have to level up

Kyle: one of the things that you said was use tomorrow ideas can you tell us about what that means and why it's maybe an important aspect of some of the things you do

Kasey Bell: yeah I mean and and that's so much of what not only I tried to do on the blog but what Matt and I try to do on the Google teacher tribe podcast as well is we really just want to spark those ideas something that's simple enough that somebody can

understand even over audio you know Hey okay I think I can do that and they might even change their lesson plan tomorrow to try it one that shows that they've got initiative and they're willing to take a little bit of risk but two you know hopefully what we're sharing and explaining is really just a twist on some skills you already have so it's just you know a scaffold you're just trying to build on on the things that you already know and show people just a few new little you know tricks that can really change the types of assignments that you have students accomplishing in the classroom

Keith: that's really cool let's talk a little bit about your your podcast

Kasey Bell: sure sure so I am co-host of the Google teacher tribe podcast Google teacher tribe comm and co-host that was Matt Miller from ditched that textbook and so we are in our third season and we try to keep the episodes under forty minutes the the things that we talk about are all Google focused but we we really try to add a lot of the application like not just talking about the tool itself but also you know how can this be used in the classroom so we will do um you know all kinds of different episodes but we always share the like the Google news and updates too because Google is always updating something so we have a short little section where we'll just share hey here's what's been you know we've got some new features or we've got some updates and some changes that you should know about and share those and then we have our featured content that we talked about which can be focused on a variety of things so you know this this week we released an episode on Google slides and really we talked a lot about alternative ways to use slides besides just as a presentation tool so you know it'll it'll will have a variety you know Ted upstairs on like eportfolios with Google Sites and you know all the the lesser-known tools the tools that people don't know about that are sort of outside of G suite and we just try to make it fun and try to think of the things that we want would want to use in a classroom

Keith: that's great so is Google taking any kind of notice of y'all they reached out and said hey thanks for for being our St. Pauls?

Kasey Bell: well I I have worked in Google several times I got them to include us on the teaching Center as a resource for teachers so Google doesn't like to officially recognize anyone or notice but we're both we're both Google certified innovators and we actually went through the same Google teacher Academy so this actually is sort of our innovator project and as the result many many years later and the Google teachers tribe project so you'll find it under the innovator projects as well on their website but I do periodically communicate with different groups at Google and and try to try to get as much help as I can but we're both under non-disclosure so we can get some access to some information but know as much as you'd like to think that they recognize people they really don't

Keith: well and so when I was looking through on your website there's you know the Google certified trainer and educator though there's a fairly self-explanatory but can you

tell us a little bit more about the innovator and how does one become a Google certified innovator

Kasey Bell: sure so the innovator program which used to be called Google certified teacher it's actually what was called when I went through it is a the most competitive of all of the certifications and you have to submit a video application with a project proposal and the projects are pretty specific big vision you know making some sort of transformation and change in in your job or in your role and you submit those for the different academies that happen all over the globe so you do apply to attend a a 2-day Academy that happens on one of the Google campuses and so they're they're pretty small they're anywhere from maybe 30 to 50 people that participate in each cohort and there's just a few of them every year so that one is like I said the most competitive but sort of the most selective of all of the certifications I went through the Google teacher Academy in 2014 in Austin which is actually the very last Google teacher Academy that's before they made the shift to calling it innovator but anyone can apply you don't have to be a classroom teacher you can even nominate others that you think would be really great so they are really looking for leaders for people who stand out in some way and who really are passionate about making changes in education of course it helps if you're a fan of some G suite tools

Keith: that's true all right well as we're wrapping up here let's help you move some paper can you can you tell us a little bit about your book

Kasey Bell: okay yeah so it is it is named as the same title as my blog there's shakeup learning practical ideas to move learning from static to dynamic you can learn more about the book itself on shake up learning book calm there's an entire support website for the book and there's a link to find out if there's a book study going on there are resources and discussion questions for each chapter so it's really sort of ready-made for any type of book study and you can get it on Amazon get it on Barnes & Noble the usual spot

Keith: can I suggest a title for a sequel shake up learning two even shakier. You can have that one free of charge that's my gift to you I'm sure that's going to just light up the New York Times Best Seller List thanks again for joining us here on the leecoschools edcast we really appreciate it your keynote at ALET was fantastic

Kyle: yeah we appreciate it a lot

Kasey Bell: no thank you

Keith: and we're as we tell everybody who comes on the podcast continue to be awesome

Kasey Bell: oh thanks I'm gonna try very very hard

Keith: you're you're succeeding by leaps and bounds

Kyle: we certainly appreciate your time

Kasey Bell: no thank you so much for inviting me and it was great meeting you and I wish you all a great fall semester

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