Analysis
After reviewing the School Wide Needs Assessment Survey I chose to mentor Mariam Whidden. She is a 2nd grade teacher with 10 years teaching experience. She is comfortable and proficient with technology. She uses Blackboard and Horizon and wanted to learn about creating a wiki, blog or discussion board for her students.

Planning/Implementation
After our oral pre-assessment of her results we made some goals and created our plan of action. Our plan of action was to review the blackboard terms and went over the homepage layout and blogs for students to access and use in class.

Assessment
During each of the meetings, Mariam was showing her understanding of the materials and was able to implement them in her classroom. After observing her implement this in her classroom, I was able to see the students actively participating and fully engaged in the process. I was able to meet and give her feedback and have her give me her self-evaluation orally.
Discussion Boards

Discussion Boards Can:

- Facilitate sharing and collaboration among students
- Allow expression of thoughts from all students.
- Allows a teacher to know HOW students are understanding a concept
- Allows all to enjoy course content in a different (more creative?) way

About Discussion Boards:

Discussion Board is a tool for sharing thoughts and ideas about class topics. The Discussion Board is made up of forums that may appear anywhere in the course but are also all centrally located in the Discussion Board tool.

Students usually participate in forums with no administrative privileges. However, a Student may be granted some forum administration privileges within a group. For instance, a student may create a thread for discussion based on an assigned reading or topic, and remaining class members respond to the thread.

How to Create a Discussion Board:

QUICK STEPS: Creating a discussion topic

- On the Class Menu, click Getting Started.
- Click the Discussion Board link in the Content Area.
- On the Discussion Board page, click Create Topic on the Action Bar.
- Type a Name. Users will click the topic name to access the topic.
- Under Topic Availability, select the Yes option.
- Select Topic Settings.
- Click Submit.

QUICK STEPS: Creating threads

- Access the topic.
- On the Action Bar, click Create Thread.
- On the Create Thread page, type a Subject.
- Type the reply in the Message text box. Format the text using the Text Editor functions, if you want.
- Under Attachments, browse for a file to attach to your message if desired. Use the Text Editor Attach File function to attach multiple files.
- To add a grade column to the Grade Center, select the Grade Thread check box and type Points possible.
- Click Save Draft to store a draft of the post or click Submit.
Wikis

What is a Wiki?

A Wiki Can:

- Facilitate sharing and collaboration among students
- Create a repository of knowledge
- Be continually be updated and revised
- Allow unlimited revisions to any page submitted by class members

About Wikis:

Most of us are familiar with that ever-expanding online encyclopedia known as Wiki-pedia. Wikis are collaborative tools that allow students to contribute and modify one or more pages of class related materials, providing a means of sharing and collaboration. Pages can be created and edited quickly, while tracking changes and additions, allowing for effective collaboration between multiple writers. Wikis increase social interaction, while enabling swift collaboration and interaction while exchanging information and creating a repository of knowledge.

Similar to the Discussion Board, the teacher acts as a facilitator instead providing class content. Unlike a Blog, Wikis require intense collaboration, where information is linked to and built upon.

How to Create a Wiki:

QUICK STEPS: Creating a Class Wiki

- In the Control Panel, expand the Class Tools section and select Wikis.
- On the Wikis listing page, click Create Wiki on the Action Bar.
- On the Create Wiki page, type a Wiki Name.
- Type optional Instructions for the Wiki. Format the text and add images, links, multimedia, and attachments using the functions in the Text Editor, if you want. Attachments added using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and have alternate text added to describe the attachment.
- Select the Yes option to make the Wiki available to users.
- Use the Display After and Display Until date and time fields to limit availability of the Wiki. Select the Display After and Display Until check boxes in order to enable the date and time selections.
- Under Wiki Participation, select the Student Access option: Closed to Editing or Open to Editing.
Creating a Wiki homepage:
• On the Wikis listing page, select the title of the Wiki to which you want to add a home page.
• On the Create Wiki Page, type a Wiki Name.
• Type a description or instructions in the Content text box. Format the text and add images, links, multimedia, and attachments using the functions in the Text Editor, if you want. Attachments added using the Text Editor can be launched in a new window and have alternate text added to describe the attachment.
• Click Submit.

Commenting on Wiki pages:
• Access the Wiki.
• On the Wiki topic page, select the page to view in the side panel. The Wiki page opens in the content frame.
• Click Comment following the user's entry. The Comment text box appears.
• Type your comments in the Comment text box.
• Click Spell Check at the bottom of the Comment box to check the spelling of the content before continuing. Click Add. Click the Comments link below the entry to view your comment.

Viewing Wiki Participation:
• Access the Wiki.
• On the Wiki topic page’s Action Bar, click Participation and Grading for graded Wikis or Participation Summary for Wikis with no grading.
• On the Participation Summary page, view participation for the students who have contributed to the Wiki in the content frame.
• In the side panel, view information about the Wiki and select a user to view his or her participation information.

Linking to other Wiki pages:
• Access the Wiki.
• On the Wiki topic page, click Create Wiki Page.
• On the Create Wiki Page, type a Wiki Name and Content.
• In the Content text box, position your mouse pointer where you want to add a link to another Wiki page.
• Click the Link to Wiki page function in the Text Editor, represented by several sheets of paper. If there is only one page in the Wiki, this function is disabled.
• In the pop-up window, select the Wiki page to link to from the drop-down list.
• Optionally, type a name for the link in the Rename Wiki Page Link text box.
• Click Submit. The link appears in the Text Editor.
• Click Submit. The new page with the link is added to the Wiki.

Assigning Wiki Grades:
• Access the Wiki to be graded.
• On the Wiki topic page, click Participation and Grading on the Action Bar.
• On the Participation Summary page, select a student’s name in the View Contributions By section.
• On the Participant’s Contribution page, a list of the student’s pages and versions open in the content frame. You can also view information about the contributions. In the Page Version column, click a page's title to review it.
• When you finish reviewing pages and are ready to grade, in the Grade section in the side panel, click Edit Grade. The grading field appears in the side panel.
• Type a grade in the Current Grade Value text box.
• Type feedback for the student in the Feedback text box. A Spell Check function is also available.
• Type notes in the Grading Notes text box. These notes are private and will not appear to the student.
• Click Save Grade.

Group Wiki Settings:
• Select the Tools link on the Class Menu.
• On the Tools page, select Wikis.
• On the Wikis listing page, click the Group Wiki’s Action Link you want to edit to access the contextual menu.
• Select Edit Properties.
• On the Edit Wiki page, the default name for the Group Wiki is the name of the Group. You can change the Group Wiki’s Name on the Edit Wiki page, if you want.
• Type optional Instructions in the text box. Format the text and add images, links, multimedia, Mashups, and attachments using the functions in the Text Editor, if you want.
• Make changes to the settings, if you want. For example, if you do not want all class members to view a Group’s Wiki, select the Group Members-Only option.
• Click Submit.
BLACKBOARD BITS

Blogs

Ascension
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

What is a Blog?

Blogs are.....
- Online journals
- Combination of text, images, links and multimedia
- Frequently updated by members of a group

Uses........
- Encourages group collaboration about content.
- Teachers can gain insight on student’s activities and thinking processes throughout a project.
- Provides a medium for students to share knowledge and materials they collected.

FYI
- Only the teacher can create a class or individual blog.

Quick Steps

Creating a Blog
1. In the control panel, expand the class tools and select blogs.
2. On the blogs listing page, click create a blog on the action bar.
3. On the create a blog page, type a blog name
4. Under blog availability, select yes (or it will not be available to students)
5. Click submit

Commenting on Blog Entries
1. Access the blog
2. Select the blog you want to comment on
3. Click comment following the users entry, type into the comment text box.
4. Click add

Grading Blog Entries
1. Access the blog topic page and select the blog entry to grade by selecting the user’s name under view entries
2. Under blog grade in the side panel, click edit grade
3. Type a numeric grade in the current grade value text box.
4. Type feedback for the student in the feedback textbox (these are private).
5. Click save grade.

Editing Group Blog settings
1. Select the groups link on the class menu.
2. On the groups page, select the group name to access the group page, select the group blog under the group tools.
3. Click the title’s action link to access the menu and select edit- make changes
4. Click submit
Journals are:

Journals are a personal space for students to communicate privately with the teacher. Students can use journals as a self-reflective tool to post opinions, ideas, and analyze class related material. The teacher can use student journal entries to gain insight to the student's understanding of class content.

Suggested uses for Journals:

- Daily Reflection
- Summative Checks “Ticket Out the Door”
- Self Evaluation/Response to Learning Targets

Creating a Journal

1. Select a Class under “My Classes.”
2. In the Control Panel, expand the Class Tools section and select Journals.
3. On the Journals listing page, click Create Journal on the Action Board.
4. On the Create Journal page, type a Journal Name (ex. Morning Journal)
5. Under Journal Availability, select the Yes option to make it available to users.

Commenting on a Journal

1. Access the Journal
2. On the Journal topic page, select the journal entry to view by selecting the user’s name in the side panel under More Journals. The Journal entry opens in the content frame.
3. Click Comment following the user’s entry. The Comment text box appears.
4. Type your comments in the Comment text box. Click Add.

Grading Journal Entries (optional)

1. Select the journal entry to grade by selecting the user's name in the side panel. The entry will open in the control frame.
2. Under Journal Grade in the side panel, click Edit Grade. The grading field appears in the side panel.
3. Type a numeric grade in the Current Grade Value text box.
4. Type feedback in the student feedback text box.
5. Type notes in the Grading Notes text box. The notes are private and will not appear to the student. Click Save Grade.