**Five ways Teachers can use Technology to help Students:**

1. **Schools must use technology that empowers teachers**. Teachers rightly reject education technologies that divert their attention from instruction. The best education technologies enable teachers to do more with fewer resources. Communication platforms like Twitter, Facebook, or Tumblr enable dynamic communication with students. Teacher-empowering technologies include mobile apps that grade written student work and provide lesson plan databases. School systems need to aggressively track what works for their teachers and put all other unworkable technologies aside.
2. **Teachers should treat the adoption of technology as part of lesson planning**. One of the major drivers of bad policy is policy churn. New district leaders want to make their mark adopting new policies and jettisoning the old. This constant changing of priorities makes beneficial reforms difficult to implement. Teachers can incorporate technology directly into their practice and insulate their students from the deleterious effects of policy churn. For example, teachers can use Khan Academy or other online resources to improve remediation. Systematic adoption of technology at the classroom levels limits the damage of shifting policy maker priorities.
3. **Teachers should not fear open-source technologies**. Many mistakenly believe that education technologies are expensive and complicated to use. Open-source technologies are stable, secure, and compatible with other platforms. Organizations both small and large use open source devices every day. Many businesses use open-source servers for their efficiency and costs savings. They often have large communities that provide high quality customer support. Best of all, open-source technologies often cost less than proprietary products.
4. **Use online education portfolios to evaluate students**. Educators have known about the benefits of paper based portfolios for generations. Portfolios allow students to express creativity for difficult to assess subjects. Teachers can choose from a variety of online portfolio providers tailored to the needs of their classroom. They also serve as a platform for students to demonstrate growth. Online portfolios have many advantages over paper based options because they cost less and allow for more robust outreach. Online portfolios are also amenable to a wider variety of formats including video, music or other interactive features.
5. **Teachers should embrace the Common Core State Standards**. Common standards make teaching simpler. Teachers have to write lessons that comply with district, state, and national standards (e.g. NCTM or NCTE). Having a single set of standards eliminates redundancy and conflicting guidelines. Furthermore, universal adoption of common standards will support future technological innovations that aid teachers. From a technical perspective, standards facilitate the development of new technologies. Innovators can focus on developing tools that better serve students rather than solving technical challenges of interoperability created by multiple sets of standards.