

School Administrators Association of New York State

Vanguard

SPRING 2015
Vol. 44 No. 2

Exploring
Educational
Leadership



INNOVATIVE PRACTICES FOR GLOBAL SCHOOLS

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EDUCATION?**

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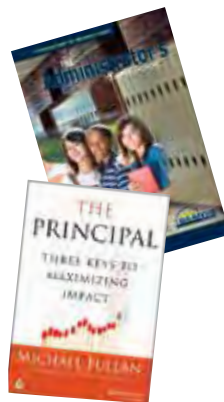
Workshops:

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Making Sense of the New Part 154
Regulations for English Language
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The Big Boil Down

The Principal NOW: Changing the
Role to Have Maximum Impact



Workshops:

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Connected Learning

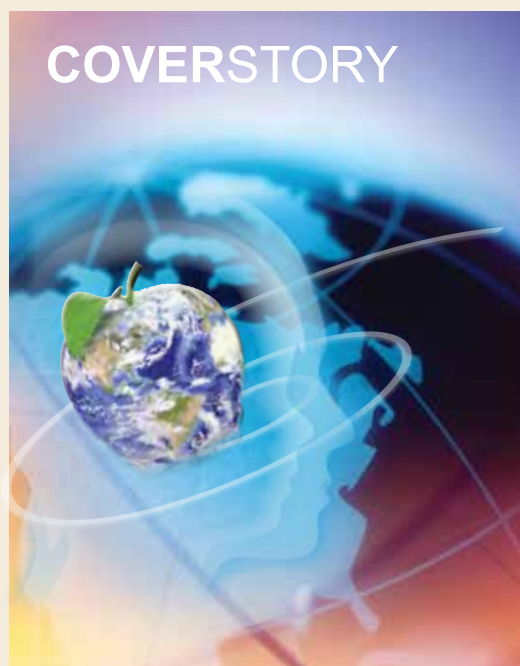
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Vanguard
SPRING
2015
Vol. 44 No. 2
Practices
from practitioners

This magazine is published
three times a year by the
**School Administrators Association
of New York State**
8 Airport Park Boulevard
Latham, NY 12110
(518) 782-0600
Fax: (518) 782-9552

Managing Editor
Michelle B. Hebert | SAANYS

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Karen Bronson | SAANYS
Peter DeWitt | Averill Park
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Layout & Design
Sharon Caruso | Graphic Designer

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"I think Gramma should outsource!"

An analogy

As some of you who attended the SAANYS Conference in the fall know, my mother was faced with some medical challenges she needed to overcome. Since her diagnosis, I have tried to assist with some of the chores needing attention around her home.

Last Saturday, I offered to assist with staining her front porch. While shopping for deck stain, I realized I was not equipped to make an educated purchase; I had not done my research. I was not sure if I needed to use a roller or a brush. I sought out advice and opinions from other people and insecurely hoped I purchased the correct materials. When I arrived back at her house, I assisted with cleaning the porch and applying the stain; before I knew it, the pollen was falling and the black clouds were arriving... um, I should have checked the short-term and long range weather forecast, I thought.

It rained all weekend and Monday, as well. I called my mom several times a day and texted my daughter on numerous occasions for a porch status report. With each report came thoughts of dissatisfaction with my lack of thorough planning. Jokingly, to alleviate some of my disappointment, I said to my daughter, "I hope Gramma will let me continue to work for her." My daughter responded, "I think Gramma should outsource."

"Ouch, that hurt!" I thought. My mind immediately began making connections to the bigger educational and employment quandary. We must provide students with learning experiences that ensure they have the confidence, knowledge, skills, and competencies to successfully participate in the workforce. We have been commissioned to graduate students who are able to meet the needs of local employers as well as the needs of businesses on the larger scale.

Unlike me and my lack of home improvement project planning, educators must accept personal responsibility for planning to address the complexity of learner and workforce needs on all levels: local, state, national, and

global. How do we create mindsets to accept this colossal undertaking?

As educators, we must intentionally plan for the momentous role we have in preparing students to be independent, productive, and contributing employees and citizens. We cannot underestimate the impact we have on each and every student.

I recently had the opportunity to participate in Results First Training. The training included a fascinating discussion entitled, "Thoughts from Hal Williams." Hal Williams was president of the Rensselaerville Institute for 38 years. He confirms that we need to change the way we think, feel, and act to positively impact the lives of students.

Hal has a soft-spoken, compelling way of inspiring participants to reflect on their own individual practices. Conversations with him leave participants asking themselves: "Do I act in a manner that captivates and excites staff members to grow and think beyond their current practices, to thinking about intentional actions that have a high-ranking impact value for students?"

As a leader in your school community, are you intentionally working with your staff members to ensure your students graduate with the employability skills needed to be successful in the workforce? According to the research firm, Global Strategy Group, problem solving, collaboration, and critical thinking are the important skills business leaders are looking for in employees.

This issue of *Vanguard* provides a magnitude of information for you to consider and investigate as you and your colleagues grapple with the numerous challenges presented to members of the educational arena. The authors in this issue cite research and practices to support your efforts in creating school systems that are the solution.

John C. Maxwell stated, "Children astound me with their inquisitive minds. The world is wide and mysterious to them, and as they piece together the puzzle of life, they ask 'Why?' ceaselessly." Give yourself permission to ceaselessly ask yourself, "Why!"



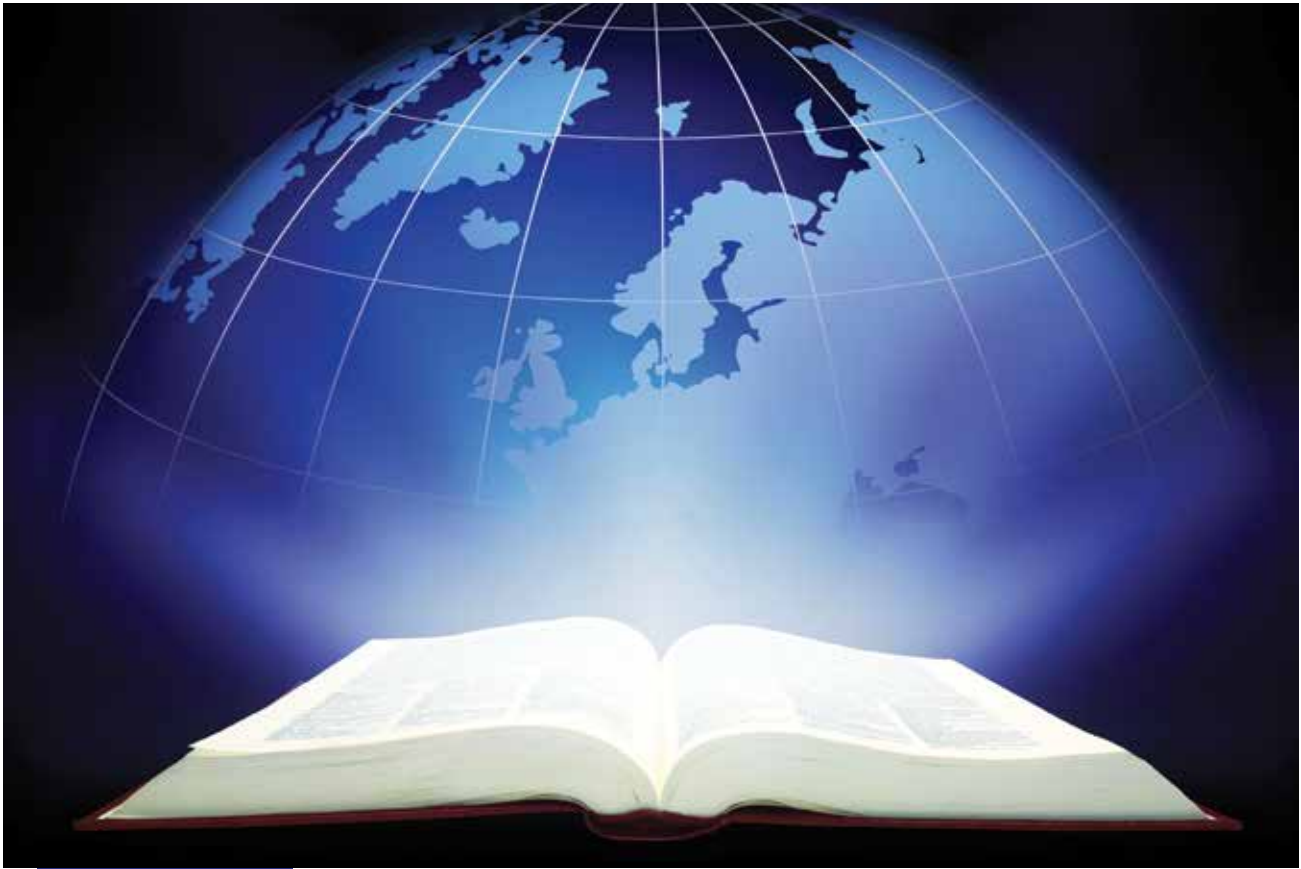
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WHAT IS

Global Education?

By Peter DeWitt, EdD

Being a school leader has become increasingly complex. There was a time when leaders, teachers, and students could stay in their small town and be isolated from the outside world. There were less distractions, and only the biggest stories made the nightly news. That world is gone, and there are pros and cons to our newly connected world. Thomas Friedman, in his groundbreaking book, *The World Is Flat*, opened everyone's eyes to the idea that social media and the Internet have given us **the opportunity to connect with and learn from people from around the world.**

Whether it is for professional or personal reasons, social media, distance learning, and other Internet tools, when used correctly, help bring people together. For school leaders and teachers this has profound implications, because students need to be prepared for this global world, and therefore so do teachers and school leaders. We often look at students as the ones who are naive about the world around them, but the adults do not always have an open mind when viewing the outside world either.

It's easy to get stuck in the rut of doing what they have always done before, and technology and social media have helped others grow, while some still shun the experience. They're afraid of what we don't know, and quite frankly they are less concerned about the outside world when they have so many constraints happening in their own state. But even with those constraints, a more global view is needed, because it will help people break out of their own line of thinking, and perhaps help them gain a better understanding of the world that our students will be inheriting.

The misunderstanding about the use of technology and social media is that everything revolves around 21st century skills, but global learning is much more than that. Global learning is about connecting with others to get a better understanding of cultures, innovations, and other points of view. These are all things students who are much older had to learn through reading textbooks, but now students have the opportunity to interact in real time with students and teachers from around the world. Unfortunately, connecting is not enough. Merely connecting doesn't go deep enough to what students should be doing. Learning should be at the center of our discussions, intentions, and aspirations. What can we learn from

“Global learning is about connecting with others to get a better understanding of cultures, innovations, and other points of view.”

one another is an important question, and some of the world's leading experts in the field of education offered SAANYS their best answers.

Russ Quaglia is the founder of the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations (QISA) and his work is being implemented around North America, as well as in London and Poland. Gavin Dykes is the program developer for the Education World Forum. Based in London, Gavin moderates forums based on global education, which brings in close to 30 ministers of education from developed countries around the world. Viviane Robinson is the author of *Student-Centered Leadership*, and she is a professor of education at the University of Auckland (New Zealand). Yong Zhao is a best-selling author and presidential chair and associate dean for global and online education at the University of Oregon. John Hattie is the director of research and education professor at the University of Melbourne (Australia) and his Visible Learning research, which involves over 250 million students, is being implemented around the world.

HOW DO SCHOOLS PROVIDE A GLOBAL EDUCATION?

Russ Quaglia states: “Global education should be underpinned by the notion of diversity and connectedness.” He goes on to say, “I think students need to be open to new ideas and ways of thinking. Schools need to allow students to explore their curiosities and be prepared to come up with creative solutions to issues they have yet to encounter. They need to do this by being connected with other students around the world. The naive simplicity of lectures and testing must be replaced with exploration, a spirit of adventure, and a common purpose. A purpose driven by the belief that teachers and students working together can make the world a better place.”

Yong Zhao agrees:

“A global learning environment enables students to learn from, with, and for individuals around

The naïve simplicity of lectures and testing must be replaced with exploration, a spirit of adventure, and a common purpose.”

the globe. Such an environment allows students to take advantage of learning resources and experts from around the globe and enables them to learn how to interact with people from different cultures. It also helps students to develop a global perspective.”

John Hattie provides a much more critical lens as to why this is all important:

“PISA has changed many policy levers and shown many systems alternative ways to develop school leaders (e.g., in Singapore you choose early to go down the leadership or top teaching career paths and whereas school leaders were focused on local context there is now a much higher awareness of looking out and realizing that we are a) not unique and b) that there are so many other models of school leadership that can work. The world of international research is also much more accessible.”

Viviane Robinson provided a unique, and much more culturally inclusive, answer. She said,

“While we all espouse tolerance, inclusiveness and the benefit of community and diversity, the world is increasingly characterized by sectarian and civil strife. State schools have a major part to play in instilling through formal and informal curricula, the virtues of open-mindedness, tolerance, and mutual accountability – an open-mindedness that rejects both weak relativism and dogmatic certainty. I see this as more important in a global education than issues of technology.”

Considering how complex, or what Michael Fullan refers to as Simplicity, this all is for leaders, Hattie believes we should start here;

“Given all this, the greatest change (still in process) is the move from transformational leadership (mainly coming out of business CEO approaches) to impact leadership – no longer can principals just be concerned with the vision of the school but increasingly are asked to be concerned with the impact of the adults in the school on students – and will more and more be asked to share this information.”

When looking at the learning that happens in schools, one of Hattie’s eight mind frames is “Know Thy Impact.” As important as that is for teachers, it is equally as important for school leaders. Being visible isn’t enough, which means that welcoming students off the bus, being visible in the hallway or classrooms, and making sure they go to the lunchroom are all important parts of a leader’s job, but it isn’t enough. Leaders must always try to understand, or Know Thy Impact.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP TO IMPACT LEADERSHIP

Principals, superintendents, and every administrative position in between understand that leadership is changing. It’s the “how” that is really difficult. As leaders continue to work their way through accountability and mandates, which is potentially resulting in a much more strict evaluation model, being innovative and working toward a more global school, while dealing with some of the same anchors that weigh them down, is a constant struggle.

Quaglia, who is a former school leader and teacher, says, “I find the most successful school leaders today having the ability to ‘balance.’ Balance between being a conformist and a bit of a renegade; being determined and passionate about one’s values and beliefs, and open to new ideas and ways of thinking; being driven by success, and accepting of failure to learn and grow; being able to voice an opinion with courage and conviction, and knowing when to sit back

and listen; being sensitive to local needs, and realizing the importance of global stewardship; being able to dream about the future and having a great vision for the school, and being able to inspire others in the present to reach those goals.”

Robinson isn’t so sure that global schools are needed, as much as a continued effort to work on those areas that are still not strengths.

Robinson says, “I don’t know that we need global schools so much as schools that can teach in ways that promote a more peaceful and prosperous global community. Leaders need the skills to engage multiple diverse communities and in so doing create the opportunities and expectations that they will engage respectfully with each other in the interests of their children. This means leaders need to be both courageous and respectful, as they model the values of tolerance, inclusiveness, and mutual accountability.”

This, of course, is parallel to what Yong Zhao believes leaders should know:

“I think it is important for school leadership to imagine that learning is not confined within a local context, as the world has become globalized. To start the change, school leadership need to broaden their definition of learning outcomes and resources.”

One of the ways to meet Robinson’s idea, as well as provide the better understanding Zhao refers to, is through some of the work that Gavin Dykes is involved in with the UN. The UN Sustainable Development Goals are meant to eradicate the world of those issues that we have been battling for centuries. The 17 goals revolve around ending poverty and hunger, while improving health, working for equality for gender and marginalized populations, and providing access to clean water and reusable energy sources. Dykes goes on to say,



UNSustainable Goals? YES!
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsproposal>

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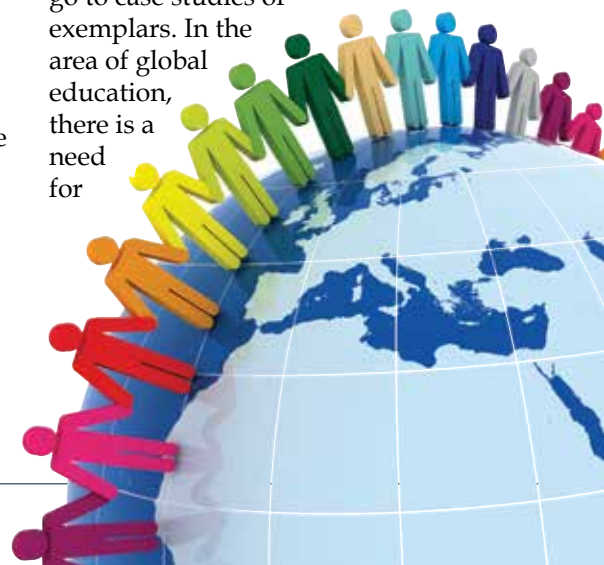
“New materials, films, and positive contributions to this initiative are being sought, so we all have an opportunity to play a part, to share and to learn. One step I’d be delighted to see school leadership taking is to start engaging with this now. That would be an excellent way to build towards becoming a globally engaged school, and to be a globally engaged school leader.”

Impact leadership, as Hattie refers to it, is an excellent way to meet the goal Gavin Dykes would like to see from schools, because that work could coincide with meeting the new UN goals.

“One of the hidden steps in working with this now is the cross-curricular nature of these Sustainable Development Goals. If you set to work on doing something about them locally now, then you will have great opportunities to associate science, literacy, math, language, and geography with them and to step along the path of project-based learning and learning by doing if you have a mind to take your leadership in that direction.”

WHO DOES THIS WELL?

As leaders and teachers look for resources around their goals, they go to case studies or exemplars. In the area of global education, there is a need for



knowing who does this well, and which leaders we can learn from as they try to meet this global goal. This often brings schools, states, and countries to a sticky point, because the immediate reaction is to go to competition. Who do we compete against? How are their test scores? Is there a standardized approach? The simple answer is that none of this comes in a box or a textbook, which is why technology and social media are important to these pursuits.

When looking at countries that are doing well, Quaglia, Dykes, and Hattie provide some answers. Robinson and Zhao felt that there are many examples, too many to call out a few.

Quaglia comments:

“Rivers Academy is a school that is on the move in all the right directions. The school is based in west London, England, and is one of thirteen schools of the Aspirations Academy Trust. The leadership (Paula Kenning) has instilled a sense of self-worth, meaningful engagement, and purpose for everyone. She did this by having high expectations of everyone (staff and students). She made sure that everyone knew they mattered and their opinions were sought after, valued, and listened to. The culture of the school went from testing and accountability to trust and responsibility. Yes, they are still taking tests like everyone else, but the feel of the school is very different and emotionally healthy. I might also add their test scores have improved as well!”

Hattie provides a much more critical answer when he says,

“Singapore is the best answer. They have widened from the narrow view of excellence of PISA (i.e., a focus on math and reading), to include vocational preparation (and it is now not the poor cousin); they have focused on teamwork, collaborative problem solving, and entrepreneurship.”

However, he believes other countries have pockets of excellence but still have things to work on:

“Australia has adopted ambitious standards for teachers and school leaders and is now embarking on a radical investigation of teacher education preparation, but still is narrow in what it values in high school.

NZ has moved to ask schools for their ‘overall teacher judgments’ and NOT the test scores. This has highlighted the massive variability in teacher judgment, has included all subjects and not just the usual few, and related a wide debate across schools about ‘what it means to be good’ at various subjects at various times in the curriculum progression. It has not always been an easy debate – and this has meant principals play a much stronger role in developing common mind frames about progress.”

Gavin Dykes provided some important insight from his work with ministries of education from around the world. He said,

“I sometimes wonder if small countries take their international context more seriously than larger and perhaps more powerful countries. In some there seems to be a natural instinct to look outwards and engage with and learn from what is happening elsewhere. This is about attitudes and values and requires empathy, humility, and skills of collaboration. But that doesn’t mean it has to be that way – those living in any country can develop those attitudes and values. It’s interesting, too, that it seems like many of today’s companies seek people with healthy doses of empathy, humility, and collaboration.”

In the end, all schools in all countries are a work in progress. One thing is for sure, schools need strong leaders who will Know Thy Impact. Dykes ends by saying,

“I see the shift towards new models for leadership, school culture, and teaching also playing out through the work of organizations such as the

Agastya International Foundation as it works to support students, teachers, and schools in several of India’s states. Agastya acts as a stimulus to innovation and as an agent of change, supporting teachers and students in doing things differently. I sense it happening where schools change their approach to set student aspirations at the center of their work, changing the dynamics of learning, improving relationships between all those involved with leadership and increasingly shared responsibility, and moving towards models more appropriate to today’s increasingly globalized world.”

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PETER DEWITT, EdD is an independent consultant working with schools in the U.S. and internationally as a learning trainer. He is an instructional coach with Jim Knight and student voice with Russ Quaglia. Peter is the author of three education books including *Flipping Leadership Doesn’t Mean Reinventing the Wheel* (Corwin Press, 2014) and *School Climate Change* (ASCD, 2014). He is the series editor for the Connected Educators Series (Corwin Press), and is working on a new leadership series with Michael Fullan, Yong Zhao, Pasi Sahlberg, Andy Hargreaves, and Russ Quaglia.



BOCES –

Ecosystems for Innovation

By Kim M. Smithgall

“Do you know what my favorite renewable fuel is?
An ecosystem for innovation.”

– Thomas Friedman

It’s 8 p.m. on a warm Thursday evening in Westbury. A screened-in porch at the back of a house on a quiet residential street provides the perfect setting for a high school student to open his laptop and get some extra tutoring before a math test. Thanks to the Nassau BOCES Center for online learning, a virtual tutoring program is “open” for business.



Twelve hours later at Greenwood Lake Middle School in Orange County, a group of seventh-graders enthusiastically greets the teacher upon entering the classroom: ni hao (pronounced “nee-how”)! Today’s Mandarin Chinese class has begun. The teacher appears on a monitor, broadcasting to students in multiple school districts from a teaching studio at Orange-Ulster BOCES.

Take a peek inside today’s BOCES and you’ll see the quiet revolutions taking place, as new services are created and others reimagined in order to prepare students for success in a global marketplace.”

Meanwhile, a senior in the Sharon Springs Central School District is the only student in her district taking an advanced placement (AP) economics course. For this rural district with a total enrollment of 300 students, offering this class for one interested student would be impossible without the Virtual Advanced Placement (VAP) initiative available through Capital Region BOCES.

At Niagara Career and Technical Education (CTE) Center, juniors in the Animation and Video Production Program are creating medical simulations using 2-D and 3-D animation software.

And then there are the juniors and seniors in Mark Harris’s classes at the Ulster BOCES Career and Technical Center – they’re making metal parts that will be out of this world... literally.

You might be surprised that these inventive and cutting-edge programs and activities originate with BOCES. In many cases, BOCES across the state are still being defined as institutions focused on vocational training and special education programs – but there is so much more happening today, according to BOCES leaders.

“School administrators are so busy that it’s often hard for them to see everything that’s happening at BOCES and the programs that are available now,” said Elisa Barilla,

project coordinator at Nassau BOCES’ Center for Online Learning.

Take a peek inside today’s BOCES and you’ll see the quiet revolutions taking place, as new services are created and others reimagined in order to prepare students for success in a global marketplace. BOCES have become ecosystems for innovation...and that’s the new normal for participating students.

GOING GLOBAL

Orange-Ulster BOCES’ e-Learning Mandarin Chinese Program, offered to students in grades six through 12, is a perfect example. Currently,

there are 320 students from 11 school districts participating.

“Students are learning about Chinese culture, history, and government and, at the same time, learning to speak Mandarin Chinese. The program is offered through our distance learning service, but it’s live. We have teachers broadcasting using videoconferencing technology over the Internet and they’re able to interact with students,” explained Orange-Ulster BOCES Director of Instructional Support Services Diane E. Lang. “This really breaks down the boundaries of traditional classrooms.”

Teaching Mandarin Chinese is growing in popularity for a number of reasons – China is the second largest economy in the world and it’s one of the largest trading partners with the United States. “To be successful in a global economy, you need to have intercultural skills; you need to be aware of your own culture and anticipate the culture of others,” Lang said. “Our students are uniquely prepared to interact successfully in a multicultural

“School administrators are so busy that it’s often hard for them to see everything that’s happening at BOCES and the programs that are available now.”

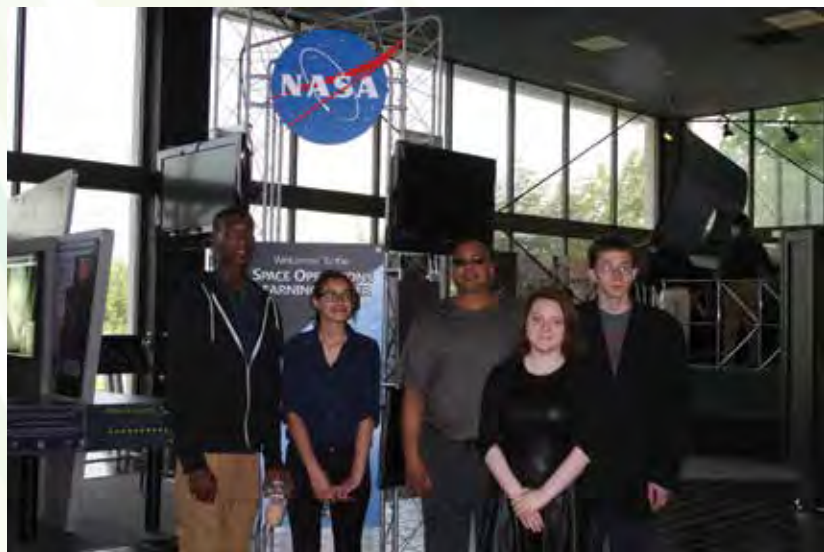
environment because of the projects they’re doing in the class.”

These projects include an extensive senior portfolio that must be digitally produced... and presented in Chinese to a panel of teachers. Last year, one student had a particular interest in Chinese architecture. “He did research, collected images and drawings and put together a detailed portfolio project, complete with text and a voiceover in Chinese. He added English subtitles for his parents, though,” Lang mused.

Lang, the winner of SAANYS’ 2015 Leadership and Support Award, feels the participating pupils not only enjoy learning a language that’s based in a different way of writing compared with English, but also using high-tech approaches. “They’re being taught in a technology-infused methodology, so they’re also expanding their technology skills along with their language skills,” she said.

RELEASING THE CONSTRAINTS

High-tech tools are also helping other BOCES across the state eliminate the constraints of classroom walls, limited class periods, and traditional grade configurations.





At Nassau BOCES' Center for Online Learning, client districts can choose from seemingly endless options for "anytime, anyplace" learning. This includes virtual courses yielding both high school and college credit, with classes ranging from multivariable calculus and AP psychology to high school English and personal fitness. The center's virtual tutoring courses can be accessed in multiple languages seven days a week, and webcams allow real-time, face-to-face interactions with the tutors; plus, the sessions can be recorded for later review.

"These are courses that districts wouldn't be able to offer on their own — perhaps because there are only a few students interested. However, by running the classes in a virtual setting, students from all participating districts benefit," said Beth McCoy, executive manager for curriculum, instruction and technology.

Nassau BOCES also offers blended learning classes, which allow in-district teachers to facilitate their students' virtual learning. Videoconferencing options can add even more options to classrooms by connecting them to such rich resources as museums...or even other classrooms around the world. "This brings the power of collaboration to life," Barilla said.

Capital Region BOCES and its affiliated Northeastern Regional Information Center (NERIC) see similar advantages with the state grant-funded Virtual Advanced Placement (VAP) program, which presented AP

classes in economics, psychology, English literature, and art history the first year of the grant and then added Spanish and statistics to the roster in the second year. Seven component school districts were part of the VAP consortium. The success of the venture means Capital Region BOCES/NERIC will open

up the program to all districts when the grant period ends in June 2015.

The results so far have been impressive, with participants not only earning high school and college credits, but also learning the soft skills that will be vital for success in college and in any career they may pursue.

"The students are connected one day per week via video with their peers in other schools and the teacher," explained NERIC's Managing Coordinator for eLearning Mike Syloski. "And the rest of the time, they're working online. This is how many college classes operate now and also how many businesses provide staff training, so it's giving the students valuable experience for the future."

Syloski added that the VAP program also helps students develop time-management skills, discipline, and the ability to be self-directed. "You don't have a teacher standing over your shoulder reminding you that you need to get your work done. Likewise, the online portion of the class can be done at any time, so it forces students to plan ahead and take ownership of their learning — just as they'll have to do in college and or in a job."

The teachers involved in the VAP program are reaping the rewards, as well. "Just as it is for the students, this is a different modality for the teachers," Syloski said. "They're excited about the professional development opportunities that allow them to be trained as AP

instructors by the College Board, as well as the chance to work in a blended technology environment. This environment lets them build camaraderie with teachers in other districts who are in the same subject area and also to learn techniques for engaging students in a virtual world."

ENHANCING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

BOCES educators are also re-imagining how academic subject matter is taught, allowing class time to become more relevant for all students. In Broome-Tioga BOCES, this re-imagining led to an option (Evertech Academy) for students to be immersed in a career and technical education program for four years in high school rather than the traditional two years.

The four-year experience at Evertech Academy was based on requests from area superintendents who wanted options for career education at younger ages/earlier grade levels. Evertech also grew out of Broome-Tioga BOCES' successful alternative high school model. The academy has 12 teachers serving 140 pupils. "Many of the students in this full-day program are at risk for not graduating from high school because of one circumstance or another," said Melissa Shade, supervisor of instructional programs. "We've set up a very tight-knit, welcoming, and supportive community and take a personalized approach to education."

This includes teachers acting as mentors for small groups of students based on mutual interests (photography, basketball, etc.) and, again, encouraging students to develop the soft skills they'll need for success in the business world; in this case, it's all about respect, responsibility, and taking advantage of opportunities to learn and grow. The academic approach at Evertech Academy focuses on project-based learning, meaning subject matter is embedded into hands-on activities and students learn by doing. And the "learning" and the "doing" relate directly to students' career interests.

"For example, we're now

embedding geometry into real-world learning experiences,” said Career and Technical Education Director Tom McNair. “The kids are getting excited...and you don’t hear them asking, ‘Why are we learning this?’”

MEETING EMPLOYER NEEDS

In the western part of the state, Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES is taking things a step further. Its P-TECH program, funded by a state grant, requires a six-year commitment from students. The acronym stands for Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools, reflecting the initiative’s combination of high school, college, and career training to prepare at-risk or disadvantaged students for jobs in high-tech industries. The program also will feature mentoring, work study experiences, internships, and preferential hiring from local businesses that need the skills P-TECH students will gain.

Since being notified of the \$2.9 million grant award earlier this year, Erie 2 BOCES educators have been planning out all the details of the program, which is slated to open to students in a local consortium of school districts in fall 2015.

“Students will begin in ninth grade and culminate in the second year of a community college program. So, they will receive a high school diploma and an associate’s degree in applied science concurrently when they graduate,” said Suzette Benson, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. “This is free of charge to the students.”

Filling middle-skills jobs is a common theme heard in BOCES career and tech centers lately. These are considered jobs that require some technical training or an associate’s degree, but not a four-year degree.

“Fifteen or 20 years ago, there was a big push from school guidance counselors for all students to go to college and not into careers,” said 2015 James E. Allen Award winner Anneda Trautman, principal at the Orleans Niagara BOCES Career and Technical Education Center. “Now we hear from employers that we’re suffering a gap in workers who have those middle-level skills, like welders, electricians,

and HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) workers. Just as an example, in western New York with the RiverBend initiative, there will be nearly 3,000 middle-level jobs available and we can only truly support 900 of those because of the lack of skilled labor.”

BOCES are also attracting students interested in such diverse career areas as fitness and computer animation – again, preparing high school graduates to move directly into careers, further technical training, or two-year colleges.

Students interested in health fields may also find animation appealing... yes, animation. “Skills in animation and video production are needed in various business environments today, not just the traditional entertainment industry,” said Jennifer Licata, a teacher in the Animation and Video Production Program at O/N BOCES. “Medical and scientific simulation, forensic animation, corporate training, and engineering are just a few examples of fields where media skills are in demand.”

The program is college-level and students are creating 2-D and 3-D animation, video, and motion graphics with industry-standard software and hardware. “Students are prepared for the rigor and expectations of college and employment in this competitive and demanding field,” Licata added.

And that’s likely to be the newly emerging image of BOCES – an organization addressing local employment voids, as well as the needs of the high-tech, global economy.

READY FOR THE WORLD THAT’S ALREADY OUT OF THIS WORLD

Students in classes with Mark Harris at Ulster BOCES, though, might be ready for work that’s quite literally out of this world. Students from his New Visions Engineering and Robotics classes and those enrolled in the Computer Design and Manufacturing Program are making parts for lockers that astronauts will use on the international space station.

“NASA sent us blueprints of what they needed to have made and

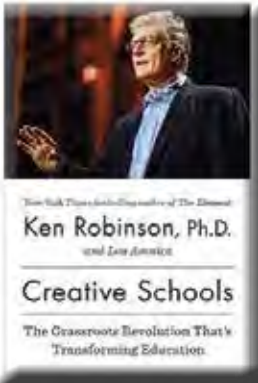


my students and I went through them to find out what types of tools we’d need to cut the pieces,” Harris said. “Students then took the paper blueprints and put them into a CAD [computer-aided design] program on the computer. From there, we generated a program that our machines could read and we started machining parts.”

You can feel Harris’s excitement when he talks about this project and the valuable skills the students gained in this and other hands-on projects they’ve been involved with. “They’re learning about different materials because of the types of aluminum used in the space station lockers. They’re learning how precise they have to be in setting up their machines; there’s no room for mistakes. And they’re making a part that really means something,” Harris said. “Our technology at BOCES is astounding. People are amazed when they come into my room. I don’t think they realize the level of work these students are capable of doing. We’ve built a full-sized car from scratch that we drove halfway around the country. We’re building stuff for the space station. How many people can put that on their resumes?”

Thanks to ecosystems of innovation, BOCES students can.

KIM M. SMITHGALL is an award-winning communications specialist and freelance writer, designer, and photographer.



Creative Schools

Dr. Ken Robinson and Lou Aronica

As leaders, much of what we are required to do in our schools is forced upon us. With the changes to APPR over the last three years as well as the implementation of the Common Core State Standards, we've had our focus narrowly adjusted. In some ways, one might say some of us have lost sight of some of the basics within

our educational system. *Creative Schools: The Grassroots Revolution That's Transforming Education*, by Dr. Ken Robinson and Lou Aronica, can be read as a call back to action for administrators, teachers, parents, and policymakers about needed changes (in ideas and process) within our schools. This book is based on the highly popular Ted Talk by Dr. Robinson, *How Schools Kill Creativity*.

In the book, Robinson provides developed definitions for the real purpose of schools, the roles of teachers, as well as the principles of curriculum. These definitions help readers re-develop their understanding of a school's true function.

In Chapter Two, Changing Metaphors, the authors remind us that there are four basic principles of education: economic, cultural, social, and personal. In regard to economic, they write: "The new and urgent challenge is to provide forms of education that encourage young people to engage with the global economic issues of sustainability and environmental well-being – to encourage them toward forms of economic activity that support the health and renewal of the world's natural resources rather than to those that deplete and despoil them (47)."

In considering this quote about natural resources, a friend reminded me in conversation about this book that natural resources must also include our students. We need not just teach our students this role but must also, as my friend suggests, insist that policymakers see that our students are indeed one of our natural resources for the future.

The cultural principle requires schools to help students develop, understand, support, and co-exist within their own cultures and others. The social principle is one that has been easily agreed upon but more in word than action. "Education should enable young people to become active and compassionate citizens (50)". Finally, the tenet for personal education explains that we need to remember the individuality each student brings to our classrooms. We need to remember that the key to connecting with them is on an interpersonal level.

Dr. Robinson and Mr. Aronica remind us that the relationship between teacher and student still counts. Chapter Five, The Art of Teaching, reminds us that "the heart of educational improvement is inspiring students to learn, which is what great teachers do (100)". Those outside schools speculate they know what teachers should do. Their speculation often forgets the four main roles of teachers: engage, enable, expect, and empower. This chapter examines these fundamental roles.

We can all agree that a teacher's responsibility extends beyond just providing content. "Their job is not to teach subjects; it is to teach students (104)."

In Chapter Six, "What's Worth Knowing," the authors explain that there are two kinds of curriculum at play: formal and informal. The formal part "is the compulsory part, which includes what is assessed and tested. The informal part is whatever is voluntary (131)." Robinson suggests we need not focus on just the imposed curriculum but that it should include eight core competencies: curiosity, creativity, criticism, communication, collaboration, compassion, composure, and citizenship. Within this chapter, the authors also make the case for a more balanced curriculum that includes much more of the arts than many of our schools do now. "The arts illustrate diversity of intelligence and provide practical ways of promoting it (143)."

This book is robust with actual examples from other schools across the U.S., the U.K., and the world that are pushing beyond standardized testing and curriculum to provide less of a one-size-fits-all approach to learning.

The book provides examples of leaders who have used culture to redesign their schools, connections within their communities, and relationships with parents. These examples are making changes, albeit starting out small in some cases, in the name of providing a robust and connected experience for students.

It can be argued that the culture of standardization isn't moving our schools any closer to where we (they) had hoped we (they) would be. Still, many would likely agree that there are pieces of our current educational system that need redesign. This book provides the lens to begin that construction.



The 'Deadly Culture of Standardization' in US Schools



Sir Ken Robinson
Scan or visit:
<http://huff.to/1SAcsBW>



BOOK REVIEW BY LISA MEADE

Lisa Meade is middle school principal and director of special education for Corinth CSD. You can find her on Twitter at @LisaMeade23.

WE SHOULD
BE EQUIPPING
KIDS WITH
THE SKILLS
TO ASK WHAT IF?
AND THEN GIVE THEM
THE SPACE
TO EXPLORE
THE POSSIBILITIES...
-TONY SINANIS

Tony Sinanis is the 2014 NYS Elementary Principal of the Year (SAANYS/NAESP).

OPINIONS



“It doesn’t make sense to hire smart people and then tell them what to do; we hire smart people so they can tell us what to do.”

– Steve Jobs

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Creating a Global Environment



By Lisa Parisi

Today's children will graduate into a world that is global, collaborative, and online. In order to prepare for this world, they need to learn to navigate through communication with people in other places, who speak different languages or dialects. They need to learn to work well with others, even when those others are not in the same room with them.

They need to learn to create an online personal learning network to use in order to accomplish tasks. They need to learn to create an online persona that is indicative of the person they want to be in the world. It is our job as educators to help them prepare for the future. We cannot help them prepare for this future if we don't give them real-life experiences collaborating and communicating online.

For 30 years I have worked as a classroom teacher. I have always worked on projects, taught collaboration skills, and practiced communication skills. Now I do that online. My classroom is global. We connect with other classes, with experts, with friends from around the world to learn with us.

I am often asked how I am able to run a globalized, collaborative classroom, and still cover all my content, still prepare for tests, still deal with all the public school regulations. Especially since those regulations have gotten much more stringent and numerous. So how am I able to do what I do?

I run all my projects with standards in mind. I am very versed in NYS Standards and Common Core Standards. I make sure that I cover all I need to while connecting.

- a. While we work on a "Save the Rhino" project with classes from around the world, my students also write letters to government leaders in Africa and America, urging them to stop poaching.
- b. While we connect in Edmodo with other classes during a global book discussion, my students answer high-level, rigorous questions suggested in NYS standards for reading.
- c. Meeting a class in Nairobi allows us to compare our life with theirs, create videos to help them learn, watch the videos they made to teach us Swahili, and run a bake sale, creating publicity for the sale, finding recipes for students with allergies, and helping younger students shop and make change at the sale. All of this is standards-based learning. I am a connected educator. I truly believe that, if I am to ask my students to connect and

collaborate, then I need to connect and collaborate. And sometimes, often, that means stepping outside my comfort zone to connect online. And sometimes, often, it means coming into the classroom without all the answers but with a willingness to connect to find the answers... or more questions.

When I first started connecting online, I was afraid to put my real name out there. I was concerned about someone getting my information, finding me in real life, stealing everything. But I did it anyway. I took a leap of faith that going online would only have a positive effect.

- a. My online persona is as an educator. I do not follow people who are not somehow connected to education. If I want to find other people who are interested in sewing doll clothes, I will use a different account to do so. My Twitter, Skype, Facebook, and Google+ accounts are all for education. So when I post, educators are reading what I have to say. And when I get responses, it is from educators.

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I have supportive administrators. I am allowed to run projects, go off curriculum when children lead me off, and have my students work online in many different sites.

At first, I never really asked. I had an idea and decided to try it. It wasn't until I needed the technology to complete my ideas that I really had to step out and ask for support.

a. I have won many awards for my online projects and have gotten many free accounts for my school and/or district. I do believe that what I do is not just for me and my class, but for all the children in the district. I want them all to be able to Skype with an author, or connect to an environmentalist in Alaska, or write letters to a class in Taiwan. So I share everything.

I have a supportive IT staff. Very little is blocked in my district. When something is blocked, one quick email takes care of unblocking. This makes on-the-spot learning easy.

I do not believe it is quite as simple for everyone but the IT staff does know that I use the technology all the time, so they are willing to help out in any way they can. When we all think about the kids first, things just work themselves out.

I have technology. My district does support technology in the classroom. I have a Smart Board, two desktop computers, five iPads, and the ability to sign up for one of three

Chromebook carts during the day. It is very rare to not have access.

I have not always had technology. When I started getting into Web 2.0 tools, I had two old desktop computers. I wrote a grant to get two more computers. Four computers worked fine for a while. Then we got a laptop cart, which was amazing to have for the children. After some time (about 10 years) the laptops were old and barely useful. I pushed for a BYOD policy in district. And each day I brought in my own laptop for when a faster connection was important. Where there is a will, there is a way.

Now this all works for me but how do we get other teachers to open the walls of their classrooms? As much as I believe in grassroots movements, it is exhausting trying to accomplish globalizing a classroom without administrative support. Many administrators do believe they are being supportive. Mine do. So why aren't teachers jumping at the idea?

There is a huge difference between being supportive and being encouraging. Supportive administrators "allow" teachers to connect online. Encouraging administrators make it possible.

As an administrator you need to ask yourself a very serious question. What is it you encourage? Think about your staff meetings. What are most of your agendas about? Do you spend

most of your time talking about test results? the new math program? state mandates? Or do you spend most of your time talking about connecting and collaborating? Who do you invite in to speak with the staff - program trainers or global educators? Look at the memos you send out or the signs you post on the walls of the office. What message are you giving your staff? What is most important to you? I am not suggesting that those other items aren't important. But really, how much time needs to be spent on test prep? Can it be done in an email instead?

We must begin now to globalize our schools and prepare our students for the inevitable future that they will face. We must begin now to teach our children empathy and compassion for those we don't know. We must begin now to help our children create an online profile that will help them connect. We can no longer wait for the right time, the right situation, the right regulations. The time is now. What are you doing to help?

LISA PARISI is a veteran elementary teacher; co-author of *Making Connections with Blogging*, published by ISTE; a frequent conference presenter on such topics as globalizing the classroom, project based learning, UDL, and responsive classroom. As a leadership member, she blogs for Discovery Educator Network, trains teachers in the use of the Smart Board, and is a Google Certified Teacher.



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Leveling Up Professional Development

With #NYEDChat – The Voice of New York State Educators



By Victoria Day,
Lisa Meade,
Starr Sackstein,
and Carol Varsalona

Insatiable curiosity, tenacity, and perpetual learning. Qualities that we must exemplify if we seek to inspire those who work with us. Whether they are teachers or students, **leaders should model the expectations of lifelong learning** and we can do that through our professional development.

Professional learning in the traditional sense has changed with connected educators. Each of us has the opportunity to grow at our own pace by collaborating with like-minded professionals from all over the world. No longer do we have to sit idly in our schools, only learning with those in our immediate surroundings. We can reach out to connected colleagues instantaneously through the power of social media, finding the answers to questions, broadening our knowledge, or conversing in real time. Social media, particularly Twitter and Voxer, provide a virtual well of knowledge and even support for those who seek connections.

Recently, educational chats have exploded across the Twittersphere providing educators with a plethora of avenues of learning. #NYEDChat, as one such agency of learning and positivity, has sprung up as The Voice of New York Educators. Through the efforts of a team of eight New York State moderators, Bill Brennan, Victoria Day, Blanca Duarte, Dan McCabe, Lisa Meade, Starr Sackstein, Tony Sinanis, and Carol Varsalona, #NYEDChat has reached out to not only educators in New York State but across the states and globe, and also to people in fields other than education.

Invitations to join the growing network of connected colleagues have been publicized for every other Monday at 8:30 p.m. EST meet-ups. Fast-paced conversations around timely topics, such as back-to-school activities, edcamp experiences, branding schools and classrooms, building connections, writing, homework, digital tools, and fostering student interest in STEAM have been the focus of the 2014-15 school year so far. The chats last just one hour but

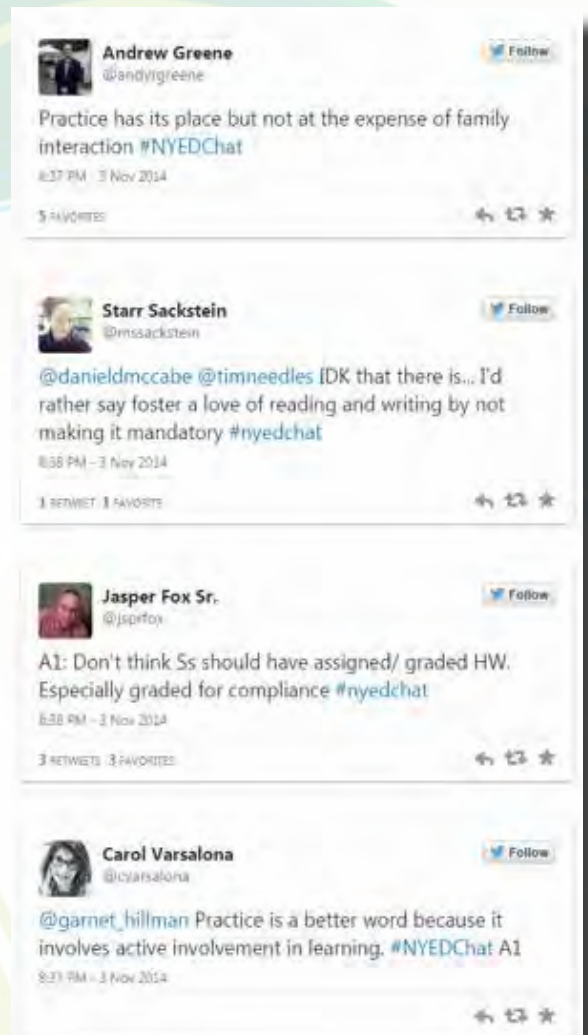
provide so much more than a traditional sit-and-get professional development session.

Professional development has taken a significant turn from the one-shot PD sessions of the past. Now educators can customize their own learning twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Being able to make these choices empowers learners and inspires, making the classrooms and schools more vibrant places.

Many leaders and educators wonder, "How can a social media venue like Twitter help my professional learning?" There may be feelings of discomfort using a social media platform. Further, one might wonder if participating in chats and connections like these make a difference. We would argue that these platforms serve as a way to advocate for our schools, our PLNs, and our own knowledge base. The learning gleaned from our conversations is rich, engaging, and leads to further reflection. These Twitter chats help to refine an educator's voice and allow him/her to ask questions and share honored opinions.

Through digital channels and platforms, we can extend our learning lives in asynchronous time, in the comfort of our own space, outside of work time. In the world of connectivity, there is always someone to speak with about issues, pressing concerns, or new areas for exploration. Personal passions become blended with academic talk to create cultures

Sample #NYEDChat threaded conversation from "The Homework Deception"



of trust. PLNs reach, extend, and lift the collective body of practitioners to become connected, linked, and partners in the quest for growing as learners.

For those who say why bother, it may be surprising to some how many thought leaders are using social media. Leaders such as Kyleene Beers, Carol Burris, Peter DeWitt, Michael Fullan, Andy Hargreaves,



Sample #NYEDChat flyers sent out via Twitter

Chris Lehman, Pam Moran, Diane Ravitch, Sir Ken Robinson, Tony Wagner, Todd Whitaker, and Rick Wormeli have active Twitter accounts.

Organizations such as the International Reading Association, NAESP, NASSP, ASCD, NCTE, and SAANYS, as well as state and national education departments, have active social media accounts, not only on Twitter, but on platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+ and other venues. Basically, it is not the platform that matters, but it is about building relationships, connecting, and continuing to learn and grow.

Level up your professional development practices and your connections with #NYEDChat, a community of positive, connected educators who believe that there still exists passion in learning beyond the rigors of mandates, and what we have to say, as New York educators, should (still) matter. These chats are an



Place your name among those who are willing to extend their professional learning to become a connected NY colleague. We'll be waiting for you on Twitter.

opportunity to reach out beyond your region, reflect, connect, share your passions, and keep you invigorated to impact teaching and learning on a continual basis.

Join our active discussion chats every other Monday at 8:30 p.m. EST to voice your opinion on timely topics. Grow professionally as a leader with #NYEDChat; The Voice of New York Educators.

Be inspired to continue the work of impacting teaching and learning with colleagues who support and are committed to improving education with a student-centered attitude. All it takes is a Twitter account and one hour every other week to join a group of committed, inspired New York educators.

VICTORIA L. DAY is the principal at East Side Elementary and a co-moderator of #NYEDChat.

LISA MEADE is the middle school principal at Corinth CSD and a co-moderator of #NYEDChat.

STARR SACKSTEIN is a high school English and journalism teacher at the World Journalism Prep School in Queens, NY, and a co-moderator of #NYEDChat.

CAROL VARALONA is an ELA consultant and a co-moderator of #NYEDChat.

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EdCamp Cultivates Teacher Leadership, Talent, and Choice



By Caroline Pidala
and Janet Warden

What do you get when you foster teacher leadership, the many talents of a dedicated faculty, and freedom of choice? From experience, we can tell you that in Wappingers Central School District, **the outcome was #edcampwcsd, and it was #inspirational.** In October of 2012, the Wappingers Central School District set off on a journey of Strategic Planning, and now in 2015, we are watching the plan come to life.

In the fall of 2015, the district's Core Planning Team presented to the Board of Education the mission and core values to be adopted by the district. In support of that mission, each of five strategy teams created action steps to achieve the end results within five years. Under the leadership of Superintendent Jose Carrion, the central office administration has been working to put the plan into action.

As a part of the planning process, strategy team three created an action plan that included collaboration between and amongst leaders at all levels within the Wappingers Central School District. Aligning the talents of present and future employees was the focus of strategy team four. All facets of the district are at this point framing their work to further the mission and achieve the intended end results.

Based on one of the district's core values, "We believe that the collaboration needed for meaningful change is built on honesty, trust and respect," Assistant Superintendent Janet Warden has aligned the goals of the Professional Development Committee to create district-wide norms and guidelines. These norms and guidelines frame the tone, structure, and environment necessary

to support collaboration for all meetings and interactions between and amongst stakeholder groups. This was designed so that all employees suspend certainty and look at many sides of an issue to arrive at the best possible outcomes for students.

An openness to listen and nourish ideas from the grass roots allowed the Professional Development Committee to build upon innovative, progressive ideas for professional learning. In conversations with many stakeholders, a new dialogue began. Paul Rubeo and Daniel Roberto, technology integration specialists in the district, and both members of the Strategic Planning Committee, proposed an idea. In the spirit of teacher leadership, they promoted the concept of an EdCamp to make strategies three and four a reality. According to the EdCamp Foundation website, an idea created by Kristen Swanson, an EdCamp is: "Built on principles of connected and participatory learning, EdCamp strives to bring teachers together to talk about the things that matter most to them: their interests, passions, and questions. Teachers who attend EdCamp can choose to lead sessions on those things that matter, with an expectation that the people in

the room will work together to build understanding by sharing their own knowledge and questions."

Though interdisciplinary conversations are happening informally in hallways, department offices, and faculty rooms, many would argue there are just not enough opportunities to make it meaningful. Embracing this philosophy and responding to the request of teachers for time to learn from one another about best practices, Professional Learning Networks

(PLNs) arose. Professional Learning Networks are the face-to-face collaborations of teachers that are enhanced by social media and other communications tools to help reduce the feelings of classroom isolation and increase teacher effectiveness. They are meant to foster an ongoing dialogue between professionals who can serve as educators for one another. To increase the idea of Professional Learning Networks, a hashtag #edcampwcsd was created for the day.

Prior to the March 20th EdCamp day, teachers, teaching assistants, and administrators responded to a survey about what they wanted to learn. The survey results were combined to create session topics and participant groups. This monumental event took place in three locations around the district. The day kicked off with a focus on our mission, core values, collaboration, and teacher leadership. Teachers participated in conversations about the definition of collaboration, how as a district we can improve collaboration, and how as members of the district THEY can improve collaboration. Professional development is part of every educator's responsibility; when teachers grow, students grow.

Over 700 teachers, teaching assistants, and administrators participated in topics including Google, Yes It Is Really More Than a Search Engine; Mini-lessons to Inspire Independent Learners; Growth Mindset for Students & Educators; Using Technology for Formative Assessments; Inquiry-Based Science Lessons; 80/20 Genius Hour: Using Students' Passions to Motivate Learning; Project-Based Learning Using Technology; Climb Bloom's Ladder: Integrating Higher Order Thinking Questions; Merging Content Across STEM Classrooms; and Can We Talk About Race? Teachers and administrators, both new and veteran, were selected as facilitators for the over 212 sessions that were held on topics that were requested for the people, by the people. There was some trepidation at the beginning about the pressure of leading a session. However,





to our mission statement." "A prof dev day that leaves me refreshed, inspired and ready to try new things!" "Sharing across buildings, across disciplines – great day!!" "Brave sharers... great information shared ... I love that ALL areas, teachers, TAs, therapists, interacted together!!" "The tweets keep coming in #edcampwcsd proud of my colleagues." "Effective collaboration and professionalism!!! The best

moments after the clock started on the 45-minute session, the ideas were flowing and the conversations were lively. A live feed and backchanneling were incorporated into the day to promote dialogue and collaboration using Twitter and Google Docs.

Teachers reported on Twitter, throughout EdCamp, that they stepped out of their comfort zones and took risks that were beneficial. Members of the Wappingers Congress of Teachers tweeted: "So proud of my staff today, insight from a different perspective. We are WCSD living up

conference ever!" "Love hearing all the ideas of how we can all work together to enhance student learning!" "We have been inspired by the best!" and "Carve out the time for choice. Don't be afraid to ask what they want to learn about."

At the end of EdCamp, there was a "smack down" session, which is a culminating activity where people reflect on their experiences throughout the day. Teachers and administrators relayed messages of appreciation for the opportunity

to meet with their colleagues and exchange information and ideas. The EdCamp survey results stated, "EdCamp helped to build my confidence and helped my area of knowledge," "Giving everyone the same voice was empowering," and "Hearing from teaching assistants to administration and everyone in between on the same topics was inspiring." The district met the goal of cultivating a climate where everyone is focused on ongoing, positive growth and student achievement. Visit #edcampwcsd to become part of our experience.

CAROLINE PIDALA is the assistant principal at Roy C. Ketcham High School.

JANET WARDEN is the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. Both are in the Wappingers Central School District.

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Innovative Practices



By James Davis

For a dedicated team of social studies teachers, a set of innovative practices for curriculum development and professional collaboration made the team uniquely suited to face several new educational challenges over the last couple of years. Put another way, they are prime examples of **lifelong learners who spearheaded a tech-savvy collaborative** that crosses school district boundaries and reaches every corner of the state.

In the decade since Thomas Friedman's *The World Is Flat* was published, educators have had ample opportunity to evaluate the educational emphasis with which Friedman frames his examination of globalization. In fact, many of the anecdotes Friedman shares about increased competition for jobs in a global marketplace had particular resonance for teachers, who had already internalized the various themes underscoring Friedman's globe-trotting. These include the ideas that skills matter as much as content knowledge; literacy and numeracy are as essential as creativity; and people will continue to use technology to collaborate in ways as never before. Ideas, innovation, as well as goods and services, would spread by means only dreamt of in science fiction.

The new social studies framework presented by the New York State Education Department over the last year reads like a play book written by those as concerned about our collective penchant to ignore the lessons of history as they are preparing globally competitive graduates. Yet the document also is concerned about nurturing a citizenry that is capable of solving complex problems that span time and space. The new shifts in social studies instruction include a greater focus on major themes as they've stretched across eras, as well as the importance of weighing multiple perspectives to a given time or challenge. In a sense, while students may no longer be expected to cite every fact or facet of human accomplishment, the new shifts should lead students to recognize the key drivers of civilization, from around the globe and right at home.

The social studies curriculum team at Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES had been going for three years strong as NYSED released its first drafts of the new social studies framework. Now entering its fifth year of collaboration, the team is made up of skilled practitioners, seasoned veterans, and trailblazing newcomers from various districts across Central New York. They've been guided by a core mission to share best practices, discuss the most pressing needs of their discipline, and arrive at a consensus on teaching materials that they can share with their colleagues throughout the region and around the state. The team shares materials and discusses course

work online, and spends the better part of each summer combining their efforts to build course work that would take even the most skilled curriculum designer years to accomplish.

Using the tools that Friedman may have anticipated influencing the world of education, this social studies team began sharing their ideas on Google Drive when Google Docs was merely in infancy, and has written syllabi, drafted unit plans, and produced high-quality, student-oriented content videos all produced and shared digitally through a learning management system. At one time or another, each member of the team has collaborated on course work in global history and geography, United States history at the middle and high school levels, producing everything from PowerPoint lessons intended for peer-customization, fresh standards-based assessments that repurpose Regents exam document-based questions, to videos regarding the phases of the French Revolution that their students can view on their own smart phones.

One can imagine how powerful such a collective can be when the expertise of master teachers is infused with the enthusiasm of new teachers fresh from graduate school. It is also clear that these are the sorts of teachers who create the kind of classrooms where new ideas can be successfully tested, such as the integration of 1:1 Chromebook initiatives. Likewise, it is clear that such a team was poised to help lead their colleagues toward a greater understanding of the implications that the new instructional shifts in social studies would have to the practice of every New York State social studies teacher. With an intimate knowledge of the scope, sequence, and learning standards of multiple courses, these teachers have been able to take a course that they had been collaborating on for years and nimbly sync it with the new social studies framework. The team is anticipating the changes to the global history and United State history exams as much as anyone in the field, and to that end is active in devising new student inquiries to add to their already robust "dream courses."

While its collaborative ethos was first hatched at the O-H-M BOCES Information and Technology Division, the team has been able to expand its

leadership role by cultivating a partnership with the O-H-M BOCES Programs in Professional Development ("PPD") division. With PPD's crucial guidance and the encouragement of area superintendents, the team has been able to provide regional professional development for social studies instructors through its Building Leadership in Social Studies program. This program has hosted Social Studies Associate Patricia Polan from NYSED to share her expertise with teachers and administrators, and has offered a symposium on how to best unpack the framework and field guide. In the months to come, the team and PPD will maintain support groups for social studies teachers as they devise strategies to implement the framework and student inquiries into their classrooms before the 2015-2016 school year arrives. The recently-devised Social Studies Field Guide aims at inspiring teachers to formulate lessons and units that are "student inquiry driven," such that students may do the work of a social scientist themselves. It is one thing to tell a student about the events of the American Civil Rights Era, but quite another to ask them to consider if it was, in a way, a continuation of American Reconstruction, or a groundbreaking second act? In posing such questions in a collective environment, the team ultimately hopes that it may serve as a model to their students as to how teams may collaborate in the 21st century.

All of this will hopefully inspire even greater collaboration throughout the region and state, all towards accomplishing the laudable goals of enhancing social studies instruction. As Thomas Friedman has suggested, technological innovation may usher in a new era of global cooperation and competition, but with unforeseen consequences. One consequence of a high-tech, globalized world is the ability of teachers to transcend the walls of their classroom. With its stress being on cooperation, the social studies curriculum development team in Central New York continues to make great strides in using the latest tools to redefine an entire field of study for their students.

JAMES DAVIS is the Instructional Support Services - Social Studies Coordinator at Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES.

The Role of Education in **Building Soft Skills** – Putting into Perspective the Priorities and Opportunities for Teaching



By Alan D. Greenberg
Andrew H. Nilssen
Wainhouse Research LLC

Study sponsored by
SMART Technologies

The field of education is under pressure as never before to prepare learners in new ways for productive participation in the workforce. Much attention has been paid by the media to the frequent introduction of new standards and curricula, and controversies surrounding the focus on mandated testing, but a less publicized, yet no less important, **shift among the business community has begun.**

The dual forces of globalization and technological change together are transforming the needs of employers, who in recent years have begun to make new calls for those entering the workforce to demonstrate soft skills – competencies that will make graduates more agile, better team members, and more adaptable.

SMART Technologies asked Wainhouse Research to investigate the state of education and, in particular, survey attitudes among educators, parents, and students toward the three Rs (reading, writing, and arithmetic) and the four Cs (collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking). The “knowledge versus skills” debate is a part of the discussion, as are concerns regarding how educators can best go about empowering, motivating, and engaging learners. Among the key questions of the day are the following:

- How well are educational institutions addressing learner, workforce, and societal needs?
- What do stakeholders believe are the elements of effective teaching and learning?
- Where do stakeholders believe schools should be placing more emphasis? On skills or on knowledge acquisition? On soft skills or hard skills?

The investigation posits that collaborative skills are perceived as essential both at a macro (societal) and a micro (learner) level. In fact, more than nine out of ten respondents see the skills as critical at the macro level. A total of 94 percent agree that collaborative skills are critical to the making of a mature society, and 92 percent see them as critical for economic growth. At the micro/learner level, similar numbers (90 percent) believe that collaborative skills are critical for successful learning and almost as many believe that they are critical for a person to be successful (89 percent).

Two out of five survey respondents mentioned earlier believe that learners are not being well prepared for the workforce. They would find allies among those who know best: those involved in

workforce management. The National Education Association reports¹ that according to a 2010 study conducted by the American Management Association – the AMA 2010 Critical Skills Survey – the four Cs will become even more important to organizations in the future. Three out of four (76 percent) executives who responded to the AMA survey said they believe these skills and competencies will become more important to their organizations in the next three to five years. Additionally, 80 percent of executives believed fusing the three Rs and the four Cs would ensure that students are better prepared to enter the workforce. According to these managers, proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic is not sufficient if employees are unable to think critically, solve problems, collaborate, or communicate effectively.

More recently *Time* magazine in the U.S. reported a different take on the problem² with two significant data points.

“As much as academics go on about the lack of math and science skills, bosses are more concerned with organizational and interpersonal proficiency. The National Association of Colleges and Employers surveyed more than 200 employers about their top 10 priorities in new hires. Overwhelmingly, they want candidates who are team players, problem solvers and can plan, organize and prioritize their work. Technical and computer-related know-how placed much further down the list.”

The magazine also reported on a separate employer survey, this one by staffing company Adecco, in which 44 percent of respondents cite soft skills, such as communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration as the areas with “the biggest gap.” Only half as many say a lack of technical skills is the pain point. Woods Bagot, a global architectural firm that works closely with institutes of higher learning, commissioned research firm Global Strategy Group to ask: Are recent college graduates ready for the rigors of today’s

workforce? The answer is:

“Of 500 business decision makers surveyed, close to half (49 percent) believe today’s graduates are less prepared for work than they were 15 years ago.³ The majority (70 percent) of C-suite executives say that fewer than half of graduates entering their companies have the skills to succeed in entry-level positions. Many top executives also believe that less than one quarter (21 percent) of graduates applying to their company have the skills to advance past those entry level jobs. The survey shows that business leaders feel the three most important skills to have when entering the business sector are problem-solving (49 percent), collaboration (43 percent) and critical thinking (36 percent).”

Wainhouse Research notes that the same skills prioritization cited by educators, parents, and students in this report completely mirror that set as cited by business decision makers: problem solving, collaboration, and critical thinking.

No less than U.S. President Barack Obama, as quoted in the NEA report mentioned earlier, has stated:

“I’m calling on our nation’s governors and state education chiefs to develop standards and assessments that don’t simply measure whether students can fill in a bubble on a test, but whether they possess 21st century skills like problem-solving and critical thinking and entrepreneurship and creativity.”





WHAT IF
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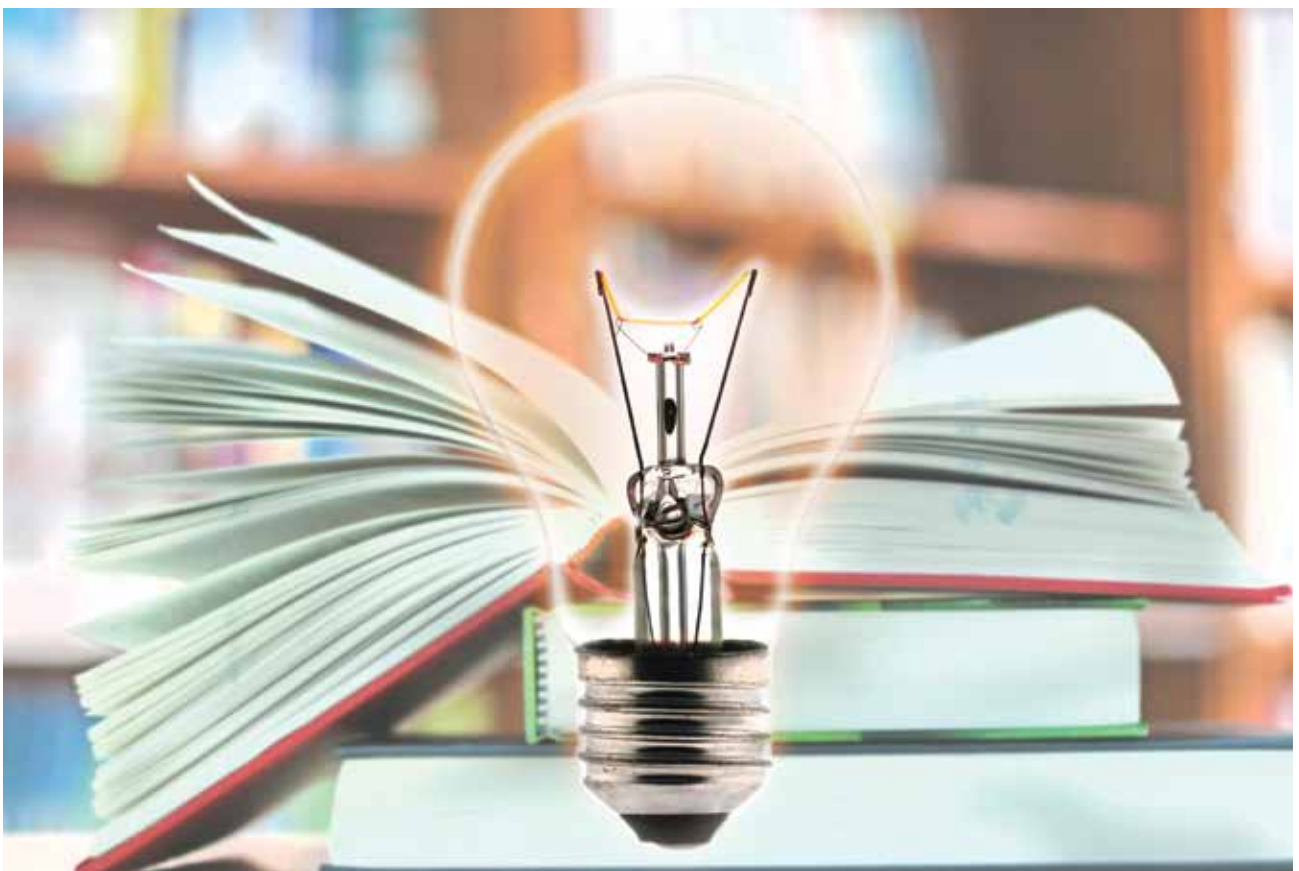
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Eight Characteristics of the “Innovator’s Mindset”



By George Couros

Recently I explored the notion of the “innovator’s mindset,” and have thought a lot about this idea. As I look to write on the topic of “leading innovative change” within schools, we are looking to develop educators as innovators. **To be innovative, you have to look at yourself as an innovator first, and to create schools that embody this mindset as a “culture,” we must develop this in individuals first.**

Building upon Carol Dweck's work, I have been looking at the traits of the innovator's mindset, which would be summarized as follows:

Belief that abilities, intelligence, and talents are developed leading to the creation of new and better ideas.

To develop students as "innovators" in their pursuits, we must embody this as educators. As I continue to research and look at different processes where innovation excels, such as design thinking, there are several characteristics that seem common amongst these themes. Here they are below and why they are important for educators:

Empathetic – To create new and better ways of doing things, we need to first understand who we are creating them for. As educators, innovation starts with the question, "What is best for this child?" For us to create something better for our students, we have to understand their experiences and this is why it is imperative that we not only talk about new ways of learning, but immerse ourselves in these opportunities. This way we can understand what works and what does not work from the perspective of a learner, not a teacher. If anything, teachers have to have a deep understanding of learning before they can become effective in teaching. We need to put ourselves in our students' shoes before we can create better opportunities for them in our classrooms.

Problem Finders – As Ewan McIntosh talks about, it is important that we teach our kids how to ask good questions instead of simply asking for answers. All innovation starts from a question, not an answer. The invention of the home computer started with the focus of, "How do we bring the experience of a powerful computer into the homes of families?" Many capstone projects developed by students in their classrooms start with first finding, and then solving, problems both locally and globally. How often do we as educators immerse ourselves in a similar process? If we want to be innovative, we need to look at questions first.

Risk-Takers – Many would argue that "best practice" is the enemy of

innovation. To be truly innovative, you sometimes have to go off the beaten path. The reality of this is that for some kids, the "tried-and-true" methods will still work, but for others, you will need to try something different. In a time where many kids are totally checking out of school, is best practice truly "best," or just "most well known"?

Networked – Steven Johnson has a powerful quote on the importance of networks where he states, "Chance favours the connected mind." Innovation does not happen in isolation, as it is often ideas that are being shared amongst many that lead to new and better ideas being developed. The best educators have always created networks to learn from others and create new and powerful ideas. Now though, many have taken the opportunity to take networks to a whole different level through the use of social media to share and develop new ideas. Isolation is the enemy of innovation. Networks are crucial if we are going to develop the innovator's mindset.

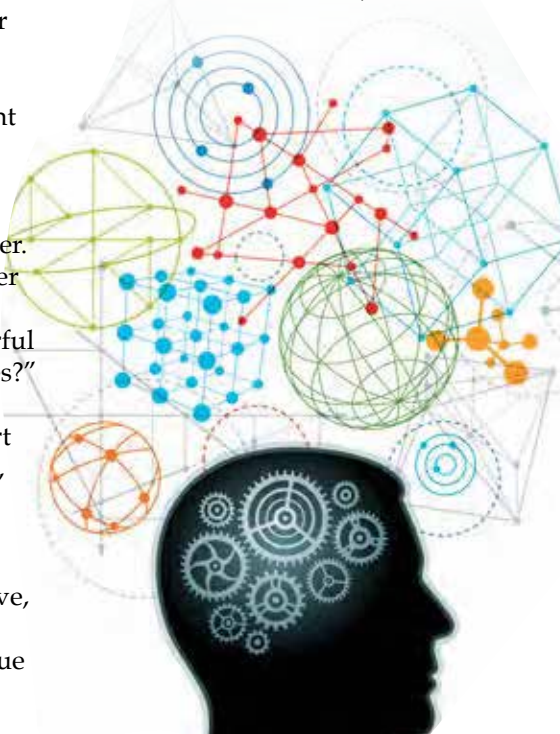
Observant – A practice normal amongst those who would be considered "innovative" is that they constantly look around their world and create connections. It is normal to have a notebook or use their mobile device to record ideas or thoughts around them and link them to their own ideas. In education, we often look

to solutions to come from "education," but when organizations around the world share their practices and ideas, we have to tap into their diverse expertise and learn from them as well. Wisdom is all around us; we just have to look for it.

Creators – So many people have great ideas, yet they never come to fruition. Innovation is a combination of ideas and hard work. Conversation is crucial to the process of innovation, but without action, ideas simply fade away and/or die. What you create with what you have learned is imperative in this process.

Resilient – Things do not always work on the first try, so what are the tweaks or revamping that is needed? To simply try something and give up as soon as it fails never leads to innovation – only a definitive end. This is something great teachers model daily in their teaching, as they turn good ideas into great ones.

Reflective – What worked? What didn't? What could we do next time? If we started again, what would we do differently? What can we build upon? It is important that in education and innovation, we sit down and reflect on our process. This last point is definitely lacking in many aspects of education as we are always "trying to get through the curriculum," yet reflection is probably the most important part of education as the connections we make on our own are where deep learning happens. For educators to embody this, it is imperative that leaders create a culture where these types of characteristics are not only accepted, but encouraged. It is also imperative that at both the leadership and whole organization levels, these characteristics are embodied. To many, being "innovative" is no more than a buzzword, but if we truly have innovative students, we need to embody the innovator's mindset at all levels.



GEORGE COUROS is the division principal for Parkland School and an innovative teaching, learning, and leadership consultant.

Fostering Student Voice – **Utilizing Technology within the Classroom**



By Victoria L. Day
Stephanie Plaisted
and Beth Siebels

Student voice. What does that mean? According to Russ Quaglia, who, along with his team at the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations (QISA), has been researching student voice for close to 30 years, student voice is defined as **“when teachers ask for their students’ opinions, listen – really listen – to what students have to say, and incorporate what they learn and students themselves into the leadership of their classrooms and schools.”** (p. 2).

As educators, some of us think that we are the “sage on the stage,” the person with all of the knowledge who disseminates it to students when the time is right, but our fast-paced world has changed, and students have access to knowledge faster than ever before, so they need to be prepared differently than we were when we were students. However, one thing is the same as when we were in their shoes: they need to be empowered.

How do our students feel? How do they feel about their education or the world around them? Where is their voice, their ownership to their education – to their passions – to their life?

Engaging our students must be one of our top priorities. Whether we do it through games, play, stage performances, or technology, engagement is the key to learning. We know that there is more to education than preparing for high-stakes testing. Skills such as writing, speaking, and thinking are needed to be creative and innovative in our global world. Regardless of whether we label them “career and college ready” or “21st century skills,” they can be developed early in our students.

Students become empowered when they have a voice in their school community. Their level of engagement increases and their learning becomes more memorable, all because they’ve taken ownership of their education and have a vested interest in what they’re doing. There’s also a strong emphasis in education in collaboration, problem solving, and leadership skills. Allowing students to have a voice in what they learn, how they learn it, and how they share it will help foster these skills.

We have found that the use of technology is a great resource for fostering student voice. In our classrooms, we use Kidblog, Schoology, and Google Documents, just to name a few, to make our voices heard. As the year has progressed, we have noticed that students are participating more responsibly and their student voice is getting stronger.

In our classrooms, students have used Schoology to give a voice to their writing. Schoology is a student

learning management system (LMS) that allows teachers and students to utilize an online platform for communication back and forth from teacher to student, or from student to student. Like the social media platform of Facebook, this private LMS allows for conversation and engagement with our students. After reading exciting chapters in our ELA novels, students typically blog about what they’ve read in a Schoology discussion. The students not only share their reactions, but they also comment on each other’s entries, promoting an interactive dialogue that can go on for days. What is unique about these online discussions is that, unlike a regular classroom discussion, all students have an equal platform to share his or her voice.

This is particularly noted in a student who rarely speaks out loud in class. During Schoology discussions, the student consistently shares thought provoking ideas that show a deep level of understanding, something he is not comfortable doing out loud in front of her peers. His blog entries typically rouse a comment such as, “Great idea. I never thought of that!” and ultimately promote a new dialogue among students exploring further literary notions. Without this blogging platform, the student’s teacher (not to mention his classmates) may never have known what remarkable ideas he is capable of.

Students’ motivation for writing has shown a tremendous increase since the introduction of an online blogging program called Kidblog in the classrooms. Publishing writing that will be read by their peers encourages creativity and gives the blogger a sense of purpose. Sometimes the blog

is centered on a given topic, while other times the theme is student generated. Kidblog entries have included blogs about hopes and dreams, retelling of important life events, original songs, and poetry. Their posts have shed light on important topics and opened lines of communication. For example, when students blogged their answer to the question, “What would you do to improve the school?” their posts resulted in meaningful conversations among each other, the classroom teacher, and the school principal.

Google Documents have been shared among our students to work and collaborate on various projects. The students enjoy collaborating with their peers and get excited each time they’re presented with an opportunity to work together via the Internet. This excitement often leads to some truly creative products. Sharing of documents also allows the students to build off each other’s ideas and to get constructive feedback from their peers.

We know that one of the skills to be successful in this century is communication. Tony Wagner noted this in his highly acclaimed book, *The Global Achievement Gap*. [See Wagner YouTube video on page 12.] Of the

The screenshot shows the Schoology interface for a class named 'Mrs. Siebels' Class'. The 'Discussions' section is active, displaying a list of discussion topics. Each entry includes a title, a post count, and the creator's name and date. The topics listed are:

- Esperanza Rising: Chapter "Las Guayabas: Guavas" pgs.58-80**: 31 posts, Created by Beth Siebels Sat Oct 11, 2014 at 6:50 pm
- Carmen from the Train**: 40 posts, Created by Beth Siebels Thu Oct 16, 2014 at 4:47 pm
- Camp Life for Esperanza**: 54 posts, Created by Beth Siebels Mon Oct 20, 2014 at 10:10 am
- Chapter 9: How is Esperanza changing?**: 33 posts, Created by Beth Siebels Wed Oct 22, 2014 at 7:47 am
- Chapter 10 Las Papas : What does this quote mean?**: 32 posts, Created by Beth Siebels Thu Oct 23, 2014 at 11:53 am
- Chapter 13: Peaches ~ Has this ever happened to you????**: 14 posts, Created by Beth Siebels Mon Nov 3, 2014 at 8:20 am
- Thanksgiving Feast & Slideshow**: 38 posts, Created by Beth Siebels Tue Nov 11, 2014 at 2:30 pm

seven survival skills for the new world of work, the fifth one he identifies is effective oral and written communication. The question remains, are we allowing this to happen in our classrooms or are we being scripted in process writing to pass a standardized test? We find that given a platform such as blogs and learning management systems like Schoology, our students are able to tell their story, stand by their beliefs and opinions in their voice, as well as learn the mechanics of writing. What we have come to understand is that utilizing these examples of online programs has been transformational. The teacher has become a facilitator of learning. The assignment or "task" is driven by a simple question, and students have taken ownership of that question, shared their voice and opinions, and put it into writing. They have shared their voice with us and now want to have a say in their learning, in their environment, as well as their life. We as adults now need to listen to what they are saying.

In the end, as educators, the most powerful thing to watch has been the dialogue and engagement within our young learners. They have taken this opportunity to soar, to open up their Chromebooks, and to log on to these programs and write and communicate from the heart. It has been a wonderful journey and we will continue to work to improve this as well as share what we have done with our staff to include the entire school. We challenge you to take the

THIS BOOK IS KILLING ME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

CATEGORIES: [BLOG](#) FEBRUARY 4, 2015 @ 8:57 AM [3 COMMENTS](#) [EDIT THIS POST](#)

I am reading this book series called An Unfortunate Fairy Tale. So far there are only two books that I know of.. The second one which is called Fable, leaves me off where the main character Mina is tied between saving her best friend, being with the one she loves, or breaking the curse put on her family. I know what you are probably thinking, "what curse," well, I will tell you. Mina is a Grimm and way back in time two Grimm brothers did something to magic royalty people called Foe. These Foe controlled fairy tales and liked messing with the world and peoples lives. They lived on a whole other planet or in the book, plane. The Grimm brothers told the royal Foe that they could finish every fairy tale that the Foe made came to life on earth. The two brothers died trying to do this so the bet thing became a curse on the Grimm family. Now, to protect her little brother from the curse, Mina has taken it on. To mess with Mina's emotions, the Foe have made her crush, Brody like her by force. (Remember, they have magic powers and are very dangerous if you mess with them.) The good son of the Foe named Jared left the magic world to help Mina because he agrees what his family is doing is wrong. For this, he was banned from the world his family is in leaving his twin brother. (Jared and his brother are Mina's age). After things started getting too hard to handle and too dangerous, Mina decided to find a portal to the magic world to talk some sense into the magic Foe. (This is the same idea her ancestors had and look where it got them.) When she gets there she is attacked by water people and then has to hide in water again so the guards don't see her. Little did she know Jared followed her somehow and then got into an epic fight with his brother who turned evil because he had so much power. Thinking she was saving Jared from death, she merged him with his brother on accident. (They became one person. Jared starting to lose control of what once was his body and his brother started taking over. And get this, THAT'S WHERE IT ENDS!!!

risk, learn some of these platforms, and give your students a voice. It will rejuvenate you, your students, your classroom and your school!

VICTORIA L. DAY is the principal at East Side Elementary School.

STEPHANIE PLAISTED and BETH SIEBELS are fifth-grade teachers at East Side Elementary School.

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Demosthenes and Daedalus/Icarus both were determined. But, their determination had different effects. Demosthenes wanted to be a lawyer and a public speaker after he saw a trial when he was 16. He practiced and won a trial for his father's land but wanted more experience. In text it said, "Demosthenes went home determined to become a lawyer and a public speaker." He made a speech and got laughed at. So, determined to get better, he practiced with many different techniques. He spoke with stones in his mouth, spoke with a sword over his shoulder, practiced speaking by the sea, etc... His determination helped him because after this practicing, he became one of Athens' (his home town) ten official orators which was his dream.

Daedalus and Icarus escaped from their prison by wings that Daedalus made. Daedalus was determined to leave even though the island was heavily guarded. He made wings and fashioned them to fit him and his son. Even though he got him and his son out, his son had not listened to previous directions and flew too close to the sun, melting the wax that held the feathers together. Daedalus's determination hurt him because his son Icarus fell down and drowned. This made Daedalus very sad. In the text it said, "Never again did he attempt to fly."

By Hailey M and Lily





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Botched: Righting the Wrongness in NYS Education Opinion



By Bruce H. Crowder, EdD

A Turkish proverb warns: **“When you’re going down the wrong path and realize it, STOP!”** Oh, the power of proverbial wisdom. Oh, would the powers that be acknowledge where we are in education reform in New York.

The key features of wrongness will be examined in this article; however, fundamental flaws rest on wrongheadedness that believes that an annual, single test score captures half of an educator's expertise and that newly created learning standards may be assessed prior to their implementation.

Wrongness is further exaggerated by the extensive attention given to accountability when time for planning and curriculum development is needlessly pushed to the side. This goes further when school leadership is caught up in continuous negotiation. The belly of New York State education has surely been cut away. Education reform has been forcibly shifted to a bloated system of accountability.

Too much time has been lost and too much is at stake. At this time there are no winners. A recounting of events designed to improve education in the state is timely if the current conditions thwarting reform are to be corrected. An examination of these events brings forth a critical question: Can well-meaning politicians and bureaucrats develop harmful laws and regulations? Current evidence would support an affirmative answer. Let's begin with the knee-jerk action tied to the acquisition of U.S. Department of Education funding.

APPR

In May 2010, the New York State Legislature acted to secure federal Race to the Top (RTTT) funds by approving an amendment to Educational Law 3012-c regarding the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) of teachers and principals. Race to the Top stipulated that certain components of a teacher evaluation system be in place for approval of RTTT funding. The components required that the system needed to be rigorous and transparent, differentiate effectiveness levels for teacher ratings, conduct annual evaluations with feedback, employ clear measures of student achievement growth as part of the evaluations, and use the evaluations for compensation, promotion, tenure, certification, removal, and staff development. However, after two years of APPR implementation, 99 percent of

teachers were rated as effective or highly effective. This result appeared counterintuitive to the requirements delineated in federal and state policies, and therefore must be wrong. Could it be that the requirements did not acknowledge the complexity of the work educators do which does not lend itself well to quantification? In a seemingly over-the-top reaction to the disproportionate distribution of positive ratings, Governor Cuomo advanced some serious dimensions to the state's school reforms with major focus on the evaluation of educators. First of all, he would boost overall school funding by nearly 5 percent, but only provide the full increase if state legislators do what he desires regarding educator evaluation. He would require student standardized test scores to account for a full 50 percent of a teacher's evaluation, rather than the current 20 percent. Is the governor looking for an evaluation system that meets his desires, rather than one that portrays the reality of education?

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Common Core State Standards were launched in 2009 by governors and state commissioners of education from 48 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia through their membership in the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). State school chiefs and governors recognized the value of consistent, real-world learning goals and launched this effort to ensure all students, regardless of where they live, would graduate from high school prepared for college, career, and life. Common Core State Standards were introduced in the state in 2011. However, there was no plan for review and implementation. Initially, support for the standards was broad based; however, without a plan and SED guidance, implementation would stall and sputter. Implementation of Common Core would have to result in new curriculum with access to new content to address the major shifts in reading and mathematics. This has not happened.

COMMON CORE-BASED TESTING IN ELA AND MATH

The initial round of Common Core testing took place in the school year 2012-13. Students in grades 3-8 were tested in English language arts and mathematics. The results were disastrous as they were predicted to be. Such a prediction clearly spoke to the fact that students were being tested on new learner expectations not yet in place. To place new learner expectations into a learning context requires the development of curriculum. For some reason the curriculum connection with accountability appears to be lost. This could only happen in a politicized environment where a single, dominant focus does not permit a fulsome explication of the challenges of educating our youth.

OPT-OUT PARENTS

An opt-out movement has taken hold in the state and across the nation. In New York, 200,000 students have opted out of this spring's state tests. Some New York districts have had more than half of their students refuse to take the tests. Polling suggests that half of all New York voters say they support the families that have opted out of the tests. Such a tactic may have serious, long-term consequences not only for the loss of important student performance data, but also for an emerging deleterious effect regarding public perception of the value of testing. In a competitive world where education and the economy are hinged, there is the need to examine how well we are doing.

BOTCHING

Striving for federal funding has resulted in crucial consequences. In the case of New York, it was mandated accountability before the research and development of a comprehensive plan for public review was in place. What is clear is the politicization of the most important domain of a nation's or state's lifeline: the education of its youth.

In addition, the degree of misunderstanding of change process and the great challenges associated with educating our youth is

remarkable. The notion that learning is steady and smooth is untrue when in fact it fluctuates from year to year. Learning growth comes in spurts that emanate from influences in current and prior years. Therefore, learning accrued over time rests squarely on the contributions of many. How, then, is it reasonable to reward any one person because learning eclipsed on his or her watch?

UNBOTCHING: A REASONABLE ATTEMPT FOR CONSIDERATION

The recommendations that follow are based on a half-century of experiences through the myriad reforms that have found their way into American education with the intent of improving it. The constant striving for improvement is important.

1. While a measurement is important in providing a picture in time, it cannot and should not be a prime factor in determining the employment status of a principal or teacher. Allowing 50 percent of a teacher's performance to be based on one test is totally unreasonable.

Additionally, the governor prohibited the use of portfolios, surveys, and artifacts for use in the composite score. These, indeed, are the real tools of teaching and the items that provide a genuine opportunity for authentic evaluations. If life has taught me anything, it's that people want to be successful. So, any system of accountability needs to ensure that the tools for improvement exist within the enterprise. For education those tools begin with a clearly defined and articulated curriculum with embedded assessments and timely reporting within an integrated technology system.

Recommendation: Redraft or amend APPR with a central focus on the connection between curriculum and accountability.

2. Common Core State Standards (CCSS) deserve a public airing before the proverbial baby is thrown out with the bath water. If not Common Core, what? Education is a system that should be standards based from which curriculum is developed and prepared for delivery.

Administrators and teachers work within such a system as they contribute to its effectiveness through their talent and innovation.

Recommendation: Bring Common Core State Standards into the light of day within each school district in the state to be examined, discussed, and possibly modified.

3. Aside from the safety and welfare of students and staff, the curriculum is the foundation for learning within a school district. It provides learning expectations and rich content through alignment with standards that spiral from endpoints to support continuous learning and growth. Therefore, equitable opportunity for learning is reinforced across a school district and perhaps the state. It is the effective delivery of the curriculum that needs to be judged continuously.

Recommendation: Provide the resources and time for the development of a standards-based curriculum with the selection of appropriate, rich content with interim assessment measures and timely reports.

4. The time is at hand when English language arts and mathematics tests should be developed by NYS educators, as have Regents exams for the past 150 years. Just review the fine work done by NYS educators in test development. Why is this dimension of education given to an outside company when the expertise exists in the state? Testing needs to be transparent for review and use to ensure its appropriateness and not held closely by an outside company with intentions of using these test items for profit in other states. Recommendation: Provide the funding for NYS educators to develop appropriate assessments as a basis for measuring the annual status of student performance in English language arts



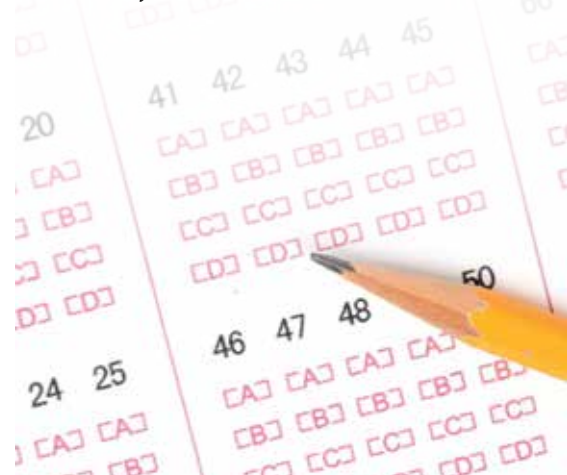
(i.e., reading) and mathematics for grades 3-8.

A WAKE-UP CALL

The state of education in New York is at a perilous moment. This is reflected in an abdication for learning by state officials. Political involvement has turned the most enlightening experiences for educators and students into a contentious nightmare. Without heeding the proverb introduced at the beginning of this article and recommendation, education in this great state may lose its sense of mission.

DR. BRUCE H. CROWDER is a senior researcher for Educational Vistas, Inc. He is a former NYS assistant commissioner for Quality Assurance and the Excellence and Accountability Program (EAP). Dr. Crowder may be reached at evibruce@aol.com.

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Carl Forbes
319-321-9755
carl.forbes@act.org
act.org

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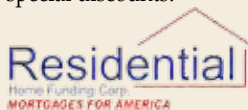
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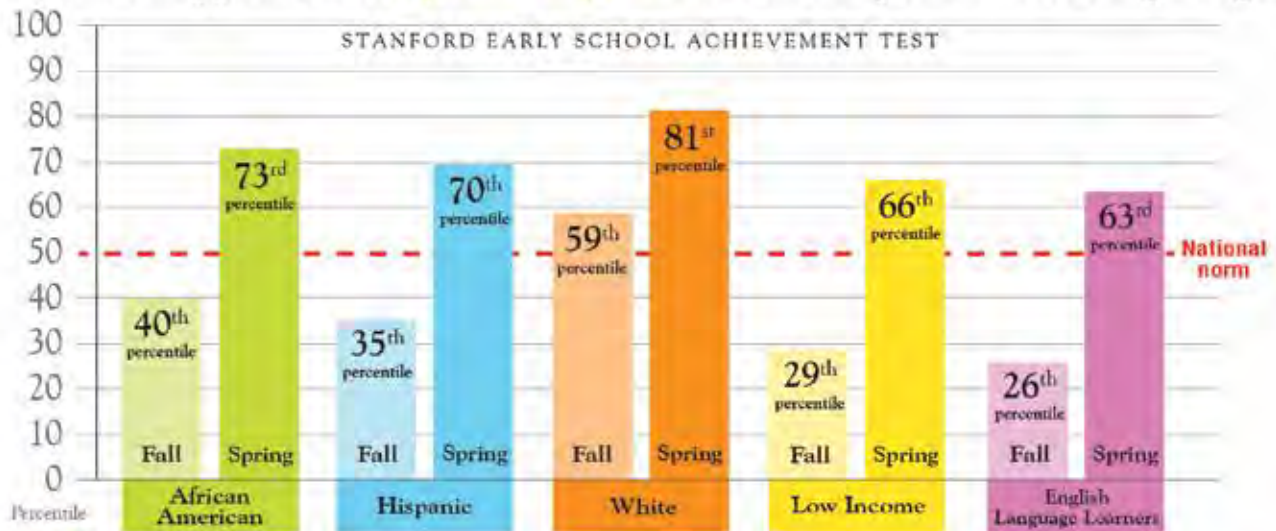
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