The Future is Upon Us

The world my grandson Aidan will inherit is not the world of my childhood. A few weeks ago, for example, I learned that seeds are now more important to our future than I could have ever imagined. Norway has decided to help the planet bounce back from disaster by establishing the Svalbard Global Seed Vault on an island that lies in the Arctic Ocean only 620 miles from the North Pole.

The Seed Vault can store up to 2.25 billion seeds and exists to preserve the biodiversity of the planet. Over 100 countries are contributing seeds to the vault. This is truly an international effort aimed at research, food preservation, and hope in a time when the world is predicted to experience drastic global climate change over the next 100 years.

This is the world my grandchildren and our communities’ children will inherit. Are we equipped to prepare our students for it? Does the Svalbard Global Seed Vault and hundreds of stories like it have a place in our curriculum?

I virtually attended the February 26, 2008 opening ceremonies inside the vault and you can too. http://tinyurl.com/3aoaok


Three more important sources for information on 21st century literacies are:

- Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century. Project New Media Literacies, http://tinyurl.com/2m55e7
- National Educational Technology Standards for Students, Second
Toward A Definition of 21st Century Literacies

Recently the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) issued a statement they called “Toward A Definition of 21st Century Literacies” that summarizes a lot of what I have learned about this topic.

Literacy has always been a collection of cultural and communicative practices shared among members of particular groups. As society and technology change, so does literacy. Because technology has increased the intensity and complexity of literate environments, the twenty-first century demands that a literate person possess a wide range of abilities and competencies, many literacies. These literacies—from reading online newspapers to participating in virtual classrooms—are multiple, dynamic, and malleable. As in the past, they are inextricably linked with particular histories, life possibilities, and social trajectories of individuals and groups. Twenty-first century readers and writers need to:

- Develop proficiency with the tools of technology
- Build relationships with others to pose and solve problems collaboratively and cross-culturally
- Design and share information for global communities to meet a variety of purposes
- Manage, analyze, and synthesize multiple streams of simultaneous information
- Create, critique, analyze, and evaluate multi-media texts
- Attend to the ethical responsibilities required by these complex environments

The digital universe where these literacies are evident is far removed from the world in which most parents, educators, researchers, and politicians live. It is at best a foreign country and at worse the “dark side.” The language, behaviors, norms, tools, and learning environments, although at times virtual, are very real for those who use them; however, unless you experience them yourself, you will not be able to understand them or realize their importance for learning in the 21st century. Perhaps if we acknowledge how difficult change is for us, we can overcome our resistance to the dramatic shift the digital world represents.

Resistance to Change

Frank Duffey in “I Think, Therefore I Am Resistant to Change,” describes the psychological barrier we have to overcome if we are to understand these new literacies and transform education to prepare our children for their Svalbard-Global-Seed-Bank future.

Mental models resist change. People don’t like to change what they think they know. Given new information to consider, individuals will search their existing mental models to ensure that the new information is consistent with what they know. . . . If the individual cannot link . . . new information to an existing mental model, he or she may . . . discard the information as irrelevant, unimportant, or wrong.

Building Learning Communities

I was introduced to the digital world of learning at a conference in Massachusetts last summer, Building Learning Communities 2007, http://tinyurl.com/2re9lv. It was the first time in my life I sat in a conference room to hear a keynote address where every other person had a computer open on his or her lap, and most if not all of the laptops were connected to the Internet. What I was slow to realize then was that some of the comput-
The mission of the Massachusetts Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development is to promote quality teaching and learning in Massachusetts by fostering instructional and curriculum leadership.

The purpose of MASCD Perspectives is to share diverse experiences and perspectives of educators across the Commonwealth and to stimulate discussion and further thought on educational topics relevant to this mission. Educators are invited to join MASCD by going to www.MASCD.org.

K12 Digital Instructional Development

I went on from that experience to learn more about the digital world of learning that is currently evolving and, I predict, will continue to do so for some time. In October 2007 I attended a free three-week online conference called K12 Online Conference 2007 that is archived on the Internet at http://tinyurl.com/24b2o6 and will be held again in October 2008. Mark it on your calendar! What I learned at the conference opened my eyes to teaching and learning environments that were virtually unknown to me. Since then, with the help of a few people I met online at the conference, I have developed an online network of teachers, administrators, technology specialists, and librarians from across the United States and the planet. They have helped me experience and understand the potential importance of the National Council of Teachers of English defined 21st Century Literacies to education for the future. They are part of my Twitter.com virtual network, and I cannot thank them enough for all they are doing to prepare our profession for education in the future.

Collective Intelligences

The MIT Center for Collective Intelligences, http://tinyurl.com/2zo9yl, was recently established to answer one research question: How can people and computers be connected so that—collectively—they act more intelligently than any individuals, groups, or computers have ever done before? For the sake of my grandson Aidan and all the children, I urge you to take the first step. Drop any resistance to the new literacies paradigm, commit yourself to learn more about it, and as you do, invite the colleagues from your professional learning community to join you on the journey I have begun into the digital universe our children will inherit. I am convinced, as MIT apparently is, that collectively we have an opportunity to pool intelligences globally in ways we cannot imagine today to answer the questions of tomorrow. We have to claim these opportunities and help our students to claim them . . . I suspect it may be the only way we will be able to live creatively and successfully in a world that could be very different from the one we are equipped to live in, a world that is rapidly disappearing.


1 Toward A Definition of 21st-Century Literacies, Adopted by the NCTE Executive Committee, February 15, 2008
New Literacy Skills for the 21st Century

by Mary Devaney Colombo, Ed.D.

A New Playing Field

Have you heard about the dihydrogen monoxide controversy? If you haven’t, information is only a quick computer search away. Enter “dihydrogen monoxide” into either Google or Yahoo and both search engines return the Dihydrogen Monoxide Research Division web site (www.dhmo.org/) in the number one position on the search results list. Or do a Google search on “dangerous chemicals” as students might do for a research project, and the same web site appears in the number three position. For many students who are searching and reading on the Internet, appearing in the top three on a search list is considered proof that the site is reliable. Trouble is that this site, like many others on the Web, is a hoax. Dihydrogen monoxide is simply water.

Many bogus sites are satirical and some are even humorous for an adult reader. Both of these qualities could be used to describe a web site (zapatopi.net/treeoctopus/) that serves as a source of historically accurate information at www.martinlutherking.org. What is not apparent at first glance is that the site is aimed at denigrating King. According to Leu’s research, while an adult might quickly conclude the motive of this site’s creator, students with excellent reading skills may not.

Before the Information Age, students conducted research using libraries and textbooks. The library’s book collection was chosen carefully, most often by a librarian who had in mind the age of the students who would be using the library. Relatively little information of a controversial nature was available to a student researcher. The library, however, was limited by the number of books filling the shelves. However, now that nearly every school in the United States (2000 US Census2) are connected to the Internet, the World Wide Web serves as a “library” that has no bounds. CNN estimated in 2006 that 100 million web sites were operating across the world.3 These sites represent an astonishing wealth of content information previously unavailable in any one library, but unfortunately, also include both purposeful and unintentional misinformation and opinion masquerading as fact. In addition, new interactive Internet technologies have spawned “Web 2.0” through which students contribute to a community of knowledge, including social networking sites, wikis, blogs and other user-generated text. Multimedia formats are also now viable modes of content delivery as Flickr, YouTube and iTunes require new literacy skills of both students and teachers. Indeed, as new technologies emerge, skills we cannot anticipate today will be necessary for students to navigate successfully through a Web 3.0 or 4.0 environment. Because of this, Dr. Leu argues that “literacy is increasing deictic (pronounced ‘dike-tic’) – the definition of what it means to be literate continuously changes as new technologies of literacy rapidly appear in an age of information, creating both new opportunities and new challenges for literacy educators.” (Leu, 2001)4 He suggests that the question educators have to ask is “How do we teach children to continuously become literate?”5 This is no small task because educators must teach students not only the skills needed for the Internet as we know it, but also for what it may become. We have to teach students how to be learners and how to independently adapt their skills to new online reading requirements as they emerge.

New Literacies

For the Web today, students have to develop a new set of literacy skills that are different from what has been traditionally taught. In a study conducted at a Connecticut middle school (Leu et al 2005)6 there was no correlation between assessments of traditional and online reading comprehension. In other words, assessments used to measure traditional literacy skills do not measure students’ skill level for online reading tasks. In spite of growing recognition that students need to develop a new set of skills for the new reading requirements of the Web, most states have not included the “new literacy” skills...
in state curriculum standards and relatively few schools are teaching them in a systematic way. No Child Left Behind-mandated state testing focuses on traditional literacy and ignores the kinds of reading skills necessary for online reading and comprehension, such as reading a page of search results, working through hyperlinked text, or evaluating online information. While we continue to assess only a slice of literacy, the Internet and all the reading demands associated with it becomes more omnipresent in students’ daily lives.

Students are avid Internet users, and for better or worse, they are learning from it. In a research study carried out jointly by the Internet Reading Research Group at Clemson University and the New Literacies Research Team at the University of Connecticut,7 the teams surveyed over 1,000 seventh grade students in South Carolina and Connecticut about their Internet usage and online reading. The survey revealed that although 70% of the students use the Internet outside of school, only 33% report being required to use it in school. Furthermore, only 3% report that they always check the accuracy of the information they read online at school, while slightly more, 5%, report that they check accuracy outside of school. These figures tell us that, while most students are using the Internet, schools are not requiring assignments that include the use of the Internet and the related critical thinking skills necessary to use it intelligently.

What might instruction that would foster these skills include? For online reading, this means that students must acquire new literacy skills, including:

- **Navigate** complex networks to locate appropriate information,
- **Critically evaluate** that information,
- **Identify** important questions,
- **Synthesize** the information to address those questions,
- **Communicate** the answers to others (Leu 2004).8

Each of these new literacy skills is crucial for the development of intelligent users of the Internet, not only for school learning purposes, but for lifetime learning.

### New Strategies

One key to developing these skills is regular use of the Internet. Students learn these skills best in context. Declarative knowledge – to know about – will not provide the depth of understanding and the proficiency of use necessary for skilled online reading. Teachers and administrators can assure that students are learning new literacies through meaningful instructional activities and purposeful curriculum planning that involves the integration of online tasks within instruction.

Teachers can help students understand how search engines organize information so that they first know which search engine is the most useful for the search they are conducting. New literacies researcher Laurie Henry suggests using a framework that leads students through the search process:

1. **Set a purpose for searching.**
2. **Employ effective search strategies.**
3. **Analyze search-engine results.**
4. **Read critically and synthesize information.**
5. **Cite your sources.**
6. **How successful was your search?** (Henry, L. 2006)9

The framework includes some time-honored literacy skills such as activating prior knowledge and using effective keywords when searching. Analyzing search-engine results, however, is a skill quite unlike typical reading tasks in that students have to be able to read URLs (unique web addresses), and make inferences about the information likely to be found at a particular link (p. 619).

Students must also evaluate the web sites that their searches turn up. A “Web Site Evaluation Form” for students is available for printing through the ReadWriteThink web site at [www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson328/evalform.pdf](http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson328/evalform.pdf) or in an online version at [www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=328](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=328) (select “Web Site Evaluation Form Student Interactive”). Questions in both print and online versions lead students through the questions such as “Who wrote the web page?,” “Is the person an authority on the topic?,” and “What is the goal of the site?” These questions scaffold students’ thinking to evaluate web sites.


In addition, teachers can access an increasing number of resources to help plan instruction for new literacy skills. Leu and his colleagues have written a teacher-friendly text full of excellent strategies for teaching children the
skills they need to use the Internet (Leu, D. J., Leu D. D., Coiro, J. 2004). A web site companion to the book at www.sp.uconn.edu/~djleu/fourth/one.html includes scores of links to resources for teachers to use in teaching students new literacy skills. The Internet includes scores of other web sites with background information, instructional ideas, and student resources that teachers can use to develop new literacies curriculum and instruction. They are no further away than a Google or any other search engine!

In Conclusion
To insure that our students have the skills necessary for the 21st century, educators must work together to help students learn to navigate, understand, evaluate, and utilize the vast and expanding resources of the Internet. Teaching students new literacy skills systemically and in the context of their broader school experience is not a luxury but a necessity in the Information Age. To do otherwise is to disadvantage our students who will need these skills to compete in a Web-based global economy.

References
1  Ibid.
5  Ibid.
10 Ibid.

Mary Devaney Colombo is the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction for the Hopkinton Public Schools. She can be reached at mcolombo@hopkinton.k12.ma.us

MASCD promotes the Whole Child Education Compact
- Each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.
- Each student learns in an intellectually challenging environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults.
- Each student is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.
- Each student has access to personalized learning and is supported by qualified, caring adults.
- Each graduate is challenged by a well-balanced curriculum and is prepared for success in college or further study and for employment in a global environment.

If you would like to host or lead a community conversation on the education of the whole child in your school or district, please contact mfhayes@mascd.org and visit www.wchildeducation.org for a host of resources.
Models Matter: Towards a More Inclusive Approach to Literacy Instruction

by Curt Dudley-Marling

Through A Filtered Lens

Scientifically-based research is a dominant theme of federal educational policy. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) refers to “scientifically-based research” and “scientifically-based reading research” more than 100 times (Glenn, 2004). In 2002, the Institute for Education Sciences (IES) was established within the US Department of Education (USDOE) with the goal of transforming education into an “evidence-based field” (USDOE, online). Reading First grants provide funding for states and local districts “to apply scientifically based reading research” (USDOE, online) to beginning reading instruction.

Arguably, the position on scientifically-based research that has emerged in the context of No Child Left Behind elevates method over theory, suggesting that the only relevant questions about educational research are methodological. From this perspective, researchers may undertake research to test theories, but there is little sense that theory shapes the questions researchers ask or how researchers design their studies. Research is, however, always undertaken from a point of view, some position on how the physical and social worlds we inhabit operate. Moreover, this point of view – the researcher’s theoretical framework – shapes how researchers collect, analyze, and interpret their data. An astrobologist looking for life on Mars, for example, will design her instruments based on (theoretical) assumptions about the nature of carbon-based life forms here on Earth. The astrobologist’s instruments will, however, be insensitive to evidence of life outside of the purview of her theoretical assumptions. Evidence of non-carbon-based life forms will likely be invisible to her. The astrobologist’s theoretical framework, her pre-existing assumptions about the nature of the universe, acts as a kind of lens that sharpens the focus of her inquiries (her ability to discover carbon-based life forms) while simultaneously limiting her field of vision (her ability to discover non-carbon based life forms).

In the same way, the meanings scientists make of their observations will always be filtered through a general theory of the physical or social world (Kuhn, 1996). Data collected by physical and social scientists, including educational researchers, make sense only from some point of view, or theoretical framework. As Dennett (1995) put it, “there’s no such thing as philosophy-free science; there is only science whose philosophical baggage is taken on board without examination” (p. 21).

Pygmalion Redux

The Report of the National Reading Panel (NRP) has been praised for establishing a “science of reading” (Walsh, Glaser, & Wilcox, 2006) that, presumably, puts an end to the reading wars. The work of NRP is having a profound effect on reading instruction, pushing out reading methods that do not find (scientific) support in the NRP report (Edmondson & Shannon, 2002). School officials across the US are taking seriously the admonition that, “if it isn’t proven to work through [scientific] research, you can’t count it toward instruction” (Diegmueller & Manzo, 2001, p. 5).

Rarely acknowledged are the theoretical assumptions that underpin the work of the NRP including how the panel organized its work and how the members of the panel interpreted the research base in reading instruction. Reading research is, however, interpretable only from some (theoretical) point of view about what it means to read and what people do in the process of reading. The organization of the NRP report into the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, for example, reflected the interests of panel members (Shannon, 2007) which, in turn, was informed by members’ theoretical stance on how children learn to read and what mature and beginning readers do in the process of reading. Although the NRP does not present an explicit theory of reading that underpins their work, there is a theory of reading implicit in their methods of data collection and the interpretation of the studies the NRP included in its analysis. Specifically, the NRP report is informed by a cognitive-psychology theory of reading (Hall, 2003) that equates reading with the rapid, linear processing of visual information into sounds and words, a process that leads directly to comprehension (assuming readers “know” the words).

To be clear, the research studies the NRP selected for review reflect pre-existing assumptions about what beginning and mature readers do in the process of reading. The Panel’s decision to include in its analysis studies of reading that employed pseudowords (e.g., “dat,” “wat,” “gat”) as dependent variables to measure growth in reading, for
example, reflects panel members’ a priori assumptions about the relationship between sounding out nonsense words and reading development. Further, viewing reading development in terms of discrete skills (e.g., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency) led the panel to focus on studies of reading that employed research methods appropriate for measuring the skills panel members believed comprised the process of reading. The NRP preferred quantitative studies employing experimental and quasi-experimental designs because these methodologies fit neatly with the definition of reading that the members of the National Reading Panel began with, a model that equates reading and reading development with a scope and sequence of discrete, measurable skills detached from social contexts. Similarly, the NRP rejected studies employing qualitative research methodologies informed by different theories of reading and, therefore, incompatible with the cognitive-psychological model of reading that underpins the NRP report. So, while the NRP report has been praised for establishing a “science of reading” (Walsh, Glaser, & Wilcox, 2006), it actually reflects both science – really a particular approach to scientific research – and a theoretical perspective. Crucially, the research methodology favored by the NRP and the theoretical framework with which the panel began its work are inextricably linked. Like the hypothetical astrombiologist, the theory-informed research methods employed by the NRP both sharpened their focus and limited their vision.

The research methods preferred by the NRP cast in sharp relief the skills the Panel believed to be fundamental to the reading process, but these same methodologies obscured processes fundamental to alternative views of reading.

Towards A More Inclusive Model

The cognitive-psychological model of reading that underpins the report of the NRP reflects a common sense view of reading shared by many parents, media pundits, politicians, and educational policy makers. However, this view of reading has less currency with the many reading researchers who work within a sociocultural model of reading. From a sociocultural perspective, literacy is not equated with a scope and sequence of autonomous skills (Gee, 1996; Street, 1995). Instead, literacy is viewed as a set of social and cultural practices that involve specific ways of interacting with people, specific ways of using language (including written language), specific sets of values for various kinds of behaviors, and specific sets of interpretations for understanding and guiding behavior (Bloome, Harris, & Ludlum, 1991, p. 22). Sociocultural models of reading indicate that people do not learn to read “once and for all” as much as they learn to read particular texts, in particular ways appropriate to social and cultural contexts (Gee, 1996).

Sociocultural models of reading have sometimes been characterized as anti-phonics, but this is inaccurate. Sociocultural models of literacy reject the phonics equals reading equation, but do not reject the role of phonics in reading or reading instruction. Readers do not read with their eyes closed. The issue is not whether readers use phonetic cues in the process of reading but how and when they use these cues (see Rhodes & Dudley-Marling, 1996 for a detailed discussion of the role of phonics from a sociocultural perspective).

The important point to be made here is that reading researchers whose work is informed by a sociocultural model of reading favor qualitative research approaches that capture the complexities of the reading process including the role social and cultural contexts play in how readers go about making meaning with and from text. The sociocultural researcher’s choice of methods both sharpens her focus – allows her to see the complex processes she believes are fundamental to reading – and limits her vision by obscuring discrete psychological processes readers may engage in. This is not a matter of being more or less scientific, but choosing (scientific) research methods consonant with researchers’ theoretical framework.

In Conclusion

The representation of the report of the National Reading Panel as establishing a scientific basis for what works in reading instruction is grossly misleading. The question what works? begs the question “works at what?” Moreover, the prepositional phrase, “at what,” references researchers’ choice of measures (dependent variables) to determine if an intervention works. Of course, the researcher’s...
choice of dependent variables reflects his theoretical assumptions about what counts as reading. Settling the question of what works? is, therefore, a function of both the quality of the evidence (research rigor) and the theoretical perspective of the person asking the question. The significance of the claim that “research has proven systematic phonics instruction is effective at improving students’ ability to sound out pseudowords” depends on your perspective on what readers do in the process of reading. Researchers working from a cognitive-psychological perspective will find this claim much more compelling than researchers whose work is informed by a sociocultural model of reading. Models matter.

Ultimately, the assessment of reading research must consider both the methodological rigor of the research and the model of reading underpinning the research. “Scientifically-based research” informed by unsound theories of reading is problematic even if based on the most rigorous research.

**References**


**Curt Dudley-Marling** is a former elementary teacher who is currently a professor in the Lynch School of Education at Boston College where he teaches courses in language and literacy. Dudley-Marling is the author of numerous articles and books focusing on struggling readers, the social construction of learning identities, and social justice. He can be reached at dudleyma@bc.edu.

---

**Make Your Voice Heard**

MASCD and ASCD are working with the State Legislature and Congress to develop sound policy to advance our educational goals:

- Educating the Whole Child
- Professionalizing the educator workforce — Massachusetts House 451/Senate 284 will insure high quality teaching and leading in all of the Commonwealth’s schools.
- High school redesign

Your voice can make a difference. Our goal is to have all MASCD members actively involved in advocating for the priorities above. Becoming an Educator Advocate is a first step that will enable you to easily communicate with policymakers, especially when the timing is crucial. To become an Educator Advocate, go to www.mascd.org and click on “Become an Educator Advocate.”

We are educators. We know what works. Together, we can change the story of learning, the story of teaching and the story of school so that each child’s educational story is one of promise, growth and joy.
On the Road Toward New Literacies

by Nancy Gustafson and Grace Magley

“Whenever I go into class, I have to power down.”
(Student at a digital education conference as quoted by David Putnam in The Guardian, May 8, 2007)

New Literacies as Keys to Success

A challenge facing schools today is how teachers, who are for the most part digital immigrants, can best reach and teach students who are digital natives (Prensky, 2001). We must ensure that all students are fluent in the new literacies they will need in the 21st century workplace, but teachers do not have the experience to know how to do so. What are these new literacies and how can we design educational experiences that ensure that students are prepared for the future rather than educated for our past? The global workplace that students will join requires them to be self-directed, collaborative, flexible thinkers who sift through, evaluate and analyze vast amounts of information using strong communication skills. These communication skills include not only traditional linguistic interpretation (listening and reading, ideally in more than one language) and production (speaking and writing), but also visual interpretation and production (understanding and creating symbols, graphs, charts, video, and multimedia). Visual literacy, information literacy and technology literacy are keys to students’ lifelong learning, retooling, problem solving and producing in the next century.

Why is the 21st century workplace so different from what many teachers grew up with? Technology is having a huge impact on productivity and redefining the economy. In the book, *The New Division of Labor* (2004), Frank Levy and Richard Murnane make the case that technology is enhancing productivity in many jobs even as they eliminate other jobs. Jobs that involve routines - blue collar and clerical work that requires moderate skills and pays middle-class wages - are disappearing quickly as computers are used to perform these tasks. As a result, there is a growing division between those who can and those who cannot earn a good living in this new economy. We must prepare our students for the high-wage/high-skilled jobs that are increasing rapidly; those involving extensive problem solving, creativity and interpersonal communication. In “Tough Choices or Tough Times,” the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce (2007) lays out the problem quite clearly:

The global workplace that students will join requires them to be self-directed, collaborative, flexible thinkers who sift through, evaluate, and analyze vast amounts of information using strong communication skills.

“The best employers the world over will be looking for the most competent, most creative and most innovative people on the face of the earth and will be willing to pay them top dollar for their services. This will be true not just for the top professionals and managers, but up and down the length and breadth of the workforce. Those countries that produce the most important new products and services can capture a premium in world markets that will enable them to pay high wages to their citizens.”

If we don’t prepare our students for high skill level jobs that require innovation and critical thinking, we will leave them unable to compete in the 21st century global economy.

What are the New Literacies?

Core content, basic literacy and numeracy are important and are the foundation of what students need, but they are not enough to succeed in life and work in this century without higher order, 21st century skills. Making learning relevant to what students know and are able to do can happen most effectively by allowing students to demonstrate their knowledge in various ways and through cooperative and differentiated learning. Technology tools geared for a cooperative learning environment can and should be used broadly and intensively to provide a foundation for the 21st century classroom. In *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century*, (2007) Henry Jenkins, Professor at MIT, states, “The new literacies almost all involve social skills developed through collaboration and networking. These skills build on the foundation of traditional literacy, research skills, technical skills, and critical analysis skills taught in the classroom.” Technology, once thought of as increasing isolation, provides powerful ways to participate in what Jenkins calls the culture of convergence where individuals join communities of like-minded people or those with similar goals to solve real world problems. Marc Prensky, who coined the term “digital native” and “digital immi-
grant” wrote in an *Educational Leadership* (Jan. 2006) article, “Our students are no longer ‘little versions of us,’ as they have been in the past. In fact, they are so different from us that we can no longer use either our 20th century knowledge or our training as a guide to what is best for them educationally.”

Consider these interesting statistics:

- 8-18 year olds spend over 44 hours per week on average in front of a screen
- Children are watching less television than in the past but spending more time with digital tools
- Teens spend an average of 27 hours per week on the Internet at home vs. 15 min. at school
- 70% of all 12-14 year olds have their own phone
- 93% of teenagers use the Internet frequently
- More than one-half of all teens have created media content
- Roughly one third of teens who use the Internet have shared content they produced
- 22 percent of teens have their own web sites
- 19 percent of teens blog and 19 percent remix online content
- Urban youth (40 percent) are more likely than their suburban (28 percent) or rural (38 percent) counterparts to be media creators

Compiled from the Pew Internet and American Life project (Lenhardt & Madden, 2005) and Maximizing the Impact-The Pivotal Role of Technology in a 21st Century Education System (2008)

Massachusetts is one of six states accepted as “leadership states” dedicated to promoting the skills and competencies needed to be engaged and productive citizens and employees in an increasingly competitive global society. For more information see The Partnership for 21st Century Skills at www.21stcenturyskills.org:

A. Mastery of Core Subjects and 21st Century Themes such as Global Awareness, Civic and Health Literacy, and Economic and Financial Literacies.

B. Learning and Innovation Skills such as:
   1) Creativity and Innovation Skills
   2) Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills
   3) Communication and Collaboration Skills

C. Information, Media, and Technology Skills
   1) Information Literacy
   2) Media Literacy
   3) Information, Communications, and Technology Literacy

D. Life and Career Skills
   1) Flexibility & Adaptability
   2) Initiative & Self-Direction
   3) Social & Cross-Cultural Skills
   4) Productivity & Accountability
   5) Leadership & Responsibility

**Taking the Lead in Massachusetts**

The Millis Public Schools are a small suburban district in MetroWest. Millis High School was awarded the US DOE Blue Ribbon this year and earned Silver Medal status from *US News and World Report* this fall. Building on a solid foundation of basic literacy and numeracy, critical thinking and problem solving skills in the elementary grades, the Unified Arts teachers in our district (Music, Art, Technology, TV Production) are leading the way regarding what can and should be done to address 21st century skills. Since they have not been bound by high stakes state testing which is content laden, they have been free to explore better ways to help students achieve at high levels in the new literacies. Students show what they learn in art classes through their detailed electronic journals and digital portfolios. Technology students build a class Wiki to explain the importance of Web 2.0 technologies to enhance their own learning (see millisps.org). As a culminating project, students design their ideal educational environment to incorporate web 2.0 tools and the new literacies.

Music students teach non-music students how to conduct an orchestra and video the process for the purpose of self and teacher assessment. TV Production students, starting in fifth grade, become expert storytellers in collaborative teams where each individual takes on an important role to produce a film. Short media clips that students create are updated weekly on our web site to showcase their work (see millisps.org). Middle School students create computer programs using Flash. In each of these scenarios, it is the technology that allows the final product to be created effectively. Using the foundational tools, students communicate, collaborate, organize and refine their creative or problem solving work. They self-assess and are assessed by the teachers via 21st century skills rubrics from enGauge...
(NCREL and Learning Point Associates) that have been adapted by teachers. These classrooms inspire the students to achieve at their highest levels because the work they are doing is relevant to their lives.

Using the foundational tools, students communicate, collaborate, organize, and refine their creative or problem solving work.

In the Spanish Immersion program in which English speaking students are immersed in Spanish from first grade on and learn all of their content in Spanish, as well as in the foreign language classes for all students starting in grade six, students develop global awareness and utilize technology to connect to and communicate with the world. About half of Millis High School students take an on-line course through Virtual High School, providing them with a supported introduction to distance learning. Our 7th and 8th grade students develop a variety of 21st century skills in Health and Fitness class, including adaptability, self-direction, productivity, and accountability. For example, students use tools such as heart rate monitors during cardiovascular fitness activities to provide this information for goal-setting, and use various online tools such as food trackers and analyzers, caloric intake versus expenditure calculators, and tools to personalize their eating habits to their needs. The curriculum empowers students to use technology to their advantage in promoting their overall health and well-being.

While core content area teachers also incorporate technology tools such as smart boards, video streaming, interactive software, and personal response systems, the focus, now more than ever, needs to be on having students doing higher order thinking, problem solving, creating, collaborating, and becoming self-directed learners rather than on doing familiar things with new tools. A basic first step is to create an online learning environment that supports the classroom and makes it easier for teachers to address these new literacies. Students and teachers need to have 24/7 access to class resources and electronic collaboration and productivity tools. Giving students a variety of ways to share what they know and are able to do increases the quality of the work they produce. A new Millis High School elective, Web 2.0 and 21st Century Skills, a hybrid course that combines face-to-face meetings with a collaborative on-line learning environment, is a pilot model for how future classes can be structured. Students learn to create and use today’s web 2.0 tools (podcasts, blogs, wikis, etc.) with the understanding that the tools will evolve and change fairly quickly. They critically evaluate information, resources, and the tools available today for their own learning. The teacher’s role moves to one of designing and structuring rigorous and relevant projects and then facilitating the learning. David Digiammerino, the instructor and developer of the Web 2.0 course in Millis, says:

Everything points to student self-actualization in a connected, collaborative world. To me what moves a teacher from good to great is recognizing the passion and giving the student opportunity and encouragement to pursue that, with rigor and relevance, within the parameters of the collaborative goal. Need evidence? Talk to my student who is on cloud nine with Google Sketch-Up- his passion for technology, art, design, a thirst for learning, is all wrapped up in the 21st century Schoolhouse Project. My challenge? Feed that passion, keep him focused, support him, insure that others in the class communicate their vision so he renders it according to other’s expectations, and be prepared to mitigate any interpersonal issues that might occur. Not teach him, at least not explicitly.

Students are more engaged in these courses because they control much of how they learn. The teacher becomes a true facilitator by helping students find resources and information, by setting high expectations and keeping the pace of the class moving forward. This means adapting frequently to individual student needs. Giving students time together and on their own to work with the material and discuss the issues is also essential to the learning process. We ask the students to think deeply about what they learned and how they learned it and they respond by thinking critically about their learning, asking for more resources and producing quality work. Assessment is an individual and group responsibility. The students in this environment are motivated to do more and at a higher level. They frequently stay after school hours to work on their projects and will email podcasts at 2:00 AM to their class discussion forum on what they thought of an article they were asked to read. How often in the traditional classroom does a student ask to do more than they are required? Making the environment of learning relevant to these digital natives allows teachers to increase the rigor in powerful ways.

In Conclusion

The challenge is to scale up our efforts to reach all students in all courses via professional development for all teachers. Moving this learning environment into the core curriculum areas will take a comprehensive, long-term training and support system. Teachers want to embrace the new technologies and make a difference for their students,
but many are afraid to take the risks that moving from the traditional learning environment to a 21st century learning environment require. “What if standardized test scores decrease if I spend more time on collaborative, project-based work? What if I invest in using technology and it fails me when I need it? How can I find time to learn and incorporate new technologies?” In order to move forward, we must support teachers so that they are no longer working in isolation, encouraging them to collaborate with colleagues in the district, state, and around the globe. In Millis we have embarked upon this journey with professional development on release days, encouraging teachers to take courses that address 21st century skills and how to create on-line learning experiences, by providing all teachers with laptops, and by moving toward a 1-to-1 computing environment for high school students by the year 2010.

Teachers in Millis support and challenge one another, set goals, analyze student work together, and encourage each other to try new methods in support of improving student achievement. Administrators must support and empower teachers to innovate and inspire students by providing technology resources and professional development that is targeted toward 21st century reformative goals for their districts. Budgets must be re-allocated, and the school and civic community must be invested so that the resources needed to support 21st century teaching and learning can be realized. Just as we need to ask our students what they need to be successful, we also need to listen to our teachers and what they need. Professional development, time to collaborate, and technology that is used extensively to support a global learning environment are keys to moving a district forward. As one Millis student expressed in a podcast, “This is the future and these tools are the modern way to learn. They allow us to be more independent.” By powering up schools and teachers we can reach and teach students for their futures, not our past.

References


Nancy L. Gustafson is the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development for the Millis Public Schools. Nancy has a CAGS from Lesley University in Educational Administration, a Masters degree from Boston University in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish and Elementary Education from Grinnell College. As a technology teacher many years ago, her ELL students won top awards in the multimedia category at the Boston Computer Society’s Youth CompuFest in 1992, 1993, and 1994. Her students far surpassed her own technology skills, as they are wont to do. Nancy can be reached at ngustafson@millisps.org.

Grace Magley is the Director of Technology for the Millis Public Schools. Grace has been a technology specialist for the Millis Public Schools since 1998 and the technology director since 2004. She has a Bachelors of Science degree in Computer Science from the State University of New York at Plattsburg and a Masters degree in Technology in Education from Lesley University. Grace has lived in the town of Millis since 1984 with her family. Grace is a passionate proponent of technology use in education to support 21st century teaching and learning. Grace can be reached at gmagley@millisps.org.
Rethinking Models of Literacy Provision for the 21st Century

by Robyn Jay

Theoretical Orientation

Traditionally, the notion of ‘literacy’ was associated with the acquisition of a fixed level of reading and writing performance. An individual could be ‘literate’ or ‘illiterate’ depending on whether or not this critical level had been reached. In the last two decades we have moved to a much more fluid notion, where ‘literacy’ has become an ever developing process, closely linked to changing social and cultural practices. Usually however, ‘literacy’ has continued to be linked to reading and writing skills. In this paper this will be referred to as ‘alphabetical literacy’.

As our lives become more complex and we become more and more part of a global community, what it means to be ‘literate’ and what is encompassed in literacy provision becomes increasingly difficult to define. If literacy is linked to communication in cultural contexts and about being able to use, gain meaning from and critically analyse a wide range of relevant modes of communication, then we must move beyond the alphabetical literacies and recognise a place for design, music, movement, gesture etc. as valid modes of communication. O’Rourke adds that it is about communicating with available representational modes which are most apt for context, culture and purpose.

Being literate means seeing beyond the surface, being able to make meaning in more complex ways, drawing upon life experiences, context and knowledge of the world to make sense of what we see (2002: para.8).

The introduction of the concept of ‘Multiliteracies’ (New London Group 1996) supports this expanded view. Literacy, they say ‘is in its nature multimodal – a matter of visual as well as linguistic design,’ and that ‘multimodality itself is becoming more significant in today’s communications environments where, from multimedia desktops to shopping malls, written text is represented in a dynamic relation to sound, visuals, spaces and gesture. Globalisation and local diversity also progressively transfer the balance of meaning away from language. As a consequence, literacy teaching and learning need to be an increasingly interdisciplinary endeavour, in which the boundaries of literacy with art, drama and music are no longer so clearly defined’ (Cope & Kalantzis 2000:234). The current culture of literacy, they add ‘suppresses our human potential by favouring one restricted form of meaning-making, that is the written word’ (ibid, 223).

Research Focus

Based on this theoretical framework the following three questions guided my Flexible Learning Leader research.

Firstly, what does a multimodal/multiliteracy model of teaching/learning actually look like? Is such a model possible within the current Australian program and funding structures or do we need to rethink current provision?

Secondly I was keen to explore how new technologies can be used to add value to teaching/learning programs, and enhance the development of all ‘literacies’ now required. At the 2003 Learning Conference in London, Bill Cope commented that ‘... much of the technology use in education is didactic, lock step, predictable, dogmatically linear, and judgmental’ (pers. comm., 2003). My emphasis needed to be on how well technology could be used rather than on how much: it was a matter of quality not quantity.

Finally, many adult literacy learners come to us following negative previous learning experiences. Much of what we do is giving back self confidence and respect as learners and members of community. Therefore I was keen to consider how new technologies might be used to reengage marginalised learners: those for whom traditional educational approaches have failed.

What’s Happening in the Field?

An informal survey of participants at the 2003 Adult Council for Adult Literacy (ACAL) conference identified
that an increasing number of new technologies are being used in some form in literacy programs around Australia. Uses include digital cameras and video, SMS, PowerPoint, web software, email, Weblogs, WWW and a variety of educational software including Hot Potatoes.

What I found however, was that while a wide range of technologies are increasingly being used in literacy programs a number of issues were repeatedly raised that are seen to impede progress and limit innovation.

- Teachers often feel that they have insufficient skills and confidence to add new technologies to their repertoire of teaching practices and resources.
- Many teachers lack ready access to effective technical support.
- There is a general lack of access to appropriate, up-to-date equipment largely due to insufficient funding or our dated views by management of what literacy and literacy provision should entail.
- Teachers feel that they lack time to engage with the new opportunities that technologies present due to the increasing casualisation of the literacy workforce and a perceived dramatic increase in administrative and reporting requirements that detract from their core business - student needs, curriculum design and teaching/learning issues.
- Current program structures and funding models are seen to restrict program options and innovation.

It is a combination of skills and confidence, time, access and support within flexible program and funding models that enable teachers to integrate technologies effectively into their teaching practice (see Fig. 1 below). When any one aspect is lacking, progress is limited.

**A Fresh Viewpoint**

Throughout the year I made an effort to explore what is happening outside the education and VET sectors. Conferences such as the OZeCulture conference in Brisbane provided an exciting peek into state of the art technology and cutting edge work such as virtual reality. While expecting to locate new and interesting ways of using technology, I was surprised to also discover a wide range of really effective learning programs particularly in areas such as Indigenous Health, cultural and community development programs and Youth at Risk initiatives.

So what is it that makes these programs work? While I can offer only tentative conclusions a number of factors DO appear common between these successful programs (Fig. 2). Each of these is explored more fully in the following section with some interesting links for further exploration.

**Fig. 1: Factors required for the integration of new technologies into VET**

**Fig. 2: Common success factors in innovative program models**
Project Based Learning: Real Tasks in Real Contexts

One of the most difficult tasks for teachers and trainers seems to be grappling with competency standards. Too often we teach to the competency standards or learning outcomes with little consideration for the learners' interests, needs and existing knowledge and experiences.

Dewey states that ‘optimal learning and human development occur when people are confronted with substantive, real problems to solve.’ His argument is that curriculum and instruction based on integrated community-based tasks and activities engage learners in forms of pragmatic social action that have real value in the world’ (cited in QLD Govt, 2001:6).

What project based learning programs prove is that we are able to provide relevant, student-centred, authentic, complex learning activities. The projects I visited in 2003 are typically interdisciplinary, focus on real world issues and practices and as a result have immediate relevance and interest for individuals and communities. To achieve this a multidisciplinary facilitation and learning support team is needed.

While the need for multidisciplinary teams is well accepted in the development and functioning of online learning systems, it seems that in face to face blended learning environments we are expecting teachers to have increasingly broader and more complex skills. To motivate learners we need not only content knowledge but a real passion for what we do. By using teams each person is able to bring to the project multiple perspectives and skills in their own field, together enabling not only the combined strength of those skills but the rich and creative outcomes that joint minds allow.

A good example of a team based project is Moving Memories. In 2002-3 Louisa Ellum and SkillsPlus Peninsula Inc in Victoria obtained literacy Innovative funding to pilot the project. Eight young people from 15-20 yrs of age who had incomplete and negative experiences of learning and required support with their language and literacy skills engaged in the project for 20 hours per week over 3 days, for 20 weeks. The project aimed to develop reading, writing and oral communication skills in a participative learning environment, which focused on harnessing young people’s existing technological literacy skills. The major objectives were to promote the growth of community connections, feelings of empowerment and the desire to continue learning through a two-way mentoring system where older people were assisted to share their stories through the digital medium and also participate in Learning Circles with the participants. The completion rate was 100%!

Fig. 3: Screen shots from ‘The Bont’ CD – community map (entry point) and narrative by community member – Reproduced with permission from Sue Williams

Lifewide Learning: Blurring Educational Boundaries

The concept of lifewide learning acknowledges that learning occurs not only throughout, but across our lives. Kalantzis and Harvey (2002) call for educational institutions to become more open and more closely connected with wider communities and for educators to operate in this increasingly complex environment as mediators and collaborators.

In Wales I met Sue Williams from the educational arts organisation, HyperAction, which aims to help facilitate the use of new multimedia technology in schools and the community through creative projects and training initiatives. Its focus is helping schools and community groups make good use of the resources they have readily available to ensure sustainability and to give a social, creative, learning experience using technologies that individuals would not otherwise have.

Sue, who has an education background, works with a variety of artists and media experts. One project, The Bont (see Fig.3), involved a team, which included Sue, a Year 5 teacher and class, and a tapestry expert, on a project.
that took learning out into the local town, where the children worked with community members to capture the essence of their local community and its history. Via a process of recorded interviews and sound, animation, and artwork the team developed a multi-layered ‘map’ of the village with links to information and narratives relating to events and locales using Opus Iluminatus software.

Narrative

When we think of narrative we typically think of stories, accounts of events that happened to us or to others, real or imagined. It is probably through the examination of our own stories that we can begin to understand the underlying purpose of narrative, which is to enable us to make sense of our experience. Because we are instinctive storytellers, this is a fundamental mode of meaning-making’ (Clark 2001:87).

So often the stories of members of our community who have limited English language or alphabetical literacy skills are not given a voice. The combination of narrative with new technologies allows a wide range of creative, engaging experiences and projects that are particularly relevant for oral based cultural traditions and for learners lacking in skills and confidence with written text.

The growing Digital Storytelling movement is a perfect example of the power of the narrative. Digital Stories are short movies (usually about 2-3 minutes in length), which combine images, a narrated story and audio.

In Cardiff, Wales, Daniel Meadows at the BBC Capture Wales project runs monthly workshops in local communities where digital stories are created and edited by community members using cameras, computers, scanners and their own photo albums. Finished products are available online under the themes - challenge, memory, passion, family, and community, but some are also selected for large screen productions on the BBC Wales digital TV network. Daniel uses Adobe Photoshop and Premiere for the workshops and has managed to whittle down the software to a point where with carefully constructed guidelines new computer users can use the software with confidence.

A Back Door Approach: Learning by Stealth

Each project provided skills development as needed, in order to complete the project at hand. The overwhelming message was to first engage learners in activities and projects that are of immediate interest and relevance. Daniel Meadows, for example, stresses the importance of firstly engaging participants in the process of story creation through group discussion and personal research.

This approach is particularly important with youth at risk. In a disadvantaged area of Bristol in the UK, the Knowle West Media Centre is having success re-engaging young people who have left school early or are at risk of doing so as well as disadvantaged members of the local community, in a wide range of multimedia projects including newsletters, short films, photography and community regeneration projects.

In Darwin at the Don Dale Juvenile Justice Centre, the BIG hART Project Nuff Stuff is also exploring the use of emerging visual languages as a method of re-engaging marginalised young people in education and encouraging re-entry into the education system. Staffed by multimedia, community development and arts experts, Nuff Stuff offers workshops and projects based around the use of non-literacy based visual languages such as animation, claymation, static image and film, that are generated from the young people’s personal narratives.

The young people are mentored to allow them to experience their own gift, creating immediate interest and engaging them in IT & New Media skills’ (BIG hART 2003: History and Vision).

A Multimodal Approach

As well as being a vital component of multiliteracy development, digital technologies offer exciting new ways to enrich teaching/learning opportunities generally. For many students they are the key for re-engaging individuals in more formal learning processes and a means by which they can communicate without the need for advanced written skills.

Feral Arts, a community cultural development organisation based in Brisbane, has been working on Placeworks, a series of projects and partnerships focused on exploring the influence of place on cultural and community histories (Moynihan & Horton, 2002). Using state of the art digital equipment – computer, video, camera and editing software, they have been working with the Dajarra community in western Queensland to capture oral traditions and community histories. Material gathered includes photos, videos, songs, interviews, paintings, and digital images.

The Placeworks software ‘operates as a digital museum or keeping place for personal and community histories’ (Moynihan & Horton, cited in Adams & Goldbard, 2002:201). It uses maps of local places to interface with a database containing material gathered through the oral and community history program. The content is guided by the community and the software enables control of images etc., which can be masked or removed by the community at any time to meet with cultural protocols. An associated project, Placestories, involves school children using scanners and digital cameras to work with community
elders to contribute materials to the Placeworks database.

In central Australia, Christopher Brocklebank with the team from Isee-Ilearn: Multilingual Multimedia is developing a range of visual learning resources - international information systems, which extend beyond the written text for indigenous and cross-cultural learning and communication. Christopher’s philosophy is that information should be presented firstly in the known media of image and voice, providing a space of common ground on which ‘all parties can stand and share important information’ without the power imbalances that English written text invariably creates (Multilingual Multimedia 2003).

Providing a Human Face

Technology can alienate or connect us as a community; make learning profoundly authentic and relevant to contexts, or totally removed. Also in Alice Springs J Easterby-Wood, with his team from the NT Department of Health and Disabilities and the IT company, Inchain, is doing some remarkable work to rehumanise e-learning. Over the past three years they have been working to develop resources that can break down the barriers that existed for Indigenous health workers in the local communities surrounding Alice Springs. As a result of LearnScope funding (and considerable energy and inspiration!) the team have developed Pathways to Dimensional Learning (PDL) which has more recently evolved into the MARVIN platform (Messaging Architecture for the retrieval of Versatile Information & News): An Interactive Multimedia Communications Platform/Program designed for multicultural/multilingual target groups. The products enable voice recognition and the conversion of text into sound files (in English and 27 other languages) in a matter of seconds. Training resources are also being created which feature animated role models set against the background of community in the local language. The result is a locally based training product created by community members for the community.

Conclusions

Literacy ‘gives its possessors potential power; as a stock of cultural knowledge within a given tradition’ . . . it ‘can constrain or liberate, instruct or entertain, discipline or disaffect people’ (Kaestle 1991, cited in Murray 2000:43).

What we offer and how we offer it must focus on learners and their interests and needs if we are serious about providing quality flexible learning opportunities. We have much to learn from the models outlined in this report. Unless we include digital technologies in our literacy programs we will further marginalise those individuals already marginalised in society. While most literacy teachers acknowledge the changes needed, they require support to put change in place. We need to critically examine current practices and to rethink how programs are funded, structured, staffed and timetabled in order to revitalise the learning opportunities we offer.

We need to adopt a revised constructivist approach that focuses on ‘designing for learning’ rather than the ‘planning for teaching’ models (Gagnon & Collay n.d.) so often employed in our VET organisations. We also need to look beyond traditional teaching approaches to community based options that will better engage, not only those traditional educational systems have marginalised, but all learners. The integration of new technologies into our teaching practice will enrich the opportunities available to students, and the likelihood of successful outcomes, while ensuring that learning is meaningful for students, and connected to their interests and understandings about the world.

The Text Petal image graphically illustrates the place of text as children enter school. While they are experts at movement, song, drama, manipulation of the environment, and art their grasp of written text is minimal.

When leaving school the size of each petal is reversed. For most children the text petal is now dominant while other literacies/communication skills have been all but lost.

‘We teach in the way we ourselves were taught’ Christopher says (personal interview, September 2003).

Reproduced with permission from Christopher Brocklebank
Finally it is important to remember that the real issue continues to be the quality of teaching, not the amount of technology. In our push for flexible learning solutions we need to focus on the learner and the community. Through effective blended learning strategies we can give all members of society a voice in the ever increasing global community.

**Project URLs**

- Isee-ilearn - http://www.isee-ilearn.com
- BBC Capture Wales Digital Storytelling Project - http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/capturewales/
  - Knowle West media Centre, Bristol - http://www.kwmc.co.uk/index2.htm
- Hyperaction - http://www.hyperaction.org.uk/
- Te Kete Ipurangi – The Online Learning Centre, NZ - http://www.tki.org.nz/e/tki/
  - Awarua programs (Mahi Ora etc) , NZ - http://www.awaruana.co.nz/programmes/
  - Daniel Meadow’s Digital Storytelling site - http://www.photobus.co.uk/new/dstory_01.html

**References**


Murray, D.E. 2000, 'Changing technologies, changing literacy communities?' in Language, literacy and technology vol. 4 no. 2, p. 44.


Robin Jay is currently Project Manager for LearnScope in NSW based at the TAFE NSW International Centre for VET (ICVET) in Sydney, Australia. She holds a Masters Degree in Education and since 1982 has worked across all age groups from Early Childhood to Higher Education. From 1992 - 2005 she worked in the adult literacy/numeracy field as a teacher, program coordinator, regional support officer, and education consultant.

**Don’t miss the**

**12th Annual Northeast ASCD Affiliate Leading and Learning Conference**

**Educating the Whole Child, Every Child**

**December 4-6, 2008**

**Boston**

www.neascd.org
High School Redesign

The MASCD High School Redesign Task Force has been working for over a year to address the urgent need to make high schools more engaging and more successful in preparing all students for college, careers and global citizenship. The Task Force is comprised of educators, students, business representatives and policy makers. We invite your comments and suggestions and encourage you to submit examples of successful practices aligned with the draft framework, which is excerpted below. Go to www.mascd.org and click on HS Redesign Framework.

**DRAFT Framework for 21st Century Massachusetts High Schools**

**VISION**
All students are healthy, safe, engaged, supported, challenged
All students are prepared for lifelong learning and for success in college and careers
All students are prepared for global citizenship in a dynamic digital world.

**REALITY**
In Massachusetts high schools, too many students are dropping out, checking out, or coasting through, even in schools that are deemed successful. Close to 40% of high school graduates, outside of those enrolled in top-tier institutions, need to take remedial courses during their first year of college. This number increases at the community college level, where over 60% of students must take at least one remedial course. Of all students who enter college, only about half graduate with a bachelor’s degree in six years.

The prevailing high school model was developed to prepare students for a mostly agrarian 19th century economy. This model is no longer adequate to prepare students for a 21st century economy based on cognitive skills, knowledge, creativity and innovation. Achieving the vision requires a systemic approach to redesign, not just tinkering with learning time or grading policies or professional development.

The 21st Century Massachusetts Framework is based on the premise that each student will have access to intellectually engaging learning experiences in high school and be challenged and supported by adults. It is designed to provide a blueprint for practice and policy. Most importantly, it is designed to insure that each student envisions and is prepared for a future that includes continued learning.

*Achieving the vision requires a systemic approach to redesign, not just tinkering with learning time or grading policies or professional development.*

**FRAMEWORK**
(See www.mascd.org for more detail)

1. Personalized and Supportive Learning Cultures
2. Accountable, Skilled, and Knowledgeable Leaders
3. Collaborative, Empowered Educators Focused on Student Learning
4. Relevant, Challenging, and Engaging Curriculum
5. Research-based, Technology-enhanced Instruction and Assessment
Carmona and Holtz Named ASCD Emerging Leaders

MASCD is pleased to announce that Ruben Carmona and Peter Holtz have been selected as 2008 ASCD Emerging Leaders. Ruben is assistant principal, Bartlett Community Partnership School, Lowell, and Peter is 8th grade English language arts teacher, Ipswich Middle School. Both are members of the MASCD Board of Directors.

Each year since 2005, ASCD has chosen 14 new members for the Emerging Leader Program: educators who have been in the profession from 5 to 15 years, hold promise as ASCD leaders, and are committed to fulfilling leadership opportunities. “ASCD continues to be committed to engaging a diverse community and building capacity to improve learning, teaching, and leadership,” said ASCD Executive Director Gene R. Carter. “The Emerging Leaders Program equips new leaders to advance ASCD positions, strengthen ASCD’s voice for influencing policy and practice, and become involved in ASCD governance activities.”

Emerging Leaders participate in a mentorship program and other activities that include the ASCD Leadership for Effective Advocacy and Practice (LEAP) Institute, September 14-16, 2008, in Arlington, VA, which includes visits with legislators on Capitol Hill.
Join the Next Generation of School Administrators

Applications are now being accepted for the class of 2009 for the MSSAA-Teachers21-MASCD Leadership Licensure Programs. The LLP prepares principals, assistant principals, and supervisors/directors. The LLPS, offered in partnership with READS Collaborative, prepares superintendents/assistant superintendents. In this highly competitive program, students spent two weeks in the summer and one weekend a month learning about and immersed in effective instructional and organizational leadership. Candidates completed a 300 hour practicum and a professional portfolio which includes artifacts and reflections related to the Massachusetts Professional Standards for Administrators. The cohort model enables participants to develop important collegial skills and to benefit from the diverse backgrounds and perspectives represented in the group.

Both programs offer the option of a graduate degree. LLP students may earn a Masters in Organizational Management from Endicott College; LLP and LLPS students may earn a PH.D. from Lesley University. The LLP is held at MSSAA in Franklin; the LLPS takes place at READS Collaborative in Middleboro. Both programs begin with an evening orientation in June, followed by a week of classes in July and a week of classes in August. Thereafter, the program meets one weekend a month through May: Friday afternoon-evening and all day Saturday. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. For more information on the Leadership Licensure Programs, visit www.mascd.org.

MASCD Continues Efforts to Strengthen Educator Quality
State Embracing Comprehensive Approach

The Working Group for Educator Excellence is continuing to build momentum around a vision for transforming the educator workforce embodied in H451/S284, “An Act to Ensure Educator Excellence.” MASCD leaders Dennis Richards, Isa Zimmerman, Peter Badalament and Mary Forte Hayes are members of the Working Group. The bill establishes clear professional standards for educator knowledge and skills and creates accountability for educators to demonstrate mastery of these standards. It ensures that educators will have sufficient support as they move through preparation, licensure, induction, professional development, supervision and evaluation, and differentiated levels of instructional leadership throughout their careers. It also insures that school structures and culture promote continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

Acting Commissioner Jeff Nellhaus has recently sent a letter of support for H451/S284 to the Joint Education Committee, and Stand for Children has joined with MASCD and sixteen other associations in formally supporting this ambitious policy platform.

The first phase of implementation will include 15 pilot districts that represent a range of demographics and geographic locations. These pilot districts will engage all stakeholders in a comprehensive redesign of the seven personnel processes connected to educator quality that operate at the local level: recruitment and hiring, induction, professional development, supervision and evaluation, teacher leadership, school structure and school culture.

To learn more about this bill, please visit www.mascd.org and click on Educator Quality. Your voice of support for this urgent agenda is critical! Contact Joint Committee on Education Chair Patricia Haddad, Senator Robert Antonioni, Representative Lida Harkins, House Ways and Means Chair Robert DeLeo, House Ways and Means Vice Chair Marie St. Fleur, Senate Ways and Means Chair Steven Panagiotakos, and Senate Ways and Means Vice Chair Stephen Brewer.

Coming in June
Repeat of Classroom Walkthroughs Institute with Jerry Goldberg Teachers21
Registration for MASCD Events at www.mascd.org

MASCD Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Presenter/Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dine &amp; Discuss for Instructional Coaches</td>
<td>Pam Barry &amp; Ruben Carmona, Lowell</td>
<td>April 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Walkthroughs</td>
<td>Jerry Goldberg, Teachers, Watertown</td>
<td>June 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coming Soon

Online MASCD certificate program in instructional leadership for team leaders, grade level leaders, cluster leaders, study group leaders, department leaders. Watch your email for more news about this exciting program to develop essential skills for facilitating improved learning.

We are now accepting submissions for prospective publication in the fall 2008 issue of Perspectives, Educating the Whole Child.

Deadline for submissions is April 1, 2008.

Guiding questions in considering your contribution to this issue include:

- How do we insure that each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle?
- How do we insure that each student learns in an intellectually challenging environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults?
- How do we insure that each student is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community?
- How do we insure that each student has access to personalized learning and is supported by qualified, caring adults?
- How do we insure that each graduate is challenged by a well-balanced curriculum and is prepared for success in college or further study and for employment in a global environment?
- How do we overcome the obstacles to providing a whole child education for every child?

Interested authors are invited to submit a 1-2 paragraph proposal describing the intended focus of the article and how it addresses one or more of the focus questions, as well as a brief biographical statement, including the author’s related experience or expertise. Articles may range from 1000-1500 words and should: bring forth an essential question and the tensions and challenges within the topic, inform readers of new and useful ideas and/or practices, explore some of the obstacles, “forks in the road”/choice points, and questions that are raised in what you are trying to do to provoke, entice, and stimulate readers to continue the discussion beyond the article itself. Author’s Guidelines are sent upon acceptance of article proposals. Send all proposals or requests for a sample of the publication to: Walter McKenzie, MASCD Communications Director at wmckenzie@mascd.org.
MASSACHUSETTS

19C Oak Street
Wellesley, MA 02482

MASCD's strength is in its membership, so please keep your membership current. (Check the date above your name on the mailing label.) You may print a form from http://www.mascd.org or pay through the ASCD joint dues program. Thank you for your continued support. Volunteers are welcome and appreciated in all committees. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact any of the persons listed at top right.