

Title of Session: GPBS - 21st Century Skills

Moderator: Linda Ullah

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LindaU: Hi I'm Linda Ullah. I just took a new job with the New Tech Foundation. I'm passionate about pbl, and Global PBL in particular. Please introduce yourselves.

LindaU: and tell me why you are here this evening

ShayneTr: I'm a high-school art and computer teacher. I'm interested in collaboration and sharing, but I'm also concerned about safety issues.

LindaU: Thank you Shayne

LindaU: Terri, what about you?

TerriZ: I'm a high school English teacher in Alaska...and it's still afternoon here!

DavidWe: I'm one of the HelpDesk volunteers and I lead a math education and technology discussion in Tapped In. I'm in New Jersey

TerriZ: I collaborate with the world history teacher and a special ed teacher...I'm trying to convince more of them to use this resource.

LindaU: What do you know about 21st Century skills?

LindaU: Have you heard the term?

TerriZ: Yes.

LindaU: What does this mean to you?

ShayneTr: Not sure... is this related to various things happening in web 2.0?

LindaU thinks this is part of it.

TerriZ: Global economy...interdependence...increasing technology...and increasing gaps between technology haves and have nots.

LindaU: What skills do your students need to "get" to survive in the 21st Century?

TerriZ: Well, according to the state, passing the state exit exam oughta do it...

ShayneTr: Being comfortable with technology

LindaU: so where does exam passing fit into their lives 20-30 years from now?

TerriZ: To me, critical thinking, the ability to work in groups, understanding of other cultures.

LindaU: Now we're cooking.....

TerriZ: None of which are on the exam.

LindaU: What do you need to know about 21st century skills in order to plan curriculum and learning experiences for your students that will help them in life?

TerriZ: Teachers have to be comfortable with technology!

TerriZ got tired of having kids explain how computers work.

LindaU: Let's take a look at: <http://www.edutopia.org/modules/PBL/whypbl.php>

ShayneTr: Giving them opportunities to discuss, analyze, evaluate..

ShayneTr: UM... does this open in a new page? I'm new here, don't want to leave!

LindaU: This is the GLEF site on PBL.. with links to 21st Century Skills.. Explore some of the links.. SCANS. etc.

LindaU: Yes it should open a new page

LindaU: When you finish.. share what you think THE most important skill(s) you students need to learn are according to this information.

TerriZ: I like the order in which they're ranked with personal and social responsibility first.

LindaU: tell me more.. why?

TerriZ: Because we tend to narrow our focus to passing specific tests or completing a specific unit. It helps to keep your eyes on the larger goals.

ShayneTr: Critical thinking and creativity. I think that if kids are taught to think critically about the world around them, they will realize that they must take personal and social responsibility (I'm both a mother and a teacher).

TerriZ: Me, too.

LindaU: so where on those standardized tests to we test these skills?

ShayneTr: I agree with Terri about the tests... they often don't relate to real life.

LindaU: Good point

TerriZ: We don't test them. They're difficult to measure on a standardized test.

LindaU: Okay..let's look at
<http://www.techlearning.com/story/showArticle.php?articleID=15202090>

LindaU: Notice that this is not a new idea.

LindaU: What do you see as the greatest impediment to implementing a 21st Century Skill rich curriculum?

TerriZ: \$

LindaU: How so \$?

ShayneTr: I'd love to explore some of the "bigger ideas" but I believe that it involves a cross-curricular approach and many teachers in my school ignore me when I suggest collaboration. Oh yeah, and \$ (smile).

TerriZ: There has to be money to pay for inservice and collaboration...for technology resources...for time!

TerriZ: I agree. You have to have teacher buy in.

LindaU: Hmmm.. lack of cross-curricular teaching.. why is this?

DavidWe: Tapped In provides access to technology resources at reasonable costs (\$0)

TerriZ: Some personalities aren't as comfortable with the give and take of collaboration.

TerriZ: It IS a great site--but you still have to have the computers for students to use.

LindaU: good point Terri.. great uses for \$. How do we get adequate stable funding for schools that allows for collaboration time, professional development and the acquisition and upkeep of technology

TerriZ: We have a lot of computers, yes, and a LOT of demand for their time.

ShayneTr: The careers teacher shouted at me for helping students with resumes. Can you believe that? Sheesh.

TerriZ: I like the word "stable."

LindaU: If we are to promote collaboration in schools.. where should that start?

TerriZ: 90% of Alaska's overall economy is funded by OIL.

DavidWe: right

LindaU: How do we promote the concept of collaboration.. again NOT a new concept.

TerriZ: You'd think that they'd find a way to stabilize the oil profits to fund schools, hospitals, police, etc.

DavidWe: Not with the price of oil rocketing all over the place

LindaU: hmmm.. good point, Terri.

ShayneTr: There can be cheap solutions... we started with donated computers, I use open source programs.

LindaU: Where in Alaska are you?

DavidWe: Do you have some people to support you with that, Shayne?

TerriZ: Soldotna...south of Anchorage on the Kenai Peninsula.

TerriZ: Do you have a teaching partner?

LindaU: There is a New Tech High in Anchorage.. I know the principal.. Mark Standley.. You might want to see if you can visit the school.

TerriZ: I've been there!

LindaU: What did you think of it?

ShayneTr: I'm in Toronto, by the way. My 18-year-old son takes computers off the streets, takes out the good parts

TerriZ: Their "old" principal is helping with rubrics and planning for schools down here.

DavidWe: Good for him, Shayne

LindaU loves Toronto.. My son went to Uof T

ShayneTr: So did I

LindaU: Fantastic.

TerriZ: Does your son help cannibalize "new" computers?

LindaU: my son is now at Ariz State.. he's an archeologist.. but back to topic.

TerriZ: Access to computers is critical. A self-chosen collaborator is a good next step. Administrative support is crucial.

ShayneTr: I find that the administration is my biggest problem - they are worried about safety.

DavidWe: Administrators have to be part of the conversation - in my experience

LindaU: Listen to the first 10 minutes of this podcast (it's about 1/2 hour long.. so stop after 10 minutes.. for now.. you can come back to it later..

<http://nlcommunities.com/podcasts/1798/blc06/entry84463.aspx>

TerriZ: Oh! Oh! May I say that this site conforms to all the internet safety and protocol established by my district?

LindaU: It can play in the background while we chat if you'd like.

LindaU: You can skip the intro if you'd like....

ShayneTr: We had issues with MySpace last year, now it is Facebook. I thought about actually using Facebook for chatting about art or computer issues. The students seem to prefer to use the internet as a way of chatting.

DavidWe imagines high school students will use almost any media for chatting

LindaU: Let me know if you can multitask after you get the podcast going?

ShayneTr: The podcast is loading... and yes I can multitask!

ShayneTr: Alan November! I love him. I've used his "Teaching Zach to Think" lesson plan.

TerriZ: I cannot click on the link and get it to come up...and I'm apparently typing in the wrong address. I keep getting an error message.

LindaU: good.. I'll let it get loaded for you.. then I'll have you look at one of the sites Bob Pearlman will reference near the beginning.

DavidWe: Wow, Bob Pearlman! Have you seen him recently, Linda?

LindaU: Saw him last week.. He got me this new job last summer.

DavidWe: Wow!

LindaU: He'll reference the chart on P 5 of this PDF:

http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/downloads/P21_Report.pdf

LindaU gives people time to open the PDF and listen to a bit of the podcast..

ShayneTr: Oops, when I clicked on the chart link, I left the podcast.

DavidWe: That can happen sometimes, Shayne

DavidWe: You may want to open another browser window

ShayneTr: Life skills... I don't think that was mentioned. (I'm listening again)

LindaU: whew--

ShayneTr: I think, since I'm now hearing about people skills, that technology helps those that have difficulty talking in person. I know a whole group of teens (including one of my own) who prefer MSN/Facebook to communicate, rather than talking on the phone.

LindaU: The Partnership for 21st Century Learning web site is:

http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=253&Itemid=64

LindaU: Actually-- I prefer chatting online and email to calling someone.. It seems less invasive...

ShayneTr: When kids do group work, if you use wikis, etc., you can see what others have contributed. Can make assessment easier.

BJB2: I'm more comfortable with text chat also

TerriZ: Agreed. It doesn't intrude on your time...you can answer at your convenience.

LindaU: One of my observations at New TEch High in Napa.. is that kids multi-task well..

DavidWe thinks anyone under the age of 25 is pretty good at multi-tasking these days

LindaU: New Tech allows IPods, cell phones, etc.. (usually banned at many high schools)

ShayneTr: I prefer text chat also, it can give you a chance to formulate what you are going to say.

TerriZ: And the unexpected result in my classes is that "remedial" kids are often more adept at navigating chats, etc. than my honors kids.

LindaU: The students work from project - briefcases that provide good scaffolding.. etc.. and really do take ownership for their own learning.

TerriZ smiles.

LindaU: Teachers still to the teacher thing... but within the context of the project.

TerriZ: How are students chosen for your school?

ShayneTr: What are project - briefcases?

DavidWe: Tell a little about the "Kids Who Know and Can Do" conference, Linda

LindaU: It is a file with all the information the students need to do the project. there are documents that explain the project, the rubrics, the potential resources.. the lectures, the deliverables. the time line --project calendar.. etc.

LindaU: It's been awhile since that conference..

DavidWe smiles

LindaU: Last one was in Atlanta a few years ago..

LindaU: It was a partnership with the now defunct Autodesk Foundation's PBL conference and Co-nect

DavidWe nods

ShayneTr: Thanks for the explanation. I'm interested in hearing about the conference, too.

LindaU: Bob was director of the Autodesk foundation before it went away

DavidWe had a wonderful meeting with Bob and some folks in San Rafael in 1999

LindaU: One more site to look at: I don't think I gave you this one yet.

LindaU: <http://www.techlearning.com/story/showArticle.php?articleID=15202090>

LindaU: I wanted to point out a paragraph about 1/2 way down the page that begins: ISTE President Jan Van Dam.....

DavidWe ABSOLUTELY agrees with that statement

LindaU: It has to do with NCLB

LindaU: why David..?

TerriZ: Talk about multi-tasking! I've been listening to a podcast, pulling up websites and emailing the addresses to my social studies teaching partner at the same time! "Look at this one, Rob!"

LindaU: Yeay Terri!

BJB2 chuckles

LindaU: You win the multi-tasking award... You're ready for the 21st Century

DavidWe: I think many schools (in PA, NJ, NY) are consumed with NCLB requirements and have put on hold a lot of interest and staff development for technology

LindaU: Not just these three states.

TerriZ: In some ways I'd love to see the federal government come in, take over, and teach in some of these schools...especially in the Bush!

ShayneTr: I don't know much about NCLB because I'm in Canada.

LindaU giggles.

LindaU: True.. Do you have high stakes testing in Canada?

LindaU: PBL was really picking up steam here in the U.S. until NCLB

ShayneTr: I'm not sure what you mean by that? We do have periodic standardized tests.

TerriZ: The federal officials are always shocked at conditions in Alaska rural communities...without roads or septic or transportation other than snowmachines and planes.

LindaU: In North Carolina.. they test the kids at the end of EACH SEMESTER.

TerriZ: Uff da. (I'm part Norweigan.)

DavidWe smiles

TerriZ: How much time does high-stakes testing take out of your year?

LindaU: From Christmas til the end of Jan.. is drill and kill time.

TerriZ: How about the actual test?

LindaU: Teachers are rated A, B, C.. by how their students do..

DavidWe: At your school they do that, Linda?

LindaU: I'm just learning about this since I'm moving to NC..

TerriZ: You have to be kidding, but I assume you're not.

LindaU: Even our new New TechHighs have to do this since they are public schools....

TerriZ: Rated according to how kids did or how they improved?

ShayneTr: Don't they look at demographics? This sounds very bizarre to me.

LindaU: These are new schools (1st year.) and we are working with them on alternatives to Drill and Kill through PBL.

LindaU agrees with bizarre.

LindaU: How they improve.

LindaU: It puts tremendous pressure on the teachers.

TerriZ: Oh, once again I've gotten caught up in a too fascinating discussion...I have to go get my 7th grader from volleyball practice. Thank you for letting me take part!

LindaU: Results from our new schools has been good.

LindaU: That's good news for PBL

TerriZ smiles and waves goodbye.

TerriZ left the room (signed off).

LindaU: Okay.. it's my lead in to:

http://www.exhibithall.org/magazine/ed1article.php?id=Art_1546&issue=jun_06

ShayneTr: The last article talks about assessment. I've been looking at Moodle which offers different options.

LindaU: Moodle is a great tool.

LindaU: Assessment is key! It is something that we have not done well---along with the PR that comes with being able to articulate our assessment strategies and proving our successes.

LindaU: The last link is another Bob Pearlman article -- It's a good outline of PBL and 21st Century Skills and how PBL supports these skills.

DavidWe: cool

ShayneTr: That was an interesting article. I've been reading a book called "Teaching Meaning in Art Making" by Sydney Walker. He talks about teaching the "big" ideas.

ShayneTr: What's the link

DavidWe has one thing to share, if he can

BJB2: A reminder that the next GPBL discussion is February 22 at 9pm EST/6pm PST

LindaU:

http://www.exhibithall.org/magazine/ed1/article.php?id=Art_1546&issue=jun_06

ShayneTr: What would you like to share, David?

DavidWe: Has anyone heard of Rafe Esquith (5th grade teacher in LA) (other than BJ)?

LindaU: One more article to look at before we go:

http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=253&Itemid=64

ShayneTr: "There are no Shortcuts"

DavidWe: He's written a book, "Teach Like Your Hair's On Fire"

DavidWe: newer book, Shayne

LindaU: I just learned about that book today...

DavidWe: Heard him and some of his students on Wednesday in NYC

DavidWe: Students were reciting a lot of Shakespeare - fantastic

DavidWe: <http://www.hobartshakespeareans.org/>

DavidWe: very inspiring

DavidWe: Big teacher audience, too

LindaU: Thank you all...

ShayneTr: I'll look up the book. Thanks!

DavidWe . o O (that's all)

DavidWe: Thanks, Linda

BJB2: thanks, Linda!

ShayneTr: Thank you, too, Linda. Gotta take out the vegetarian haggis now. Happy Robbie Burns Day.

DavidWe: ???

DavidWe . o O (vegetarian haggis?)

ShayneTr: My hubbie plays bagpipes. And yes, it is kosher (he's religious and veggie and very interesting)

DavidWe smiles

LindaU: <http://www.thelavinagency.com/college/enewsnovember2006.html> for info on the book

DavidWe: Wow!

ShayneTr: Thanks again, Linda

ShayneTr: Bye!

LindaU: Thank you all...

DavidWe: Bye, Shayne. Nice to meet you