



Future of the Profession: A New Learning Ecology for Teachers and Students

September 17, 2010 ♦ 8:30 am – 11:30 am
Hyatt Regency, Columbia B
400 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington, DC

Briefing Summary

On September 17, 2010, more than 125 educators, union officials, policymakers, and other key stakeholders gathered in Washington, DC to attend a forum about the role of technology in America's education system in reshaping the school learning environments and expectations for the teaching profession. The event was held to create discussion around three emerging realities facing the nation: (1) the funding crisis; (2) the teacher shortage; and (3) the integration of new technologies.

Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and former Governor of West Virginia, opened the event by addressing the importance of focusing on the 70 percent of Americans unaware of the disparities and problems in schools; for America's economic wellbeing, society has to stay current and globally aware of many emergent realities facing our nation. Governor Wise defined the funding crisis, the teacher shortage, and new technologies as an effort to express interest in creating new outlets for integrating technology into the nation's school system. To initiate the discussion, Governor Wise posed the question: How does our nation make online learning effective for students and teachers?

Michael Horn, executive director of education and cofounder of the Innosite Institute, introduced and summarized his recently released book, *Disrupting Class: How Disruptive Innovation will Change the Way the World Learns*. Three key points from Mr. Horn's presentation included:

- **The main force in education is led by disruptive innovation.** This is a transformation of society by offering products or services that are characterized by affordability, accessibility, and convenience. Examples of disruptive learning in education are increased use of community colleges and online learning. By 2019, 50 percent of high school classes will be offered online.
- **Federal policy should address opportunities to shift the structure of education to a modular system to ensure individualization in a student's education is less expensive.** In order to identify students' learning needs, expenditures for individualizing an education plan for a student cost two to three times average the per pupil rate with the nation's current infrastructure in education. Disruptive innovation points toward the idea in education that society needs different learning strategies at different developmental

periods in our lives. Conflicting mandates in education—what we must teach versus what we must learn—is very interdependent in infrastructure, resulting in standardization as a solution for our nation’s education system.

- **Federal policy should adopt strategies for online learning in high school education to create easier access to advanced placement classes, reduce the high school dropout rate, and facilitate teacher effectiveness.** With an online system, schools can overcome the time variable and focus more on whether the student has actually mastered the skill. Teacher roles will shift to mentors, entrepreneurs, and team teachers.

Panel 1: Teacher Solutions 2030: What We Must Do Now and in the Future

Barnett Berry, Founder and President, Center for Teaching Quality

Jennifer Barnett, Technology Integration Specialist, Winterboro High School (Alpine, AL)

Carrie Kamm, Mentor-Resident Coach, Academy for Urban School Leadership (Chicago, IL)

Jose Vilson, Math Coach and Educator, Inwood IS 52 (New York, NY)

Dr. Berry presented four emergent realities that will create a profound and provocative future for our education:

1. transformed learning ecology for students and teachers
2. seamless connections in and out of cyberspace
3. differentiated professional pathways
4. “teacherpreneurism”

He then noted six leavers for change:

1. public engagement
2. school finance
3. teacher education and licensing
4. cultivating working conditions
5. reframing accountability
6. using unions as professional guilds

Dr. Berry noted three key areas to effectively influence federal policy:

1. National Board for Professional Teaching Standards should revamp assessments.
2. Government officials should close the loop holes in who enters the teaching field.
3. Unions should insist members meet performance standards and advance professional teaching goals.

Each panelist shared individual examples to identify their views on the transformation of federal education policy. Ms. Barnett described her experiences by defining the transformation in the way students can learn with the use of technology in a school system. She described how technology standards serve as the means to customize and modify instruction in response to student learning, not as an end in and of itself. Dr. Kamm talked about the importance of the

relationship between teachers and students. She noted that the teacher and student relationship needs to stay “rooted in care” with the use of online systems in order to regulate academic success.

Mr. Vilson expressed the importance of community involvement paired with social media outlets within local schools systems to ensure that each student receives a quality education from effective teachers. He concluded by saying that the school should be very reflective of what happens in the community.

The panelists agreed that s can be more effective with increased use of technology to create involvement in and outside the classroom. Panel 1 also agreed that teacher preparation and training with new technologies in the classroom would help many teachers become more effective in using the technology in the classroom.

Panel 2: Federal Policy Implications

Gov. Bob Wise, President, Alliance for Excellent Education

Dr. Joseph Aguerrebere, President and CEO, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Ms. Karen Cator, Director of the Office of Education Technology, U.S. Department of Education

Ms. Antonia Cortese, Secretary-Treasurer, American Federation of Teachers

Mr. Segun Eubanks, Director of Teacher Quality, National Education Association.

Governor Wise described this hybrid connection between teaching and technology: online learning, virtual schools, special populations, over time, will be used primary as a hybrid between teaching and technology. The product of our education system is not what we currently desire because there is a demand for many more outcomes than we actively produce. One initiative to solve the need for a high-quality, cost-effective, and accessible education is the online-learning initiative.

- **Taking advantage of a technology based education.** Dr. Aguerrebere shared concerns about how society is missing the part on how to finance technological advancements in the school systems. He noted that the current structure for funding dictates ratios for students, teachers, and administrators. Dr. Aguerrebere suggested federal policy use a new financial organization method in education so teachers can have time to work more effectively inside and outside of schools. Ms. Cortese agreed that alternative teaching strategies are important in the technology transition.
- **The role of society in education and technology.** Ms. Cator discussed how society has access to technology and the proliferation of social networks. She noted that, as society manages to transition to the digital classroom, it needs to think carefully about the tools needed to ensure a successful transition. Ms. Cator expressed the importance of a environment that can be customized with online learning and technology.

- **Tools for transition into a digital classroom.** Ms. Cortese stated that America shies shields away from the “what” in education, and noted that the materials used in schools have to be both challenging and solvable. She shared that communities need wrap-around services to make sure students are equipped with support in the classroom and at home. Ms. Cortese noted that the union’s role will be important to collaborate with teachers to ensure continued value in their profession.
- **Meeting the needs of the next generation of students.** Mr. Eubanks expressed that teaching a learning process is inherently a human interaction process, and the challenge is how we take the human interaction combined with technological innovations to a form and not override the human interactions. Mr. Eubanks noted that *Teaching 2030* provides good ideas of union roles of technology and education in place for identifying professionalism, teacher control over the governing system, and the union’s influence in policy.

Question and Answer Period

Panelists answered questions from the audience.

Q: A teacher asked: What is your take on the community college shutting down all sources of social media to get students to focus? (referring to news story on 9/17/2010)

A: Panelists agreed that schools need to recognize there are many ways to facilitate social media in the classroom to compete with the technological and motivational needs of the students. The panelists also agreed that technology can be used to facilitate learning and improve a student’s level of achievement.

Q: A representative from *Education Daily* asked: What questions do you have about the integration of content and technology? How do you view professional development in this integration of technology?

A: Ms. Barnett replied that there is not a particular way to achieve the integration of content and technology. She continued by saying that society needs to figure out how students can find the information meaningful in their life. Ms. Kamm added that our students are already learning from technology in their everyday lives. She said a role of teachers is to get up to speed on the current venues students use to learn and communicate.

Q: How do we prepare educators to want the roles of understanding and modifying curriculum in a university’s education program?

A: Panel members agreed that universities should push to raise credentials for standards in schools of education to face issues of teaching as a profession.

Q: CCCSO is discussing new standards of teaching practice. Do you have three core skills or know ledges that should drive the preparation forward?

A: Panelists agreed that society should think about how to select new teacher entrants and effectively continue with professional development.