

Preparing Tomorrow's Leaders Today



A publication for employees of the St. Clair County School System
January 19, 2010

SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

EDUCATING DIGITAL NATIVES

John Palfrey, Harvard Law Professor, new book, *Born Digital*, examines the lives of digital natives. The first generation of "Digital Natives"- those born after 1980 into a digital, online world-now influences everything from pop culture to politics, and much research suggest that this generation of young students thinks, works, and learns in a very different way from previous generations. I found his book interesting in how he describes the stages digital natives go through and the implications for K12 schools...

- ◇ "The stages are important and fast-changing areas... The first step is "grazing". Instead of sitting down every morning to read the paper, digital natives may go through the day absorbing information via a Yahoo reader, RSS feed, Facebook, etc.
- ◇ A subset will take the second step, the "deep dive," where they are looking for further analysis by clicking on a hypertext link, hearing a podcast, or seeing what their friends think. This stage is like actually reading a newspaper article instead of just the headline.
- ◇ The third step is the most engaged, the "feedback loop," here they engage the information on a deeper level, critique it and share it by posting it in their Facebook profile or on Twitter.

The fear is that students will only use these tools to go through the first or second step. Students getting the most educational benefit and absorbing the most information are going through all three steps."

Professor Palfrey was asked: "**Should this three-step process be replicated in schools, putting the focus on this methodology and not on the technology itself?**"

He stated: "I think that's crucial when we think about technology. The technology should not dictate to us how we use it. We should instead ask the question: 'What do we want to accomplish in the classroom?' and 'Can this technology help us?' If so, we should use it. *The schools that figure out how technology informs pedagogy are going to have the most success.*"

We have to prepare our students for the 21st century. It is important for educators to make parallel changes in order to fulfill its mission in society, namely the preparation of students for the world beyond the classroom. Therefore, the school system must understand and embrace the 21st century skills within the context of rigorous academic standard.



Leadership

"What does it take to gain the focus required to become a truly effective leader?"

The keys are **Priorities** and **Concentration**. A leader who knows his priorities but lacks concentration, knows what to do, but never gets it done. A leader with concentration but no priorities has excellence without progress. **But when leaders harness both, they gain the potential to achieve great things.**

To get back on track with your focus, work on yourself, work on your priorities, work in your strengths, and work with your colleagues... You can't be effective alone." John Maxwell

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LEADERS

National Board Certified Teacher-2009

Ms. Leslie Holiday –MES
Ms. Mary Morrow-SSCHS
Ms. Amberlyn Scott - SES
Mr. Jim Wilder– OIS

St. Clair County Teacher of the Year 2009 Winners

Mr. Jim Wilder– Elementary Division
Mr. Fitz Yarbrough– Secondary Division

St. Clair County Teacher of the Year Candidates

Mr. Lance Cisco-MES
Mr. Brandon Easterwood– OMS
Ms. Bridgette Harrell– MMS
Ms. Judy Metcalf– AMS
Mr. Tommy Smitherman-MJHS
Ms. Leann Vann-SJHS
Mr. Jim Wilder-OIS
Ms. Sue Wood-OES
Mr. Fitz Yarbrough-AHS



St. Clair County School District's Vision...
"Preparing Tomorrow's Leaders Today."

