Schools Without Borders
The Global Partnership Project

Innovation
FALL 2010

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I appreciate the work NEP does and the help it provides to educators and educational leaders.”

Laine Obando, Teacher
Lake County Public Schools, Florida
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Earth as seen from the International Space Station.
Photo by NASA

Innovation Staff
Cheyenne Antoine
Anindeeta Azreen
Claudio Beckford
Regina Humphrey

CAAS Advisors:
Amiee Mateo
Diane Varano

NEP Advisors:
Bridget Cotner
Mark A. Thompson

Innovation Magazine is produced at the Cultural Academy for the Arts & Sciences
5800 Tilden Avenue, Suite 351
Brooklyn, NY 11203

aazreen@neponline.org

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Changes of Global Proportions

by Mark A. Thompson
Director, National Educator Program
Denver, Colorado USA

The way NEP does business has changed. Permanently.

It began last year with NEP’s historic presentation in Great Britain on the 5 Keys for Successful Career Academies. Not only was it NEP’s first appearance overseas, but it marked a historic event in the year of career academies’ fortieth anniversary, that the concept of career academies was exported to other nations.

This year, NEP’s annual SLC Success Conference became the SLC International Conference. Twenty-one states attended, but so did a total of four nations.

For the first time in our history, one of our conference partners was a foreign government. (Croatia) And you didn’t have to listen long before you heard accents among the presenters from other continents. At our 2011 conference, you can expect an increase in participating nations to seven. In addition, several exciting announcements about partnerships and projects between NEP and international agencies are just around the corner!

That is why this issue of Innovation focuses on “Schools Without Borders.” Our world is shrinking quickly, and the opportunities for more support and greater connections with brother and sister educators in other lands is increasing exponentially. We hope that the information contained in this issue will prompt an exploration of the learning opportunities for both your faculty and your students, through the NEPwork and others. NEP offers a world of opportunities for you. Enjoy!
Connecting Students Across
A Global Partner

Students in the schools of today, anywhere in the world, are growing up in an ever-increasingly global environment. In 2008, leaders from the District School Board of Pasco County, Florida, in the United States, approached ISC about the possibility of partnering with schools in other parts of the world. The ISC contacted school district leaders from Sweden and other countries, with a focus of helping students become global citizens.

That same year, leaders were identified from two school districts to work as partners with Pasco County Schools. These leaders invited a private school in Tampa, Florida, the Independent Day School - Corbett Campus (IDS) to participate in the initiative.

Initially, a leader was selected from each school district as a member of a GPP leadership team, which was comprised of Karolyn Snyder, Ed.D., President, The International School Connection, Inc., and John I. Mann, Ed.D., Director of Communications & Leadership Development, Pasco County Schools, Florida.

We called ourselves the PSN International Leadership Team, which is short for the Partnership for School Network International Leadership Team. This team, made up of leaders from both school districts, was responsible for driving the success of the eleven school partnership teams (33 total schools). We hope our story will encourage school leaders to adapt themselves to 21st century living and working conditions.

Karolyn J. Snyder, Ed.D.
President, The International School Connection, Inc.
United States

John I. Mann, Ed.D.
Director of Communications & Leadership Development
Pasco County Schools, Florida
United States
Cultures and Time Zones: ship Project (GPP)

Emma Johnson  
GPP Project Coordinator  
Sweden

Mark Xing  
GPP Project Coordinator  
Nanshan District in Shenzhen  
China

expanding global environment where the local cultures of living and learning are changing forever.

ached the International School Connection, Inc. (ISC) for assistance in forming learning partnerships China to explore their interest in a three-continent, three-school district partnership for interested

unity: Nanshan District in Shenzhen China and Stockholm City Schools in Sweden. Pasco County also join the project. The Headmaster at IDS, Dr. Joyce Burick Swarzman, is also a member of the ISC

ch was facilitated by the ISC: John Mann, Mark Xing, Cecilia Goransson, and later Emma Johnson Pasco, Stockholm and Nanshan, and met regularly on Skype to create the design for, and facilitate rage others who are venturing into the global arena with students to understand dynamic forms of
Global Partnership, continued from p. 7

Design of the GPP Project

During the last several decades, and most recently with the emergence of personal digital communication systems, people young and old have been reaching across the world to learn, make friends, explore, and work together. This GPP project was intended to engage students in friendship-building activities where they would also learn about other cultures and their customs. Eventually they would work together in digital environments to study a global issue that was important to them locally. The premise of the project was that students needed to become global citizens during their school years. The GPP project was a beginning effort to serve that purpose.

The International School Connection has as its mission to help school and district leaders develop their schools as Global Learning Centers, where students become global citizens over time. Hence, “preparing global citizens” became the overarching purpose of the GPP. To help schools on their journey, we used the ISC Global Learning Center Benchmarks, which served as guideposts for the GPP school development project.

On this global journey for students, most schools as living organizations will accommodate to the changing realities of the time, although to varying degrees and success rates. We know that school work cultures influence the success of innovations, so GPP partnership teams would necessarily be adapting their school work cultures while adapting to the digital learning environments for students. The student and the organization are in a symbiotic relationship in this GPP pilot.

Global Learning Project Possibilities

To guide the school partnership teams in search of a global learning project for their students, we provided a list of current global challenges for the human community, and suggested that this list be used as a guide to stimulate their partnership dialogue, exploration, and decisions.

- New Global Forms of Work
- Social Networking and Youth Culture
- Global Financial Conditions
- Developing Technology
- New Years and annual holidays
- Local cultures, teens, family life
- Safe Water and Sanitation
- World Hunger and Poverty
- Regional Cultures
- Eastern and Western Religions
- The Environment
- The Influence of Media
- Genocide in Darfur
- Terrorism and Challenges in the Middle East
- Domestic Violence
- Crime and the Systems of Justice
- Merging Eastern & Western Values

To guide our learning journey, and the changes that were required, we grounded our work in six lessons that have been drawn from Chaos Theory in the sciences, called The Chaos Theory of Change (*Snyder, Acker-Hocevar, Snyder, 2008). This natural approach to change assumes six features of any natural development over time, and in this case the focus is on change in schools. The essence of each feature is grounded in the modern sciences of Systems Thinking, Chaos Theory, and Complexity Theory.


1)Schools recognize and learn about the dramatic changes within the local and the global environments of living.

2)New information about these changes provides disequilibrium for educators, which is the source of new professional learning for school development.

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3) The energy for change initiatives is built through partnerships and networks, which include local and international connections.

4) Encouragement, support, and resources are given to those developing the innovation team.

5) Self-organization emerges as professionals develop new systems that adapt to changing local and global environment.

6) Shedding outdates programs and institutionalizing more adaptive programs are facilitated by the entire support system.

Listen now to the stories from the three school district GPP leaders, for each represents different perspectives, yet with many common threads. What can we learn from their stories and perspectives?

“The design for virtual working was new, and the requirement of some degree of expertise in English presented many challenges.”

John Mann
United States

For the last five years, the District School Board of Pasco County has worked with Karolyn Snyder to develop, offer, and refine a new one year training program, with a trainer training program, for all school district and school based leaders, called: Leadership for Sustainable School/District Development (LSSD). This program is grounded in current local and global realities of living in the 21st century, which include media and digital environments. Eventually leaders came to understand their new school challenges of preparing students as global citizens, and requested assistance in forming partnerships with schools around the world. This drive for school partners led to the birth of the Global Partnership Project (GPP), working with the International School Connection (ISC). A Pasco School District’s global vision for schools and students drove the design of the project.

We requested the ISC to locate two other major school districts on different continents to work with us in a pilot project, which we called GPP 1. Connections were made with two school districts in the ISC network: Nanshan District in Shenzhen China, and Stockholm City schools in Stockholm Sweden.

For the first few months, leaders from each school district worked together on SKYPE, with assistance from the ISC, to design the parameters of the school partnership teams and their work. Once the framework was agreed upon, we organized the volunteer schools into 11 partnership teams, with each team having a school from Pasco, Nanshan and Stockholm. We launched the GPP pilot with a seminar for Pasco GPP school teams that provided the design of the project and introduced them to their partners in China and Sweden. Excitement was in the air!

A very important feature of the pilot was the creation of an asynchronous virtual work site, for all 33 GPP pilot schools. Pasco County schools had recently begun to work in a MOODLE environment with classroom teachers, and because of its success the MOODLE free, open-source virtual learning environment was selected for designing a GPP virtual space for Pasco’s 11 school partnership teams. In recognition of the flexible, asynchronous nature of the system, Pasco branded its VLE with the acronym LEARN – Learn Everything Anywhere Right Now. It gave the schools in all GPP school districts a safe place for students and teachers to post discussions and exchange a variety of text and graphics files.

In MOODLE, each partnership team had its own work space for communication and posting of documents, videos and photos, while a public area was created for all partnership teams to view the work of other teams. Many challenges emerged with our international teams for working in MOODLE; the design for virtual working was new, and the requirement of some degree of expertise in English presented many challenges. There were also issues of band width strength as well as the numbers of computers for student use. The District media and technology leaders became our partners throughout the project, making continuous adjustments to support partnership communications across the school districts.

One of the best strategies that emerged was to train the tech specialist in each Pasco GPP school in the new GPP MOODLE site design and function. Their task was to become the partnership team’s primary MOODLE resource. This strategy helped teachers and students eventually to function well while communicating with their partners, and even sharing videos and other documents. Each of the pilot schools in China and Sweden also had a tech resource specialist to help their local team. In addition to the asynchronous work environment within MOODLE, we observed that Skype (http://www.skype.com) and ooVoo (http://oovoo.com) eventually became preferred methods for partnership communications.

An important feature of the GPP project, which eventually was used by both Nanshan District and Stockholm City, was the three scheduled full day seminars for the Pasco GPP school teams. For these meetings we worked with the ISC on new concepts about...
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support systems for everyone, after which many problems were addressed for all GPP teams. The local group of GPP pilot schools became a strong network during the project, in which they explored options together. These regular meetings became a vital process to global school learning and partnerships. This time together enabled educators to share their progress with their partners, and to dialogue about the challenges they faced in providing resources to each other. We gathered this pilot group together three times for formal seminars to give new information, learn from them about their successes and challenges, and to consider difficulties they presented for our school district and project.

We viewed this GPP pilot as a journey to explore a new form of school learning, one that connected students and their peers with others around the world. The tech specialists evolved as leaders for GPP teams in their school, while working with their partners across the oceans. Eventually all three partnering school districts held regular seminars for GPP teams as the district support system. We also shared documents with Nanshan and Stockholm that we produced for our local teams, where they were translated into Swedish and Chinese, and adapted for local use.

Changes in Pasco Schools

Schools throughout the District changed in many different ways because of their participation in the GPP. Participation in the project fostered accommodation to the new learning resource needs of students, and for working patterns with educators in their partnership schools.

Voices from Pasco Teachers:
“Skype has had the biggest impact. On MOODLE, students shared Power Points and podcasts with their partner schools.”

“MOODLE was indispensable, for it allowed us to connect with our partners in China, who are 13 hours ahead of us, and have discussions on our own time tables.”

“The practically limitless discussion could not have taken place without MOODLE. Skype and ooVoo were also important communication tools for our teachers.”

“MOODLE provided a secure location for students and teachers to communicate. Students from other countries posted when the time was convenient. Skype was useful for teachers, but the time difference was difficult for students.”

The GPP Learning Program

The first tier of activities in which schools engaged was titled: “Getting to Know You,” and “Getting to Know Your School and Community”. Through these activities, teachers and students came to know each other and become aware of their cultural similarities and differences. Schools involved in the GPP became more positive and happier learning environments because of the excitement about their new friends on two other continents.

During the second tier of activities, each partnership team worked together across time zones and languages to create a global learning project that was of mutual interest to teachers and students. The framework for the GPP pilot was a global learning center school, using the ISC’s Global Benchmarks in their everyday work. The 21st Century Skills from the Partnership for 21st Century (www.21stcenturyskills.org) took on new meaning when coupled with the Global Benchmarks. As Jackie Halaw identified in her video, Three Steps for 21st Century Learning (http://teacherhack.blogspot.com), student success hinges upon their ability to collaborate, compete and cooperate with their global peers. These cross-school projects fostered an atmosphere of academic opportunities coupled with human interaction.

Global Learning Projects

Each partnership team, including students, designed a common global learning project using the list mentioned earlier as a guide.

Listen to the voices of Pasco Teachers:
“In the beginning we focused on ‘getting to know you’ and then decided to focus student learning on ecology, water issues, holiday traditions, and literature.”

“Our students enjoyed working with students in China and Sweden on our Recycling Project, and in the process developed relationships and learned about their culture.”

“We were all connected on the global issue of recycling. We worked with reading, research, writing, math, science, social studies, and technology, connecting the curriculum around the global issue.”

“Our students focused on instrumental and vocal music from China, including classical and folk styles of music.”

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Impact of the GPP Project

The effect of this global learning project on teachers and students is broad, and is stimulating a new kind of schooling, one that prepares students as successful and competent global citizens.

Listen to Pasco Teacher Voices:

“The general impact of the GPP project is a greater awareness about global education and the importance of connecting our students with other students world-wide. They learned that students in other countries were just like themselves: the same issues, concerns, thoughts and ideas about life regardless of nationality.”

“Teaching our students to become global citizens has helped me to become a better global citizen myself.”

“The GPP project has generated a better understanding of China and its people, and has nurtured a global interest in my students to learn about music and cultures all over the world.”

“There has been an expansion of my students’ world-view, and a reduction in the cross-cultural stereotypes”

“Although the GPP project timeframe has finished for us, my students are still maintaining an Academic relationship with their new friends in Sweden and China.”

“The GPP project exposed students to a new world.”

Conclusion

Networking principals, teachers, tech specialists and their students around the world through emerging and converging technologies is likely to become commonplace in the future. As digital natives, Pasco students who are born into a point-and-click world, will feel more at ease now having a lesson or videoconference with someone across the ocean. As stated by Jenny Borders, a 7th and 8th grade Language Arts teacher at Pasco Middle School: “The most important outcomes of the global project came from students learning to collaborate and work in the same ways that they will encounter in the work place,” Rick Card, a 3rd grade teacher at Mittye P. Locke Elementary School, observed: “Our students have been using technology to develop and foster new relationships with students in China and Sweden”. Susan Berryman, a 2nd grade teacher at Locke expressed it best when she said, “The Global Partnership Project has opened my students’ eyes, hearts and minds to a new world, and because of that, they will never be the same.” As may be evident, Pasco County educators have learned many lessons from the first GPP experience.

Emma Johnson
Swedene

Stockholm City’s purpose in joining the GPP project was to help students acquire key competencies for lifelong learning, such as communication in foreign languages, digital competence, and cultural awareness and expression. We participated as a member of the GPP Leadership Team, the PSN, to define the GPP purpose, parameters, and processes for schools to link with their international partner. We also wanted to provide support for their success by working both with the PSN and locally with our schools. Initially nine Stockholm City schools partnered with schools in Nanshan China and Pasco County Florida, USA. As the project developed, more schools wanted to participate, and so two additional partnerships were formed.

Eventually a project coordinator was named for the GPP, who assumed responsibility for the success of the GPP project in Stockholm schools. Each GPP school was visited in the beginning of the project and presented with the purpose

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Global Learning Center Benchmarks

The Global Learning Environment for Students

1. The curriculum provides opportunities to learn about local & global forces that influence change.
2. The School as a growing system has a vision and a plan to provide opportunities to connect with the Global Community & its dynamic forces.
3. Educators participate in professional development activity in a global networked environment to promote learning.
4. Partnerships with local, regional, and other global businesses enhance the direction of school development.
5. The School annually shows evidence of improving or sustaining student performance levels, using multi local, regional, or international measures.

Preparation for Success in a Global Environment

6. Current knowledge about human learning guides learning practices throughout the school.
7. International projects or programs are included in local curriculum to promote global learning for all students.
8. Students are developing capacities for success in the evolving global workforce, which includes emerging technologies.
9. Students learn & use democratic decision making processes that value diversity, and promote equity and the appreciation of human life as foundations for becoming global citizens.
10. Students demonstrate an orientation for caring about the global community and its sustainable development.

International School Connection, Inc.
2008
Global Partnership, continued from p. 10

and project design. The project plan was translated into Swedish, as well as instructions for MOODLE and SKYPE, and given to GPP school teams. Several meetings for the Swedish participants were arranged for educators to share their experiences, successes and challenges, and to learn with and from each other. Contact was made continuously with the GPP schools through e-mail, Skype and telephone contact, answering questions concerning MOODLE, and above all trying to solve contact problems between GPP partner schools. The PSN Leadership Team was a vital help to us.

School Activities in Stockholm

In an initial GPP phase, Swedish schools spent time getting acquainted with their partners and learning how to work in Skype, ooVoo and MOODLE. The majority of our meetings took place in Skype, with either principals or teachers, and in some cases including students. Due to technical problems and the time differences between partner schools, setting up meetings at times was a challenge. However, many of the teachers and students report that meeting their partners on Skype was very motivating and inspiring.

In a second GPP phase, most schools focused on students getting to know each other. Several of the Swedish schools made movies about their schools or recorded student presentations that were sent to their partner schools. Others made written presentations or power points for the MOODLE environment to share with their partner schools.

After getting acquainted, students and teachers started to plan for their global learning projects. Some partners presented a project plan on MOODLE, with ideas including traditions, recycling, water, friendship, youth culture, and climate issues. The major curriculum areas that were integrated into the global learning projects included English, Social Science, Natural, and Swedish.

Technology and Digital Competence

The extent to which the Swedish schools engaged with their partners varied. Some partnerships were very active, having rather frequent meetings on SKYPE, and devoting time for the GPP project during regular classes each week. Others had trouble establishing regular contact with their partners. A few schools experienced technical problems that hindered their work.

Listen to Stockholm Teacher Voices:

“The kids have been chatting and e-mailing on MOODLE. They have added photos and made power point presentations about themselves and their lives.”

“Many of the teachers and students report that meeting their partners on Skype was very motivating and inspiring.”

“Our children had problems writing in MOODLE, but we know that someone in the USA is working very hard on this problem. Students made a video of their school and picked out what they thought were the most important places.”

“Teachers had weekly meetings on ooVoo, and students were slowly introduced into the project. Students wanted to talk with their peers in China and Sweden, and so we opened 15 generic ooVoo accounts.”

“We have purchased web cameras and microphones to work in SKYPE and ooVoo. We had four video conferences with our partner school in Florida, where students participated in two conferences.”

“Our partnership team made a common exhibition about our school that we posted in MOODLE.”

Listen to the Voices of Stockholm Teachers:

“Students prepared a short talk about their recycling project, and showed pictures and props on our region’s specific way of recycling. Some groups recorded their presentations and sent them as links to their partners.”

“Our students talked in our second meeting with our partners about water surrounding Stockholm and the Baltic Sea.”

“We had a project called ‘the message’, which was an appeal to make a presentation at the climate conference in Copenhagen. Students in both our Florida and Shenzhen partner schools signed the petition and gave encouraging comments.”

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Conclusion

The GPP is a unique project because of its design, for it is cost effective when compared to other international projects. The use of SKYPE and ooVOO, where participants can see each other, enables students to participate in an international project to a greater extent than in projects that are based primarily on written communication (in a foreign language), or travelling to other countries.

English language skills were a challenge for some participants. For natural reasons this has been especially difficult when it comes to communication between Chinese and Swedish students and teachers. Partners in the GPP project have had different expectations about the project and on the time and effort each partner should spend. Educators in several Swedish schools said that the project demanded more technical capacity and competence than they had foreseen, and the differences between their own digital capacity and those found in the schools in USA has been a challenge for them.

As the GPP project is one of the first of its kind, there is likely to be greater clarity of expectations in the future. Communication problems can be solved by actually having the technical equipment and by discussing what communicating virtually requires to ensure that all participants are fully committed to the project, and that they have enough digital competence and competence in English to be successful.

Mark Xing

China

The Nanshan School District intends to commit all of its schools to building and strengthening international cooperation in this era of globalization. Ever since the launching of the Global Partnership Project (GPP) with the International School Connection (ISC), our School District leaders have given the participating schools strong support and encouragement to push this project forward. To date, this project has had a great impact on Nanshan participating educators, students and schools as well, particularly in the transformation of educators’ conception of the purpose of schooling in the 21st century, which is regarded as a guarantee of the success of this project.

Changes in Nanshan Schools

The educators in all eleven Nanshan schools involved in this pilot project are proud to be given opportunity to join in international collaboration. They attach great importance to the organizational construction and management of students and teachers. Some teams created school websites in English as a window for their foreign partners, and they upgraded equipment and facilities to promote a smooth launching of this project.

Nanshan school leaders and teachers have expressed how they treasure this valuable opportunity to learn about advances in education and management from their foreign partners, and to explore new teaching strategies and curriculum reform ideas. Some schools have been inspired by an American syllabus of science education for placing more emphasis on students’ independent thinking, cooperative learning and hands-on learning processes. Some schools have explored a school-based curriculum called “Care About Our World” to make students aware of the global issues. Teachers are coming to understand that etiquette education and dissemination of different cultures are as important as the teaching of the English language if we want to promote international understanding and encourage students to become global citizens with a strong sense of responsibility.

Changes in Nanshan Students

When the schools made it known to students that a cross-continent partnership project was going to be launched, all students wanted to become members of the first group to participate in this project. Their enthusiasm proved that they were eager to know the world outside of China personally, rather than only through TV, movies or books. The GPP project satisfied their curiosity by opening a window for students to the outside world. Students have participated with eagerness in discussing with their foreign partners about a wide range of subjects, such as culture and customs, food, literature from different cultures, stories about ancient civilizations, and great people in history.

The global learning projects for partnership teams included water resources and protection, global warming, prevention of H1N1 flu, working together to save our planet, recycling, pollution, healthy living habits, environment conservation, etc. The global topics raised students’ consciousness about globalization, provoked their speculation on global issues, and inspired them to take action to address global challenges and care for the entire world.

Due to limited space and equipment, students had to take turns participating in face-to-face dialogue sessions with their foreign partners, via Skype or ooVoo. Even though only some students had the opportunity to participate in this project, more students have been motivated to learn English well so they can learn more about the world. In fact, many students worked hard learning English, and as a result their English language proficiency has been greatly improved because of their participation in the GPP. Students are acquainted with some knowledge about the geography of the countries involved in the GPP. A new learning for our students was that they live in different time zones from their partners when they dialogue through the computer screen. When they say “Good Morning” to their American partners and “Good Afternoon” to their Swedish ones, it is pitch-dark here in China. This stimulates students’ desire for more knowledge about global living.

Changes in Nanshan Educators

Prior to the GPP project, very few Nanshan educators had communicated with educators in America, and Sweden.

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This cross-continent project is unanimously agreed to be an amazing platform for communications and dialogue between principals, teachers, tech specialists, and students on each partnership team. All educators seem to have high levels of commitment to their global partnership.

Language is a challenge to most Nanshan teachers. Although all GPP contact teachers are teachers of English, when they communicate with their foreign partners they find their English falls short of their wishes. Therefore, they try to find time to improve their English despite their tight schedules. And their efforts have paid off, in both their spoken and written English. Yet they probably spend more time than their foreign partners preparing to share before every online meeting.

GPP as a Growing System

To some extent, the GPP project has functioned as a growing system in which all principals, teachers, tech specialists and students involved have been nurtured and developed. The GPP project not only provided opportunities for cross-culture communication but also changed the concept of school teachers from disseminators of knowledge, ethics and personality shapers to educators with global perspectives, who develop students as both competent and caring Chinese and global citizens.

The GPP project is an important source of energy and a resource for all Nanshan educators. It is difficult to explain why our teachers sacrifice much of their spare time to work with their partners overseas without any complaint. It is also difficult to explain why they feel tired yet happy when they see the smiling faces and excited eyes of their students during and after their online meeting. Students and educators from Nanshan are able to share with their foreign counterparts China’s splendid culture and its rich tradition of five thousand years as well as China’s economic development and social harmony and progress in recent years. We believe this helps the world to have a better understanding of Modern China. It goes without saying that this GPP project is a blending of the East and the West; we are learning from each other.

What did We Learn?

In the GPP pilot, the PSN International Leadership Team identified both local and international challenges that will help educators in future GPP projects. For example, we learned that successful school level partnerships are formed by educators who want to explore this new GLOBAL feature of schooling, and work in unknown environments to raise the level of 21st century learning for their students. While the GPP pilot was added onto school agendas everywhere, in those schools where this pilot was given a priority and support from principals, more successful partnership programs and outcomes were realized.

The tech specialist at each school became a leader in the GPP, for the media and technological environments are what made global learning projects achievable. In those schools where principals only gave permission, or paid little attention to the work of teachers in this project, the partnership projects had a lower success rate. A new challenge for us is to build the strong support systems for teachers and students who participate in global learning initiatives.

A school district support system became vital for keeping in touch with the successes and challenges of their schools, and then doing whatever it took locally or with the PSN to provide assistance. Gathering the GPP pilot teams together at regular intervals reinforced the District’s commitment to the success of teacher’s work toward the GPP mission. Sharing stories and addressing challenges together generates energy to continue exploring the unknown, and the innovative work that is essential in a pilot program.

The GPP support system of collaboration among role groups at the school level that emerged included support from the local school district office. The international leadership team provided the necessary and vital total connection system for successful school partnerships. If we want students to develop friends across the world, care about life on this planet in all nations, and become global citizens, then the support systems for teachers and students are essential for exploring options and opportunities, and putting the right new technologies and curriculum in place. We hope our story is an inspiration for others who are seeking ways to connect their students in global learning projects with others across the world. As one student remarked: This experience was epic! Now I want to go to China and Sweden!”

"When the schools made it known to students that a cross-continent partnership project was going to be launched, all students wanted to become members of the first group to participate."
Let your light shine ...  

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Ogden High School  
Ogden, UT

Wunsche High School  
Spring, TX

Beacon Schools

No schools have earned the designation “Beacon School” as of yet. Will your school be the first?

SCHOOL OF PROMISE

If your school is in the process of implementing small learning communities, career academies, or 9th grade academies, apply to have NEP evaluate your progress. Schools that show proficiency in the 5 Keys for Successful Career Academies are eligible for the prestigious “School of Promise” designation. A School of Promise is a school that is working their way through the implementation process. They have challenges like everyone else, but they are developing and implementing systems to create success. When a school wears the School of Promise designation, it means they are doing things right and long-term, sustainable success is imminent.

BEACON SCHOOL

“Beacon School” is the highest honor NEP gives a school. It shows the school has demonstrated mastery of all 5 Keys for Successful Career Academies and that ongoing innovation and improvement is part of the school’s life cycle.

HOW TO APPLY

Go to www.neponline.org click the “Free Resources” tab. Download either a School of Promise Application or a Beacon School Application. All instructions, deadlines, and FAQs are inside. And guess what. It’s free. The application. The Evaluation. All of it. Haven’t you earned it?
can’t
should
might
could

are
CAAS KIDS are GETTING IT DONE!

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SITE VISIT DATES
- October 28, 2010
- December 2, 2010
- March 10, 2011
- May 5, 2011

Call 888-NEP-1997 x 3
or
e-mail dvarano@neponline.org
My Teacher As A Role Model

By: Chelsie Moore
Brooklyn, New York USA

My name is Chelsie Moore, and I go to Cultural Academy for the Arts and Sciences (CAAS) in Brooklyn New York. In my opinion, CAAS is the best high school in Brooklyn. I have some of the most amazing teachers in the world. They are loving, supportive, and encouraging. They care for us as if we are their children. Each and every one of them gives us much more than an education, they teach us life lessons that we can use to make every possibility endless.

Although all of my teachers are amazing, there is one that stands out just a little bit more. That teacher is Ms. Deloatch. She has all of the qualities that a good teacher should have. She is 100% amazing. She always has one on one talks with us letting us know what we are doing well and what we need to work on. She shows us tough love while still being sweet at the same time. She never says no or I cannot. She does whatever we need her to do. Whenever she sees a child “without,” she makes it her business to see that they have what they need. She works as both a teacher and a counselor. Whenever something is going wrong, she is the first to notice and tries her best to make it right. Whenever things are going well for us, she is always one of the first to congratulate us. She is much more than a teacher to us. She is almost like a parent.

Every teacher that I have had at CAAS is wonderful. Mr. Winn has the ability to stay cool in ugly situations, like when my classmates and I can’t seem to shut up. Mr. Lee has ability to joke around with us and make us laugh and still manage to get us to learn. Ms. Klinofsky expects more from us than we expect from ourselves. Mr. Beck finds things to make us work out and laugh at the same time, like castle ball. Ms. Petit-Blanc never gets upset with us for what we can’t do, but does get frustrated with us when we refuse to try and continuously telling us that we can, we should, we are, and that we will.

The Student Voice

The Student Voice is a new, ongoing column in Innovation where students provide their unfiltered insights into the educational experience.

This issues’ column is submitted by Ms. Chelsie Moore. Chelsie is a student at the NEP Lab School and provides insights on her teachers, what runs through her mind when she works with them, and how they affect her.
Although Ms. Varano, Mr. Sacca, and Mr. Liu are not my teachers, they are still a big part of my school life, a big part of my life in general. Ms. Varano always takes the time to listen, pay attention, and do whatever we need her to do. She is an amazing principal. Mr. Sacca shows us so much love (even though he would never admit it). A lot of my schoolmates would disagree with me on that, but that is only because they do not understand how much Mr. Sacca actually cares about us. That is why he is the way he is, because he cares so much. Mr. Liu is fantastic. You are not able to walk in the hallway with a frown on your face, because once you bump into Mr. Liu you cannot help but laugh. He will make a joke about anyone just to get you to laugh. He may be one of the most sarcastic, but he is also the one that wants to see us happy the most.

These three people are the ones who make our lives a little bit easier. Especially Mr. Liu, with him every bad situation becomes extremely funny. All of my teachers have had a huge impact on my life. They are some of the most important people I have met in my 16 years of living. They are wonderful, amazing, and impossible not to love.

CAAS at a Glance

The Tilden (R)Evolution continues.

LOCATION
Tilden High School in the East Flatbush section of Brooklyn, New York.

DEMOGRAPHICS
Students are in grades 9 - 11. CAAS is in its third year and adds a grade level each year.

20% are classified with at least one type of learning disability
90% are on free or reduced lunch
50% are under grade level in reading
21% are African-American
37% are Haitian
21% are Jamaican
15% are other Caribbean nationalities
4% Hispanic
1% Bangladeshi
1% Chinese

Most common language for ESL students: Creole

INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL
All classes are taught at honors level. Additional assistance is offered via the New Opportunities class.

SCHEDULING
The Cultural Academy for Arts & Sciences is on a flex block schedule with six classes of 58 minutes each. There are advisory classes every day, time for remediation and common teacher planning time.

TEACHER TEAMS
Each CAAS teacher works on an AEP Team (Academic Education Plan) and a grade level team. They have a common planning period and meet three times a week. These meetings have allowed them to address instructional issues, individual student data, and other types of educational collaboration.

ADMINISTRATION
Every administrator including the principal is also a teacher, teaching at least one regularly scheduled class each day. This fits the NEP belief that the principal’s main role is not to be a “manager,” but the chief educator on campus.

OTHER FACTS
- There is professional development time scheduled twice weekly.
- There are advisory classes daily.
- There are no bells to signal changes in periods.
- CAAS is on the third floor of Tilden High School.
- CAAS has a courtroom and a culinary arts kitchen.
- Innovation Magazine is edited by CAAS students in cooperation with NEP Books.

Stay informed!
Get frequent updates on career academies and small learning communities with NEP’s free electronic newsletter.
Send an email message to msanchez@neponline.org and ask to be placed on the NEPnews e-mailing list today!
As president of the nonprofit PENCIL, I was delighted to hear that Mark Thompson, Director of the National Educator Program (NEP), sensed immediate synergy between our organizations when he learned about us this fall.

"Like you, we got started because we wanted to bring outside support to the classroom," he explained after sitting in on a school visit between new PENCIL Partners Elliot Fread, President & Founder of Bimmy’s, and Principal Diane Varano of the Cultural Academy for the Arts & Sciences in Brooklyn. “That’s really what schools are thirsting for.”

PENCIL’s mission shares a lot in common with NEP’s work to connect schools with resources and professional knowledge that improve classroom instruction. For the past fourteen years, we have inspired innovative solutions to the challenges facing public schools through a variety of programs that actively engage the private sector—including school donation programs, a summer internship program for high school students, and our flagship Partnership Program.

PENCIL’s Partnership Program—which recently launched affiliate programs in Rochester, New York and Baltimore, Maryland—builds and supports customized relationships between business leaders and principals. With more than 450 Partnerships in our network serving over 100,000 students, we provide a flexible, yet structured way for members of the private sector to contribute their unique expertise and resources to help meet individual school needs. From enhancing the curriculum, to increasing career and college awareness, to developing strong school leaders, the program enables Partners to have a tangible impact on the schools they serve.

Just as NEP has largely developed around the need to provide educators with leadership support, many of PENCIL’s Partners have focused on helping principals shape strategic plans that address school goals. In the case of Sana Nasser, principal of Truman High School in the Bronx, she has worked with her PENCIL Partner to support the creation of small themed academies that have helped customize instruction for the school’s 2400 students.

“Our Partnership has become fundamental in helping us overcome our challenges,” Nasser says. Although the school had the infrastructure to support the school’s goal of creating specialized programs, Nasser lacked the guidance to fully leverage her resources and develop a broad management strategy. Working
Connecting Business,
continued from p. 19

with Charles Bendit, a Principal and Co-CEO of Taconic Investment Partners and a member of the New York State Board of Regents, she has been able to create a business advisory council that has helped her identify opportunities for strengthening the academy structure. Largely as a result of the Partnership, Nasser has observed increased on track graduation rates, attendance and credit accumulation rates among students participating in the academy program. She has also seen staff attrition decrease over the past four years from 40% to less than 1%.

Like all PENCIL Partners, Truman and Bendit have focused their collaboration on strategically addressing school needs. In fact, PENCIL matches Partners based on the background and interests of a business leader and the specific goals of a school. PENCIL then assigns the Partners an individual PENCIL Partnership Coordinator (PC) to provide one-on-one technical assistance throughout the life of the collaboration—many of which have been ongoing for years. By working with their PC and leveraging PENCIL’s support tools—including workshops and trainings, case studies, project guides, and the PENCIL Exchange, a web-based tool created exclusively for PENCIL’s network—Partners can develop goals and plans together and implement projects on their own terms.

Our model for school-business Partnerships has been highly effective in bringing real change to public education. 90% of principals in our network reported that their collaborations had a positive impact last year. For instance, former Principal Monica George of PS 153 in West Harlem attests that her Partnership with Dave Barger, President and CEO of JetBlue Airways, was primarily responsible for decreasing teacher attrition from 25% to 3% within five years. Among their efforts, the Partners developed a logo and mascot, a school store, school spirit days, faculty leadership enrichment programs and new sports teams for the school. And Principal Catherine Reilly of Bushwick Leaders High School in Brooklyn reports that her Partnership with Frank Bisignano, Chief Administrative Officer of JPMorgan Chase & Co., contributed to a 200% increase in student applications. Together, the Partners created a new computer lab with wireless access and developed financial literacy workshops for parents and students.

But the school is not the only side to benefit. In fact, a majority of Business Partners report that the program is unique for them primarily because it provides an opportunity for long-term involvement and an accessible way to share their unique skills or resources with a school.

“Our school Partnerships through PENCIL have boosted employees’ morale and cross-collaboration among Macy’s employees,” says Terry Lundgren, Chairman, President & CEO of Macy’s Inc., which has been partnered with the Life Sciences Secondary School in Manhattan for six years. “We get back as much as we put in.”

For more information on PENCIL, visit www.PENCIL.org.
In the Trenches of Career Academies
Philadelphia, PA
1969 - 1972

It was the fall of 1969 when the culmination of a year of intense, community-wide planning came to fruition. A creative spark from the mind of Charles W. Bowser ignited a fire that has lasted four decades.

In this series, “In the Trenches,” NEP talks with the founders of this initiative that became a fundamental shift in the way secondary education is delivered in America. We have been fortunate to speak first with Al Glassman and Lee Everett. In the last edition of Innovation Magazine, John Thompson discussed what it was like to be the first career academy Lead Teacher: creating academy curricula from nothing, and the perils of being a vocational teacher marshaling support from academic teachers. In this final installment of this series, we speak with one of the earliest supporters of the career academy concept from the academic side of the hallway. Dr. Joseph Phillips was the English Department Head at Edison High School. Forty years later, here is what he told NEP about their resounding success, in his own words:

I was the department head for English when this thing got started. The first year, it stumbled along, trying to put into place something that would be beneficial in the education of these poor kids for whom the conventional, or the established educational patterns were not successful. It was very modest. Henk Koening had an idea that if you motivate the kids with tools in their hands, have them do things with their hands, that would be good and they would have a sense that they would want to be educated. So that was his vision.

Henk didn’t have the practicality of it, but we got together in a meeting to tackle the problem that was facing everybody: the kids were having an attendance problem. We couldn’t keep them in school. But, in the first year or so as we progressed, it was clear that the kids were not coming to school except on a selective basis. They were coming to the shop. They were coming to this stuff having to do with electronics. But they weren’t going to English or math and so on. Their attendance was generally not that different from the other kids. What this indicated was, they would come to school if the electronics teachers required it.

So, we thought this thing through. We couldn’t just say, “Forget about their schooling. Just let them go to the electrical shop.” The idea came to us, when we make a program in school, conventional high school programming has to connect as often and frequently as is operationally responsible with this career goal that the academy was setting up for the kids. Over the next couple of years, we worked on developing a curriculum that integrated schooling in a way that it could be the work of the Academy. It was an interesting problem of trying to define what it was we wanted to do. It was a blank slate as far as we were concerned.

So we came up with this: If you go into a shop, if you go into work, if you go into an electronics store . . .

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In our case at Edison, the principal, Al Glassman, was very good and believed in what we were doing. He was very good at interacting with the people who could make things happen. He was an “enabler”, which is a very good role for a principal. He was a very good enabler, and when you have somebody like that, you’re in good shape. He saw it as something he should support, and not just something he should let happen.

Disciplining was positive. We didn’t count up the misdeeds. It was, “You can do better.” That would be how we would handle it all the time. It demonstrated to the kids we cared about them.

The guy who would become the coordinator of the Academy, John Thompson, would have a lot to do with that: finding the right fix for a particular kid. He would deal with discipline a good bit, and he also dealt with outside issues. You need somebody - or as many people as you can get - who would be thinkers. In our case, I believe my function was to be kind of the “idea man.” John would be the “implementer.” He was very good at that.

I’ve seen many changes, and most of them are not for the better. You can’t come back and do the same thing you did the year before. Some people think that’s okay. I don’t.

You know I was an English teacher. I taught literature. If you want to teach Macbeth, you have to read Macbeth. No matter what novel it was, whether it was Great Expectations or what have you, I would always reread everything because I couldn’t remember it all. But it was a blessing to have a bad memory, because I would always have to reread everything.

In working with the teachers, and keeping them involved, I would remind them, “You can’t do everything, but you can do something.” The problem of burnout is based on failed expectations. The
Career Academies in 2049?

by David Stern
University of California, Berkeley

Marilyn Raby, Charlie Dayton and I coined the term “career academies” as the title for our 1992 book, which described academies being developed by Philadelphia, California, and the National Academy Foundation. Since then the School-to-Work movement has come and gone, the Gates Foundation small schools initiative has waxed and waned, and the Obama Administration now is placing highest priority on “college and career readiness” as the goal for high schools. These waves of reform have propelled career academies forward, like surfers. As of 2010, we think there are about 7,000 career academies in U.S. high schools.

Why the surge in career academies? I would say the evidence has a lot to do with it. Beginning with some careful evaluations in the 1980s, and continuing through the landmark study by MDRC, researchers have found that career academies contribute to students’ success in high school and beyond. Researchers like me have become “empirical evangelists,” advocating academies because of this evidence.

Given how important I think evidence is, it’s ironic that what I’m writing about here is a topic on which there is absolutely no evidence: namely, the future! And the rapid pace of change in the past decade or so makes me very humble about offering predictions four decades hence. Just think how recently the internet, smart phones, email, texting and Facebook have transformed our lives. If Ray Kurzweil is right, humanity will have passed through the “singularity” in about 20 years, reshaping itself into some kind of carbon-silicon life form, networked in ways we can’t even imagine.

So the first question I’d raise is not whether career academies will exist, but whether high schools will exist in anything like the shape and form we’ve known for the past hundred years or so. Already in 2010, close to 30 percent of teenage students are already enrolled in something other than the traditional large high school with its egg-crate classrooms, bell schedules and multi-period days designed to keep track of instructional minutes and Carnegie units. Current non-traditional options include independent study, home schooling, virtual high schools, alternative schools, continuation schools, and various new small schools and small learning communities, including charters.

Several things account for the current fracturing and fragmentation of the Carnegie-unit high school. First of all, this kind of education has never worked for all students. The fraction of teenagers completing high school “on time” rose during the 20th century to about 3/4 in the mid 1970s –– and has been stuck there ever since. As high school “dropout” reduction becomes a public priority again, the search for alternatives is renewed.

One of the chief advantages of Carnegie-unit high schools is that they’ve been a relatively inexpensive way to keep teenagers out of the labor market and off the streets. One older adult supervises a group of 30 or more teenagers in a classroom. Unfortunately, the teenagers are getting harder to manage, for all kinds of reasons including the internet itself, which has reduced the authority of classroom teachers as sources of knowledge. Providing alternative settings for teenagers usually means fewer students per . . .

Continued on p. 24
The Next 40, continued from p. 23

. . . teacher -- and of course that’s more expensive.

This is where the internet comes in. Home-schooling, independent study, and other alternative programs are getting a big boost from the internet. Even traditional high schools are making an increasing use of on-line curriculum to help students make up classes they missed or flunked, or to access more advanced material.

It seems almost inevitable that the internet -- or whatever evolves from it -- will play a much bigger role in educating teenagers 40 years from now. This will facilitate a number of structural changes that may help achieve what traditional high schools have been unable to accomplish: preparing all teenagers to become productive adults and responsible citizens.

One structural change that may be necessary is increased involvement of other adults, in addition to professional teachers, in educating teenagers. We already see this in home schooling, where parents play a central role. Programs like career academies, which recruit adults in workplaces to supervise student interns, also demonstrate this idea. “It takes a village” to educate a young person. Improvement of on-line learning resources could enable more teenagers to participate in a much more individualized education, supervised by an older adult who acts as guide, advocate, and counselor for a group of students. The adult advisor could be responsible for guiding each student over a period of several years, orchestrating the student’s involvement with other adults through internships, civic enterprises, group activities including traditional classrooms, and independent study with various teachers or mentors. “The Met” schools, by Big Picture Company point in this direction.

Another structural change would plan for student mobility. Many students change schools because their place of residence changes. But the current school system has no easy way to accommodate students who move, so mobility has been a well-known risk factor for dropping out. The internet, with its burgeoning virtual high schools, will make it much easier to maintain continuity in curriculum for students who move from one place to another.

If this more individualized, internet-facilitated approach is going to become a more prevalent form of education for teenagers, it would have to be accompanied by other structural changes. Funding formulas could no longer be based entirely on “seat time.” Some teachers would have to be prepared as educational guides, not classroom managers. None of this will happen tomorrow. But in 40 years, who knows?

How can career academies position themselves for the future? First, don’t get complacent. It’s been said that if you’re sitting on your laurels you’re wearing them in the wrong place. The MDRC study and other evaluations have found that career academies can produce positive outcomes for students. But just because academies can work doesn’t mean they always do. Among the 7,000 or so career academies in U.S. high schools, no one knows how many actually embody the key elements present in the particular academies that researchers have found to be effective. Worse yet, the research has not yet determined exactly which features of academies really account for their effectiveness. So in addition to trying to build career academies that have the key elements identified by MDRC and others, it’s important to keep the focus on results for students.

Schools, districts, and states that sponsor career academies should routinely check for changes each year in individual students’ performance. Did students this year improve their attendance, credits earned, grades, discipline, and test scores? Did they get promoted to the next grade, or graduate from grade 12? And how did the growth in performance of academy students compare with the growth of non-academy students in the same school, district, or state? To keep career academies strong, describing and comparing changes in student performance each year should become part of standard operating procedure. If results-based funding ever does come, career academies should be ready!

Second, career academies . . .

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... should actively embrace the internet. Academies that are serious about students taking all required college-prep classes in addition to a strong career-technical sequence often find it very challenging to fit it all into students’ schedules. This will be a challenge as long as schools are using multi-period days to allocate instructional minutes and award Carnegie units. But as more and better curriculum becomes available on-line, career academies should use it to enable students to complete courses they can’t fit into their schedules.

Career academies also may be able to help deal with student mobility. Currently, if a student leaves a particular school, that school is no longer responsible for the education of that student (though counting the student as a dropout will look bad on the school’s accountability report). In a career academy, as in other small schools or small learning communities, one of the advantages is that students and teachers can build more trusting and supportive relationships. If an academy student goes away, those relationships are left behind. But maybe that isn’t inevitable. In the future, with the internet and all, students who move might be able to stay in contact with one or more academy teachers with whom they had close relationships. This happens informally now. Making this kind of continuity more planned and deliberate could keep academies in the vanguard of educational change.

Another strength of career academies that may sustain their future vitality is the involvement of adults from outside of schools. Workplace supervisors, mentors, parents and other adults have played an important part in career academies. Their involvement keeps academy students and teachers more connected with the economic and civic life of their local communities. In addition to helping educate teenagers, this connection can help career academies keep evolving along with the world outside of schools.

Career academies have been an important agent of change. Along with High Schools That Work, revisions to federal law, and other developments, career academies have contributed to breaking down the 20th century segregation between college and career preparation. Career academies have been found to be an effective alternative to 20th century forms of tracking in high schools. But career academies in their current form are not a panacea. To lower the dropout rate substantially and prepare much larger numbers of teenagers for college, careers, and responsible citizenship, additional structural changes will be needed in the educational system. Career academies, continually evolving, can and should be part of that change.

INCREASED COLLABORATION
Mark A. Thompson
Director, National Educator Program
Building on teacher collaboration, career academies will see increased school-to-school collaboration and support through innovative networks like the NEPwork and the International School Connection.

STRONG COMMUNITY PARTNERS
Lisa J. Nutter
President, Philadelphia Academies, Inc.
Keeping business and community partners united and involved in the cause will keep academies strong and thriving, as measured by individual student successes.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS & PERSONALIZATION
Dr. Gene Bottoms & Dr. Heather Sass
Southern Regional Education Board
Career academies will be successful insofar as they have high achievement standards in both academic and CTE classes, provide extra support, and meet the diverse learning needs of every student.

ACADEMIES MUST ANTICIPATE CHANGE
David Stern
Career Academy Support Network
Additional structural changes in schools will be required for career academies to continue their evolution and continued benefit to students.
Call for submissions
Are you ready to tell educators throughout the USA and abroad about your research, integrated projects, success with dropouts, or how you solved problems implementing academies and small learning communities?
Let Innovation Magazine be your forum. Here’s how to do it:

- All submissions must be original and not already published elsewhere.
- All submissions become the property of the National Educator Program (NEP).
- All submissions are subject to editing.
- All writing should be submitted electronically.
- Submissions should be about best practices or editorial.
- Submissions are not guaranteed to be published.
- We prefer submissions be done in Mac Pages or Microsoft Word.
- Photos should be submitted separately.
- All photos of students must be accompanied by parental release.
- Include author’s name and contact information, name of person submitting the work (if different) and contact information, and names of individuals in photos (if applicable).

To submit your writing for possible publication, log onto www.neponline.org and click the Innovation Magazine tab. Then select the “Write for Innovation” link on the right side of the page. We look forward to sharing YOUR innovations with our more than 5,000 readers!
What a Party THAT Was!

NEP wraps up over a year of celebration in honor of career academies’ fortieth anniversary with this edition. The candles are blown out, the cake has been eaten, and we have some spectacular memories. Take a look, and NEP celebrated!

A BIRTHDAY PARTY
Where it all started: Edison High School. Yes, it was a great cake, but not as great as the educators who stood around it.

HISTORICAL MARKER
NEP presented Edison High School with a bronze historical marker, identifying that school as the site of the world’s first career academy.

The First Career Academy
In the Fall of 1979, through the efforts of Deputy Mayor Charles Bowes and others, the world’s first career academy began at Edison High School. The Academy of Applied Electrical Engineering was highly successful, and a fundamental shift in the way high school education is delivered. Career Academies then spread to every state in America, as well as to schools internationally.

NEP
Presented to Edison High School by the Vocational Educator Program (NEP) on October 16, 2009 - The 40th anniversary of the first Career Academy.

CAREER ACADEMIES GAME
NEP Books unveiled “Retool Your School: The Career Academies Game.”

NEP’s ANNUAL SLC CONFERENCE
Houston 2009, conference sponsor Spring ISD and NEP made the 40th anniversary the centerpiece of this outstanding conference. With the theme, “Back to the Future!”, participants traveled in time with The Human Timeline, and shared critical events of the last four decades.

THE NEXT 40
Innovation Magazine runs two special columns. The first is a series looking back with the founders of the first career academies. The second is a series that looks ahead to the year 2049 and what academies may look like then. Views were offered by NEP, the Philadelphia Academy Career Academy Support Network.
What a Party
THAT Was!
NEP wraps up over a year of celebration in honor of career academies’ fortieth anniversary with this edition of Innovation. The candles are blown out, the cake has been eaten, and we have some spectacular memories. Take a look at how you and NEP celebrated!

The Charles W. Bowser Award
Named for Philadelphia’s favorite son and “father of career academies,” NEP created this award in honor of the anniversary of his brain child. It goes to a person who has had national impact on education. It is the highest honor NEP gives to a single individual. It is not an annual award; it is only awarded as earned. The first two recipients were Mr. Al Glassman (Principal of the first career academy) and Mr. John Thompson (Lead Teacher of the first career academy).

Career Academies
2009-2049
that looks back with the founders of the the year 2049 and what academies may emies, High Schools That Work, and the
CAREER ACADEMY ROUNDTABLE
Also created for the 40th, this annual event is an exchange of ideas and best practices for career academies by today’s practitioners and innovators.

L-R: Al Deckert (First Academy Teacher), Al Glassman (First Academy Principal) and John Thompson (First Academy Lead Teacher) blow out candles on the 40th Anniversary Cake.

John Thompson accepts the 2010 Charles W. Bowser Award in Colorado.
NEP's publishing division "NEP Books" brings you
"Retool Your School: The Career Academies Game."

The “Retool Your School” board game is a powerful
professional development tool that takes an unflinching
look at the realities of making career academies and
small learning communities a sustainable part of your
school culture.

Here's what the educators who field tested Retool
Your School: The Career Academies Game had to
say about it:

"It's exactly like real life, which is both good and bad."
- Charlotte Hughes, district administration
  Hillsborough County Schools

"I wasn't sure we were going to pull it off. It was very stressful at the start, but by the end we were cheering for
each other. Now that I think of it, it's a lot like what happened at our school when we started."
- Jackie Davenport, career academy teacher
  Lake County Schools

"I graduate next May. Now I want to be sure I work at a school that has career academies."
- Brent Gilbert, math education major
  University of South Florida, College of Education, SCATT Program

"I want the leaders from all the high schools in our district to go through this. This is even bigger than academies.
It's all about school leadership."
- Beverly Haskins, Director of Staff Development
  Lake County Schools

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nehelpful.org
All of the resources of our entire website available to you to help your SLC or career academy.

Schools of Promise & Beacon School Applications
Apply before January 15 each year and be assessed based on the 5 Keys for Successful Career Academies. Your school may be honored at our annual SLC Success Conference in the spring. If you don’t receive a designation, you are given detailed feedback and allowed to reapply the following year.

Conference Overview Session
Okay, you actually have to pay to attend the conference. But if you do, you may attend this in-depth look at breakout sessions for free. NEP’s first-class Conference Concierge service is included!

The NEPwork
Schools Helping Schools

How Your School Can Be Involved
The NEPwork creates cohorts of similar schools. These similarities are based on progress in implementation of SLCs or career academies, along with faculty and administrative leadership. There is a school fee for participation and schools are required to commit to a certain degree of time investment and travel.

What Your School Gets for Participating
NEPwork enrollment is for the academic year. Your school will:

- Have access to virtual office space on the NEPwork’s designated website
- Receive professional facilitation of dialog and virtual meetings
- Be treated to priority check-in and extras at NEP events
- Be able to exchange best practices, ideas and integrated lesson plans with your “sister school.”
- Have access to personalized technical assistance.

How to Enroll
Email Diane Varano at dvarano@neponline.org, or call toll free 888-NEP-1997 ext 3 for additional information.

** Enroll NOW to be included in the 2009-2010 school year. **
WHAT MAKES NEP’S CONFERENCE DIFFERENT?

Conference Scope
Our Small Learning Communities International Conference draws upon the academy and small learning community experience and expertise of practitioners from at least seven nations!

Graduate Credit
NEP’s post-secondary partner, Colorado State University, allows you to earn graduate credit hours. CSU is respected and recognized world-wide for academic excellence.

Conference Concierge
Assists you in choosing a session itinerary that is right for you and your team. It’s a “first class” experience.

NEP Lab School
Work with the staff & students of CAAS in Brooklyn, NY who turned around a low-performing, “Persistently Dangerous” inner city school.

Career Academy Roundtable
Talk with schools and districts who are actually doing it … perfecting career academies at their sites for mutual support and sharing of best practices.

Find out more at www.neponline.org, including session topics, schedule, pricing, deadlines and registrations!

coming in the next issue of Innovation:

⭐ The Future of Academies
It starts right now with a groundbreaking project underway by NEP and our partners

⭐ The Other Columbine
A memorable interview with Principal Frank DiAngeles of Columbine High School

⭐ A Culture of Responsibility
Students working with students: Integrated projects, cooperative learning, and peer-to-peer support

⭐ Curriculum Integration
Academic & Career teachers together: No longer taboo, see creative ways to break down the “department silos”

⭐ Teachers Helping Teachers
Teachers using peer coaching to assist each other’s professional growth
Inspiring. Innovative. NEP.