



The 21st Century Educator

October/November

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2017

Hope Everyone has a Wonderful Holiday Season!

Learning Competency Focus: Skilled Communication

This month we are focusing on **Skilled Communication**. We often use the term *communication* to describe the simple act of talking with others. **Skilled** Communication, however, is so much more! Communication in the 21st Century takes many different forms, traditional and modern, and includes presentations, written documents, podcasts, blogs, emails, videos, and so on. Increasingly, there is a need for students to use **extended** communication—the representation of a set of connected ideas, rather than a single, simple thought. The nature of communication in the digital age also requires us to think of communication in **multi-modal** forms—that is, the use of more than one mode at the same time, such as video and text, to present a message. Communication also requires an understanding of the importance of **supporting evidence** for what is communicated, and the needs of the **particular audience** who will be the target of communication. In the context of learning, we should provide students with many opportunities across disciplines to practice communicating with purpose and audience in mind. Click [here](#) for the Elevator Guide.

Click [here](#) for a great article on the importance of Communication and some exemplar schools that are putting it into practice with their students of all ages from *P21: Partnership for 21st Century Learning*.

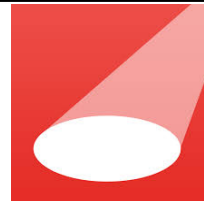
A 2015 [article](#) in STEMJOBS states that “In the STEM workplace, employers are looking for graduates that are not only proficient in content, but also in soft skills. These skills are referred to as *21st Century skills* and include the ability to comprehend material quickly, solve problems, and manage time. When it comes to desired skills in the STEM workplace, communication tops the list. Communication is something that is cited as lacking by both educators and those in the STEM workplace alike. While this generation is very technologically savvy, students don’t know how to effectively communicate...” (Owens, 2015).

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Practitioner in the Spotlight

Webster’s Dictionary defines a Practitioner as someone who is “**actively engaged in an art, discipline or profession**”. A **21st Century Practitioner** is someone who is “actively engaged in the art of the 21st Century Learning Practices” by infusing them in their instruction. This feature of the Newsletter will be shining a monthly spotlight on 21st Century Practitioners in our district who are doing amazing things in their classrooms utilizing the 21st Century Learning Practices.



Ms. Morgan Acuncius, Lincoln Park ES



Can you just give a short background of yourself, what you teach and when you first started using the 21st Century Learning Practices?

My name is Morgan Acuncius and I am currently a 4th grade teacher at Lincoln Park Elementary School. I am currently in my second year of teaching 4th grade. I started using the 21st Century Competencies this past January after a PD was held at my site. After getting a taste of the practices at this PD, I needed to learn more. I took the Practitioner Badge class this year as well.

How has using the 21st-century learning practices transformed your instruction?

While I am still in the beginning stages of implementing the practices into my instruction, I am already seeing a difference in my instruction. After incorporating the 21st Century Practices into my lessons, I have noticed that I am able to create more rigorous and meaningful tasks for my students. The lessons are also more student centered and teach the students valuable life skills, like how to manage their time, instead of just academics. I am preparing my students to not only be successful in school, but in their life after.

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- ◆ [CUE of NEVADA events](#)
- ◆ December 4-10, 2017
Hour of Code
[Click here to learn more.](#)
- ◆ January 18, 2018
Leaders Network
Professional Learning Day #3
- ◆ March 15, 2018
Leaders Network
Professional Learning Day #4

Practitioner in the Spotlight cont.

How has implementing the 21st-century learning practices transformed your students' learning and their achievement?

After implementing the 21st Century Learning Practices, I noticed that my students have become more motivated and independent. The students' quality of work has greatly improved as well. Incorporating tasks that use the Practices gives meaning to what we are doing, instead of just being 'one more thing'. The students are proud of their work and are more engaged in completing their tasks. They have been enjoying the immediate feedback they can receive from their peers and myself.

In thinking about planning with, and implementing, the 21st Century Learning Practices, what advice would you give to someone who is new to 21st Century Learning?

For someone just starting out, the best piece of advice I can give is to start small, try something, and do not be afraid to make mistakes. It has taken many hours of trial and error to get to where I am now. Even now, I am still working to improve what I have to make it even better. Like I teach my students: mistakes are fabulous-they show that we are learning.

Can you describe the activities you are doing related to 21st Century Learning with or without technology and to demonstrate the students' learning.

I have been working with Microsoft OneNote and Teams in an attempt to use technology more often in my class. I have been doing this for a month or so and have had some success. My literature block has mostly been converted from paper copies to various notebooks in OneNote. Guided reading and the coordinating centers are also completed through the iPads. Instead of printing out books from Reading A-Z or articles, students can access the texts through RAZ-Kids or on OneNote. The reading centers and projects are on OneNote for students to work on. Completing these activities using technology allows for more differentiation, fluid groupings, quick and easy adjustments, and less paper used on copies.

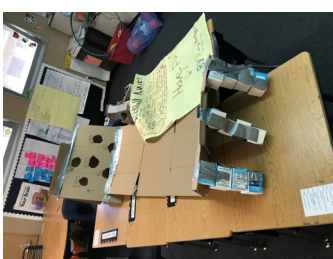
We are doing a couple activities that incorporate the 21st Century Practices. We have begun a variation on literature circles where the students are asked to dig deeper into the text. Students are required to complete their individual tasks before going to their discussion groups. If one person does not complete their individual task, the discussion will not be able to be completed. The students are reading a fictional text and are completing their work in OneNote. I can distribute task pages to individual students and they can share and collaborate through the collaboration space. While this is still new to my class, thus far it has been a success.



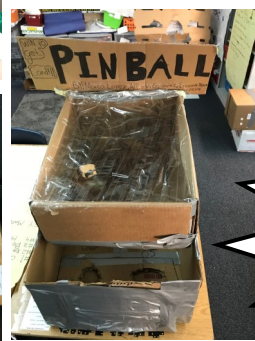
We have also begun working on a new PBL (Project Based Learning) where students will be asked to engineer a device to support a failing piece of a body system. Students are asked to conduct research using texts and the internet in order to learn about a particular system and various ailments associated with it. The students are also asked to collaborate with a group to decide which ailment they would like to engineer a device to correct. Once this project is completed, students will have the opportunity to share their creation with others.



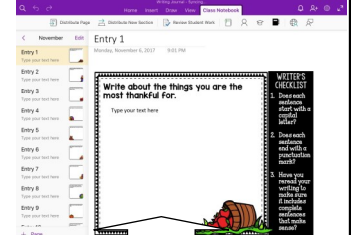
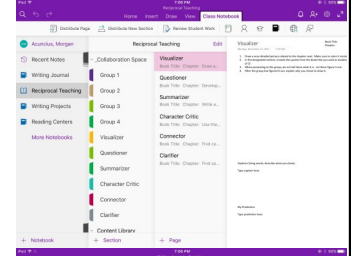
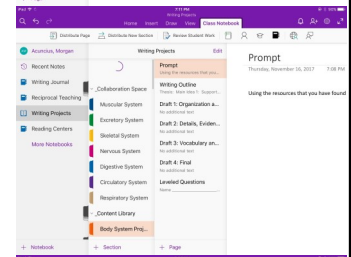
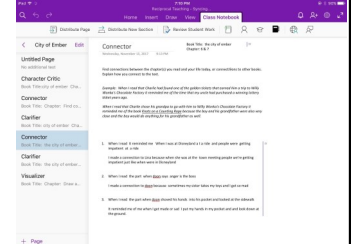
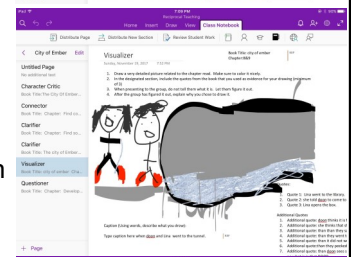
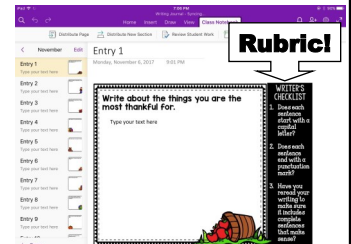
A project that we just finished was for our school's Halloween family night, Fall Frenzy. The students had to collaborate to turn pieces of cardboard and other recycled materials into carnival games that would be played during Fall Frenzy.



Students were able to collaborate, create a game, and present it during the night. The games that the students collaborated on to create were incredible!




**Awesome
Real-World
Problem Solving!**





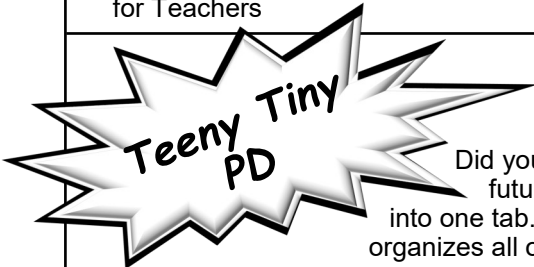
WANTED! 21st Century Exemplar Classrooms We are looking for 21st Century Exemplar Classrooms within Washoe County School District to exhibit the positive student impacts achieved through [21st Century Learning Practices](#). Applications are coming soon, so you can highlight your work and how it enhances students' learning. If chosen as an Exemplar Classroom teacher, your practice will be showcased for your peers, leaders within the district, and professional learning communities beyond Washoe County Schools.

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- ◆ See the Most Popular Microsoft Office 365 Tips and Tricks from 2016 [Here](#).
 - ◆ See the Most Popular Google G-Suite Updates from 2016 [Here](#).
 - ◆ [Here](#) are 25 Great G-Suite Add-Ons & Chrome Extensions for Teachers
 - ◆ [Here](#) are 10 Chrome-ifying Tips and Tricks
 - ◆ [Here](#) are some Best Tech Tips and Tricks for Teachers

Want to see what 21st Century Learning looks like in our School District? Click [here](#) for videos.



Are **YOU** doing amazing things in your classroom with 21st Century Learning Practices? Would you be willing to share these great things with others? We would love to come in and video-tape your students showcasing the 21st Century Learning Practices! Please email Shari Dunn at skdunn@washoeschools.net to schedule. These also make great artifacts for evaluations!

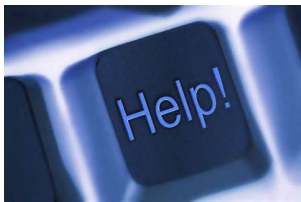


This month's **Teeny Tiny PD** is brought to you by **Terra Graves!**
Terra is shining a spotlight on OneTab for Google Chrome!

Did you know you can consolidate all your online tabs into one place and save them for future reference? OneTab is a Chrome extension which collapses several open tabs into one tab. This conserves browser speed and helps your pages load faster. Additionally, it organizes all of your tabs into groups each time you use it. Watch this video to learn how!

Video: [Teeny-Tiny PD OneTab](#) * Link to [Transcript of Video](#)

More Resources: [Why You Should Never Have More Than Nine Browser Tabs Open](#) *Angus Kidman, Lifehacker*
[Why You Open Too Many Browser Tabs and How to Stop It](#) *Lauren Moon, Trello*



What the Tech? and other Tools

COMING SOON... Have a question related to technology? The 21st Century Learning Division and I.T. are collaborating to create a Question and Answer Forum for your technology related questions. You will be able to browse a wide variety of categories and search for answers to your questions. Are you, at your school site, inundated with the same tech questions over and over again? You and your fellow teachers will be able to search for those answers in this SharePoint site.

10 Best STEM Apps for Kids: Bloglovin Daily Digest– Science is one of those great, hands-on subjects. Apps have the ability to extend learning for kids who love science, technology, engineering and math. And, kids who don't naturally love STEM can benefit from the additional learning activities fun STEM apps can offer.



10 Free Text to Speech Web Tools for the Classroom: Bloglovin Daily Digest– Are you looking for FREE text to speech technology web tools that do not require downloading software and can be used on Chromebooks, laptops or computers? There are a lot out there. Here is a list of 10 different **easy to use** text to speech (TTS) tools students can use to assist with text read-alouds as well as their own writing. TTS technology is also a helpful tool for ELL students and those who struggle with dyslexia.

10 Great Free Apps for High School: Common Sense Education has researched 10 great apps for High School students for everything from ELA to organization.



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Please encourage colleagues at your site to take the Practitioner Badge course!



21st Century Practitioner Badge Courses

Practitioner Spring Badge Course at the Brown Center starting January 23 to March 6, **2018**; 4:15 - 6:15pm
Facilitators: Tina Holland & Dr. Jessica Stepaniak
[Link to Register](#)

*Additional Sections will open up as needed.

21st Century Leader Badge Courses

Prerequisite: Must have successfully completed Practitioner Badge

Leader Badge Course at Brown Center starting March 5, 2018; 4:15- 6:15pm
Facilitators: Tina Holland & Misha Miller-Hornbuckle
[Link to Register](#)

This monthly newsletter brought to you by The 21st Century Learning Division

Mail Stop: Brown Center

Contact us through our website, www.wcsd21.com with Questions, Concerns, Suggestions

Editor: [Dr. Jessica Stepaniak](#)

Check out our webpage frequently for new updates and resources.



EdTech Courses

Explorer Badge - CAMP 21 Online Course
Did you know... You can take Camp 21 more than once to earn credit. There are many options to choose from, so you'll be able to pick something new to learn about and explore!
January 23 to March 23; 1.0 credits
Facilitators: Terra Graves & Misha Miller-Hornbuckle
Registration opening soon - Keep checking MyPGS!

Learn How to Empower Your Students Through Coding - at the Brown Center
December 9, 2017; 8:30 - 4:30pm; 0.5 credits
Facilitator: Tina Holland
[Link to Register](#)

Other Free Webinars & Videos

How to Measure Student Growth for Learning. The measurement of student growth has become a hot topic with regards to value-added models and teacher evaluation. But how are we truly using growth data and multiple measurements to personalize learning pathways for students? Click [here](#) to register and view video.

Leading and Learning: Collaborative Leadership for K-12 Education. Join education thought leader Peter DeWitt for a live discussion on six research-based influences that matter most for collaborative leadership. Click [here](#) to register and view video.

Solving Real-World Issues Through Problem-Based Learning. Video Article from Edutopia. Click [here](#) for full article and video.