Middle Grades Institute

Middle School is Not a Building – Voice, Choice, Community

Castleton State College

June 28, 2010
Goals for today

- Set some historical context/perspective
- Relate to *Middle School is Not a Building*
- Describe/discuss some examples
- Consider implications for you
The Basic Ideas Are…. 

Our “customers” are coming from a different place…… (They are “Digital Natives”)

… At a time when the world is a different place…

… When they have independent access to SO much more information… (Information Age/Web 2.0)

… and when many of us experienced only the “stand and deliver” approach

So what does this mean for middle schools?
But 1\textsuperscript{st}, some context/perspective....

• The concepts aren’t new
  – A Nation at Risk
  – Horace’s Compromise
  – Breaking Ranks in the Middle
  – Turning Points
  – MSNB

• Exacerbated by transformation from:
  – Manufacturing age
  – Information age
  – Connected age
So the basis for this “transformation”

- Our clients are “Digital Natives”
- Technology Influence
- Standards-driven Education and Results
- 21st Century Knowledge & Skills (Globalization)
- What students tell us

“You must BE the change you want to see in the world”
Our “customers? From a different place? Who Are THEY?

Digital Natives!! Who………..

Don’t know life without the Internet!

Regularly use a wide variety of technologies

Define community as a digital place of common interest, not just a shared physical space

MSNB cites video stats!

… and seek to control their environment
Recent Influence: “Web 2.0”

• Evolving... **originally** addressed idea of web being the platform for applications, rather than individual computers

• But web applications open door for collaboration, social networking

**Key Elements**

• Web as platform
• Small pieces loosely joined
• Architecture of participation (collaboration!!)
• Harnessing collective intelligence

Control!

Why is this important?
Examples of Web 2.0 Tools

• Swivel – “Flickr” for stats (Link)
• Gliffy – Diagram making (Link)
• Prezi – Presentation tool (Link)
• Del.icio.us – Collaborative bookmarking (Link)
• Ning – Social Networking (Link)
• Blogs & Wikis – Sharing & collaborating (Link)
• Etherpad – Live collaborative writing (Link)
• bubbl.us – Brainstorming (Link)
• Loosestich – Outlining tool (Link)
• Geogabra – Interactive graphics & algebra (Link)
So what does it look like?

• Student-centered Education
• Leadership in a Student-centered Learning Environment
• Flexible Learning Environments
• Engaged Community Partners
• Results and Indicators of Success

... And what does it mean for schools?

• Applied, project-based and interdisciplinary learning
• Collaborative learning
• Inquiry and investigation
• Technology for learning
• Demonstration of competence
• Personalized learning - Voice AND Choice
• Information access, analysis, synthesis and the generation of new ideas
And…. What are the connections?

MSNB 21C Learning

Click
Examples to consider

After review & gaining some understanding:

• Break into groups of 4-6, and consider……
• Did the example illustrate any goals of MSNB and/or conference theme of “Voice, Choice, Community”?
• Which ones?
• If you were to take some ideas from the example, what would you take and how would you adapt/change it?
Immigration Unit* (Link)

* Immigration Unit – Essential Questions
  - What would cause someone to leave their home country?
  - What was it like for immigrants as they traveled to, arrived at, and lived in the US?
  - How has immigration shaped United States culture both past and present?
  - What were the joys and sorrows of the immigrant experience?
  - What is the current immigrant experience?
  - What should current immigration policy look like?

Immigration Unit
Background

• 4 weeks, approx. nine lessons
• Pre-Assessment – Paper & Pencil addressing essential key questions
• Formative assessments incl exit tickets, journal, wiki and blog entries.
• Summative assessments include a wiki rubric, journal rubric, collaboration rubric, podcast rubric, and blog rubric
• Uses VT GE’s, NETS, and 21st C skills
• Unit is rich with readings, poetry, journaling, multimedia, simulations, analysis, online resources

Katie Reen – Milton School District – Riverdeep Learning Village
Sample Lessons/Activities

• Photo Walk – 20 immigrant photos (8x10) around room. Students select one that “speaks to them the most” and journal:
  1) Who is the person in this photo?
  2) How does this photo make you feel? Why?
  3) Draw a conclusion - I think ________ because ...........
  4) One question that I would ask the person or people in the photo is...........

Sample Lessons/Activities

• Welcome to America – Thru a simulation, students explore the conditions at Ellis Island, Angel Island and Castle Garden as well as the sentimental meaning of the Statue of Liberty.
  • Uses poetry to prompt reflection ( “The Forefather Arrives” by Norbert Krapf & “The New Colossus” by Emma Lazarus)
  • Emotes feelings about sailing into NY Harbor
  • Simulation - immigrants arrive
  • Uses primary source account "Castle Garden" from the 1866 New York Times.
  • Experience waiting room, interrogation area, detaining area, money exchange, cafeteria, hospital, ticket selling area, etc.
  • Complete personal blog entry re: the experience

Katie Reen – Milton School District – Riverdeep Learning Village
Sample Lessons/Activities

- Past to Present – Link past immigration to current issues through examination of multiple perspectives about immigration.
  - Poems for 2 voices - Students team in pairs (immigrant & native, 1866 and 2000 immigrant, voluntary & involuntary immigrant, etc) and write poem about their experience
  - Understand current immigration debate via asst sources (NPR, Youtube, CBS newsclip)
  - Use ProCon.org article re: border fence – must read opposite of their personal view
  - Podcasts re: this issue
Pease Mountain Stewardship Program
Charlotte Central School

• Involves multiple grades, not just middle level
• Started as effort to build nature trail
• Evolved into cooperative effort with students from UVM’s SNR
• Thematic, project-based with community outreach component
• Students choose team & topic within framework
• Publish outcomes on a wiki

(Link)
Parting Comments

1. Know that the goals and directions expressed in MSNB are based on sound, historical research.
   • Don’t underestimate the power of “Voice, Choice, Community”

2. Take time to reflect on your own teaching/work in light of the goals in MSNB.

3. Advocate for these pedagogical approaches with colleagues at different levels and with administrators.

4. Use this week to plan your efforts.
Contact Info

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When all is said and done…
What should “school” look like?

Structurally & Functionally

Let’s start here…. 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Context</th>
<th>Skills Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Global Competition:**             | • Global Awareness  
|                                     | • ICT Literacy  
|                                     | • Creativity & Innovation  
|                                     | • Critical thinking & Problem Solving  
|                                     | • Cross Cultural collaboration  
|                                     | • Entrepreneurship                                                             |
| **Changing Nature of Jobs & Careers:** | • Critical Thinking & Problem Solving  
| (New P21 study)                      | • Innovation & Improvement  
|                                     | • Flexibility & Adaptability  
|                                     | • Leadership & Initiative  
|                                     | • Productivity & Accountability  
|                                     | • Research & learning skills                                                   |
| **Information Growth:**             | • Information Literacy  
|                                     | • ICT Literacy  
|                                     | • Critical Thinking & Problem Solving  
|                                     | • Research & learning skills                                                   |
| **Technology Growth:**              | • Information Literacy  
|                                     | • ICT Literacy  
|                                     | • Critical thinking & Problem Solving  

Is this why... are so popular?

Facebook

Wikipedia

Google Docs & Spreadsheets
Dude—Help me out here.

Can you read question 8?

What is this?

The history test were taking in ten minutes.

Moe took a picture of it last period with her cell phone camera and posted it on her MySpace page, which I’ve been trying to make out on my teenie BlackBerry screen for the past forty-five minutes.

Good use of your study hour. Why do people keep saying that to me?
We can’t base the Future on our Past

- Competitive edge = creativity & innovation
- Abundance
- Asia
- Automation

- Americans compete in global, web-enabled playing field
- Allows for multiple forms of collaboration in real time, without regard to geography, distance even language
21st Century Careers

Number of Jobs:

20th Century
1 – 2 Jobs

21st Century
10 – 15 Jobs

Job Requirement:

Mastery of One Field

Critical Thinking Across Disciplines
A numbers game
Future supply of high school graduates

From OECD
Growth in baseline qualifications
A world of change

Approximated by percentage of persons with high school or equivalent qualifications in the age groups 55-64, 45-55, 45-44 und 25-34 years

- 1990s
- 1980s
- 1970s
- 1960s

From OECD

1. Excluding ISCED 3C short programmes
2. Year of reference 2004
3. Including some ISCED 3C short programmes
On college entrance exam day

• Offices and stock market open one hour later
  … to keep roads clear for students.
• All other students stay at home
  … to keep schools quiet for test-takers.
• Planes are grounded and incoming foreign aircraft circle at 10,000 ft
  … so students are not interrupted for the audio part of the test
Skill Level Changes

1950

- Unskilled: 60%
- Professional: 20%
- Skilled: 20%

1997

- Unskilled: 15%
- Professional: 20%
- Skilled: 65%

National Summit on 21st Century Skills for 21st Century Jobs

7/4/2010
And what do our results tell us?

- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
- New England Comprehensive Assessment Program (NECAP)
- Graduation Rates (Link)

- Significant portion of students are not achieving standards
- Significant variation in performance based on gender and poverty
What do Students say?

12\textsuperscript{th} Graders Perceptions About School

Source: Natl Ed Tech Plan, 2004/2010
Digital Native Characteristics

Marc Prensky points out

Growing up surrounded by digital technologies
Computer use comes naturally
More time on computer than on TV
Internet is first reference source

Natives prefer:
“explore and try” vs. “listen and learn”
Expect rapid change and adapt quickly
Mistakes are opportunities to learn (Video games)
Immediate feedback

"Different kinds of experiences lead to different brain structures, "
Dr. Bruce Berry; Baylor Coll of Med

7/4/2010
Digital Native Characteristics

Common to listen to music, read, IM with friends-
  Multi-tasking comes naturally
  Can perform multi-tasks well (concentrate on multiple open windows)
Dislike linear, directed path through information
  Prefer to wander through many sources of information to construct own meaning
“Community of peers” seen as worldwide