

**Title of Session:** Tech Leaders Roundtable- Bridging the Technology Gap

**Moderator:** Jen Wagner

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Room: On Tap Cafe

**JenW:** We are going to have a very open discussion today -- so you might wish to warm up your fingers!!!

**JenW:** I look forward to everyone's comments!!

**JenW:** I need to warn everyone that I am on my new laptop with a kitten crawling all over my desk -- so hopefully I won't hit any wrong buttons --- and neither will my kitty

**BJ:** Welcome to tonight's Tech Leaders Roundtable. As always, let's start with introductions

**ShereeR:** Hello!

**BJ:** I'm a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In and a teacher in Pennsylvania

**JenW:** Welcome!! I am Jennifer Wagner. I teach in Corona, CA at a private Christian School and I maintain several online projects at [www.technospudprojects.com](http://www.technospudprojects.com)

**TonyD:** I am a technology specialist for a high school in Montana. I also teach an IT Essentials course and Adult Ed Courses.

**ShereeR:** I am an artist /art educator in St. Petersburg Florida. I teach severely emotionally disturbed K-12.

**JenW:** Well -- WELCOME everyone!

**JenW:** We are going to have a very broad category today

**JenW:** I look forward to all your comments -- but I ask that we don't talk over each other

**JenW:** Our Topic Today is

**JenW:** Bridging the Technology Gap

**JenW:** and I am looking for your input on whether you think we (you) your school are meeting the needs of our students. How we could do better? What are we doing already that is great!!

**JenW:** Tony -- I don't mean to pick on you

**JenW:** but could you share some things you do with your HS students??

**JenW:** do you have expectations?? do they??

**JenW:** grins -- or **JeffC** -- you can jump in anytime as well

**TonyD:** I'm not sure exactly what you mean...

**TonyD:** ...by "expectations".

**JenW:** Sorry for being vague

**JenW:** do you have goals for your students?? standards they need to achieve??

**JeffC:** frankly... my expectations for what goes on in public schools diminishes almost daily.

**JenW:** FORGIVE ME --- lets back paddle a bit

**JenW:** I teach Middle School

**JenW:** I am frustrated by their lack of wanting to learn a program and just jump in and conquer it

**JenW:** yet -- that is their learning curve right now

**JenW:** so -- am I helping them, by letting them have freedom to learn

**JenW:** OR am I helping them, by going step by step

**JenW:** Grins -- what are your thoughts

**JenW:** and remember -- this is very BROAD today

**TonyD:** I think you have to guide them step-by-step.

**TonyD:** I wish more of my students were self-starters.

**TonyD:** There are about 5% of them that are.

**JeffC:** NCLB saps the will to learn... and so severely cramps the ability to teach that most educators do virtually nothing with tech. I teach an after school program for middle school students for two hours a day twice a week. I had invited \*every faculty member in the district to attend\*. No one showed (a few students did). I came early to a faculty meeting... it hadn't started yet... I asked the principal if I could have thirty seconds to announce my workshops (where I could support the faculty there)... she said she already had told them.. .and if they hadn't come... they wouldn't... then said I could have twenty seconds (very begrudging).

**JenW:** I would believe that

**TonyD:** The rest are motivated by assignments, grades, etc.

**JenW:** Tony -- do you have a set curriculum??

**JeffC:** being motivated by assignments and grades is completely external and detrimental to the learning process (imho).

**JenW:** can you share the software you use??

**TonyD:** I am teaching this one class for the first time.

**TonyD:** Curriculum is provided by Cisco Networking Academy.

**JenW:** Jeff -- I think I am motivated by Paycheck and praise -- aren't you??

**TonyD:** However, I use many other different tools, including some self-made packets, etc.

**JenW:** Self-made or self-guided?? or both??

**TonyD:** I made the packets myself.

**JenW:** Great!!!

**TonyD:** The curriculum is actually computer-based.

**JenW:** Sheree -- I am sure you have some great things you do with your students

**JenW:** Tony - - cisco is self-guided learning??

**JenW:** sorry, I am unfamiliar with it

**ShereeR:** Yep, I do a lot of things with my kids.

**TonyD:** It's kind of self-guided.

**ShereeR:** My kids are very different though

**JenW:** Sheree -- can you share some?? And how are they learning? Step by step or freedom to explore

**JenW:** Sheree -- grins -- all kids are different.

**ShereeR:** Both

**ShereeR:** Jen, I didn't mean it that way.

**JenW:** Sheree -- do they have goals they are shooting for

**ShereeR:** I KNOW kids are all different.

**JenW:** Yes, Sheree, I understand.....you work with exceptional kids

**JenW:** Yesterday -- I was at the movies-- and there was a commercial for PlayStation, I believe

**JenW:** and the slogan was CHALLENGE EVERYTHING

**JenW:** and this is what the students are learning today

**JenW:** are you seeing that as well in your classes

**BJ:** do you feel that the kids challenge everything, Jen?

**JenW:** Grins -- seems like my students are this week

**JenW:** Tony?? Jeff??? how about you

**BJ** smiles...yes, we all have weeks like that

**JenW:** Perhaps I am just frustrated today.

**JenW:** And wanting to know if I (you) feel you are Bridging the Technology Gap

**JenW:** our students are not learning the same way the teachers are wanting to learn

**JenW:** as Jeff pointed out

**JenW:** and besides threats and more pay -- is there a way to meet in the middle??

**JenW:** Lately I have been reading about No Child Left Behind

**JenW:** but I wonder if it should be No Teacher Left Behind

**JenW:** kids are embracing technology -- with great passion

**JeffC:** Well... for starters... I'd recommend finding ways to accept student likes and dislikes... and go from there... for the most part... students (and teachers) are bored out of their minds.

**JenW:** bored --- meaning???

**JeffC:** Yeah... they will embrace it when given the opportunity... but for the most part... I don't think they are.

**JeffC:** Students don't get to use tech that much... and when they do it isn't that interactive... or student-centered.

**JeffC:** Bored= doing school work for a grade

**JenW:** at your school?? in your district??

**JeffC:** in America

**JenW:** my students get tech twice a week

**JenW:** it's very interactive and student centered

**JeffC:** you're more of the exception then.

**JenW:** still -- grins -- they are bored

**JeffC:** what are they doing with it?

**JenW:** Webpage design

**JenW:** Flash

**JeffC:** are they building websites with kids overseas?

**JenW:** Internet Scavenger Hunts

**JenW:** Jeff -- we tried Think Quest this year

**JeffC:** ok... that is usually pretty good

**JeffC:** thinkquest is good

**JenW:** Honestly -- I hadn't thought of Global Learning for them

**JenW:** that's a great idea

**JenW:** unfortunately our internet hookup seems to stall when we all try to log on

**JenW:** We tried CyberSurfari last year -- kids LOVED it

**JeffC:** I'm not denying that there is good (great) stuff out there... I know there is... but from a support person's point of view... and that's been what I've done for about 6 years now (although because of budget cuts I was laid off three months ago)... it just isn't happening in the K-12 classroom for the most part.

**JenW:** but alas, the site closed down

**JeffC:** Yes...

**JenW:** So Jeff == what are the classroom set ups like where you work

**JeffC:** You get into something good and the site goes down.

**JenW:** is it lab setting or computers in classrooms

**JeffC:** Right now I'm doing an after school program at the local middle school... great computer lab with new equipment.

**JenW:** and internet connection??

**JeffC:** Unfortunately... one of the sites that the kids want to go to (neopets) has been banned by the district... I'm trying to get it unblocked... there is a T1 out

**JenW:** so no internet traffic jams -- that's good

**JenW:** student's patience in the lab (well at my school) is not very good

**JeffC:** Teachers moved to have the site blocked because kids were using it during class time... this really upsets me... because for my after school program... I want it to work... kids \*love\* it... and that is important to me.

**JenW:** I have several students who love NeoPets as well

**JenW:** we use Cybersitter and it isn't a blocked site

**JeffC:** speed isn't the problem... it's the attitude of paranoia... of blocking things out... of making techies block sites because the teachers can't manage their class.

**JenW:** I am not sure it's that they CAN'T -- instead, I think it's they don't know how

**TomL** joined the room.

**JenW:** Hi Tom

**TomL:** hello

**JenW:** I think many teachers are timid of technology

**JenW:** they don't understand that internet toolbar

**JeffC:** yeah... that's part of it... also because there isn't a support person to help the teachers... one of the first layoffs in the district.

**JenW:** Grins -- wish you were near SoCal -- I am teacher and support as well

**JenW:** **TomL**-- this is a tech roundtables meeting -- WELCOME

**JeffC:** when I supported a middle school in California... I turned two empty labs into two full ones by the end of the year...

**JenW:** are you in the Tech World??

**TomL:** thanks, just dropping by to see how this all works.

**JenW:** Great -- we are just having a chat on using Tech in the Classrooms

**JenW:** and Bridging the Gap with teachers

**JenW:** Well -- it seems like its a continual problem with getting teachers comfortable with using something that is so common place to their students

**JeffC:** The bottom line for me Jen, is that educators will not use tech unless given sustained support.

**JenW:** Jeff -- by support -- not only backup for trouble shooting but GOOD tutorials and training

**JeffC:** yes... and I'm not even talking about training in the didactic sense either.

**JenW:** Tom -- tell me a bit about Clarity -- are teachers embracing that technology??

**TomL:** I wish HR depts in districts would look for folks already into technology.

**JeffC:** I'm talking about knowing that there is a polysynchronous network of support available in a wide variety of areas... from software to projects to everything in between.

**JenW:** So Tom -- you are finding people want the technology of CD yearbooks but not giving it to teachers who are already using technology??

**JeffC:** Well... tell them I'm available Tom. The trouble is... that support positions are usually the first cuts (myself included) in K-20+ environments...

**JenW:** I would love our Yearbook to go to CD -- but unfortunately I would be the one to have to do it.

**TomL:** We have retired a lot of teachers in Oregon and lots of new folks coming in. I mean math teachers who use technology, 4th grade teachers who use technology, English teachers who use technology, Principals who use technology -- or at least want to.

**JenW:** grins --and my plate is MORE than full

**JeffC:** Right now I'm just looking to get part time in a number of districts... trouble is... people listen... enjoy my presentation and what I have to offer... but don't have a way to do it financially.

**TomL:** It is cheaper to hire people who are tech savvy than to train them

**JenW:** Does Oregon expect their teachers to be using technology??

**JenW:** in the classroom??

**TomL:** They do in the buildings, but not in the HR department.

**JeffC:** Well... in the College of Education I worked at... yeah... they had to take a class... and I spent the rest of the year supporting them and getting them up to speed... but there is no state requirement... but if you want a job... you better know it.

**JenW:** and the yearbook is always HR -- and I am reading Human Resource -- should I be reading it different??

**JenW:** sorry -- is the yearbook always the HR department??

**TomL:** HR=Human Resources

**TomL:** Yes, we do not give much weight to a teacher's technology knowledge when we hire them, but then we don't have money to train people who don't know.

**JenW:** do you present your product at conferences??

**JenW:** Jeff -- have you presented at conferences??

**JeffC:** Yes

**JeffC:** NCCE

**JeffC:** I'm not product though... I'm tailored support.

**JenW:** NCEE?? National Conference E? E?

**JeffC:** Try this on for size: [tinyurl.com/amen](http://tinyurl.com/amen) NCCE was regional in Portland last year.

**JeffC:** <http://www.tinyurl.com/amen>

**JenW:** Jeff -- I will try it after this session

**JenW:** or - grins I will look at that now

**JenW:** pretty cool Jeff

**JeffC:** Yeah... well... when I was a kid it was called "cheating," now it's called "collaborating."

**JenW:** yes, grins, I read that on your information page

**JeffC:** I've been working with computers since the days of Unix and one 386 in my classroom...

**JenW:** Tom -- do people contact you?? or do you recruit schools as well

**TomL:** I'm mostly doing consulting in Distance Learning.

**JenW:** Tom -- I was just wondering if you found teachers enthused and excited -- or did you have to encourage it

**JenW:** not soliciting in any way

**JenW:** well -- we are almost done -- and I thank you both == for your input

**JenW:** but one more question

**JenW:** Tom -- Jeff -- does Oregon reward teachers usage of Technology??

**JenW:** I know that certain states, NJ, GA, really encourage and reward technological use

**TomL:** I would say that we have more folks that want to use technology than we have technology. Schools encourage technology use unless you want to buy a computer. We're broke here.

**JenW:** as is California

**JenW:** well -- its almost time to wrap up. Any last thoughts??

**JenW:** Tom -- I wish you the best with your company

**TomL:** Now that technology is pretty cheap, we're broke. Lots of Irony.

**JenW:** **JeffC** -- I wish you the best with your job search

**JenW:** Yes, I wish when we had our first technology grant -- computers would have cost what they cost now

**TomL:** Thanks for bringing it together.

**JenW:** we bought our first lab -- 8 computers for \$15,000

**JenW:** yesterday we bought 7 computers for \$4,200

**JenW:** Tom -- no problem, thank you for being a part

**JenW:** we wandered a lot today -- but good discussion

**JenW:** Jeff -- any last comments!!?!?!?

**BJ:** Jen, what is the topic for next month?

**JenW:** TOPIC -- SITES YOU GOTTA SEE

**JenW:** come with your TOP 3 sites to share!!