



EDITOR'S REMARKS

Ann D. Thompson

Times Are Changing

I am sure that my column title is not a revelation to any of our readers, but I do know that we must work to stay informed and proactive in these challenging economic times. It seems clear that both K–12 and higher education are deeply affected by the struggling economy, with differential effects experienced in different parts of the country. Hilary Goldmann, ISTE's governmental affairs officer, is now writing a blog designed to share the latest information on government programs in the area of technology. Checking Hilary's frequently updated blog (<http://www.iste-community.org/profiles/blog/list?user=HilaryGoldmann>) is a very efficient way to keep informed about these important issues.

Most of you know that ISTE, SITE, AACTE, and ATE, among other organizations, have been increasingly active on the legislative front. Thousands of letters to legislators were influential in recent funding of the Enhancing Education through Technology (EETT) program, and we all need to remain vigilant for future funding opportunities. Both Hilary's blog and the ISTE website (<http://www.iste.org>) are excellent sources of updated information.

As we work together to create funding opportunities for our work, the issue of the effect of technology interventions in schools on improved student learning is at the forefront. We know that funders from both the private and public sectors are concerned about this question. Accepting this challenge, many of us continue to work to develop sound methodology for demonstrating the effects of technology on student learning, and a new book titled *Framing Research on Technology and Student Learning in the Content Areas* (edited by L. Bell, L. Schrum, & A. Thompson, 2008) provides a valuable resource for this work. As one of the editors for this book, I am impressed with the quality of the content-area chapters authored by educational researchers from mathematics, science, social studies, English, literacy, reading, early childhood, and special education. Each of the chapter authors describes a research project based in content-specific tools and the methodology used in this research. Although each chapter is firmly based in a content area, important lessons for researchers also occur across the chapters.

I believe that most of us recognize that issues of funding provide some new challenges for our field and that we must work together to address these issues. I also believe that people attracted to the field of technology in education seem to thrive on change and new ideas. So we may be in the right place at the right time!

Our articles for this issue help illustrate some of the new ideas that characterize our changing field. Jill Ardley's article, "Unanticipated Findings: Gains by Cooperating Teachers via Video-mediated Conferencing," demonstrates how video-mediated conferencing can change teacher practice by promoting reflection, increasing student engagement in learning, and providing experienced teachers with an opportunity to

use 21st-century tools. Although ICTs are changing what it means to be literate in the digital age, in the article "Digital Natives as Preservice Teachers: What Technology Preparation Is Needed?" Jing Lei found that most preservice teachers who used Web 2.0 technologies in their personal lives failed to realize how they could be integrated into classroom learning and teaching. This finding suggests that sophisticated uses ICTs may not occur more seamlessly as "digital natives" enter the teaching workforce unless explicit instruction is provided for how ICTs can be integrated meaningfully into classroom instruction. The final two articles, "Teaching Formative Assessment Strategies to Preservice Teachers: Exploring the Use of Handheld Computing to Facilitate the Action Research Process" by Kristin Redington Bennett and Ann C. Cunningham and "Tools for Data-driven Decision Making in Teacher Education: Designing a Portal to Conduct Field Observation Inquiry" by Gerry Swan, have important implications for the role technology can play in promoting data-driven teacher reflection that results in positive change for classroom instruction, an outcome central to our field.

Hear & Be Heard!

- Download and respond to a year's worth of free author commentaries about recent articles in JCTE.

Check out
JCTE Author
Perspectives
Podcasts



www.iste.org/podcasts

