



## Dream **BIG!**

ISTE President **Trina Davis** encourages educators to refine their visions, advance their efforts, and ultimately expand their students' horizons.

**“Dream BIG.** As educators we have, through our classrooms (face-to-face and virtual), the ability to awaken young minds to a world of possibilities and promise.”

**R**ecently, I found myself reflecting on NECC 2008, and I wanted to share some of the ideas that I highlighted during my opening address. I hope that many of you were able to fuel your imagination at the conference, and connect in ways that will ultimately help you play a role in transforming teaching and learning. As we think about transformative events, they start or take place when the need for change and the opportunity for change coincide.

Think of all the events that have led to a transformation of one kind or another. The international anti-apartheid movement, the creation of the United Nations, the invention of the World Wide Web, or the civil rights movement—I believe all had something in common. They were all—regardless of their ultimate size and scope—envisioned, nurtured, and grown from a small group of dedicated, passionate people convening to address an issue or cause who connected with and attracted others to join them, and acted in a concerted and focused way until

the change, the transformation they sought, happened.

As educators, we have an amazing opportunity to add to the list of transformative events. Supported by technology, we can use our collective knowledge, experience, and passion to connect with others to transform the way we teach and the way our students learn. I'd like to suggest five simple, actionable things you can do to personally nurture and help grow the dynamic movement of educators who are advancing the effective and appropriate use of technology to improve teaching and learning:

- Be a powerful advocate for educational technology
- Share your knowledge and passion (across your entire sphere of influence)
- Showcase your work and your students' work in creative and innovative ways
- Use all of the resources available to you to help effect change, and
- Dream BIG!

The need for advocacy for state and federal funding for educational technology was communicated across several venues at NECC and is especially significant during this election

year. Educating the public, the politicians, and others who control the purse strings is always a challenge, and it must be a priority! This message was heeded by several conference goers—more than 3,000 letters were sent to Congress by the fourth day of the conference (<http://www.iste.org/advocacy>).

Above all, it's essential that we dream big. We must have high expectations for our students and think critically about how technology can help them achieve those expectations. The possibilities are limitless when smart, committed people have a vision for their students, their classrooms, or their organizations. We must continue to learn better ways to engage our students, challenge their thinking, assess their progress, and ultimately expand their horizons. I believe that the change we seek will ensure that education is the means by which our children will be prepared to participate in the transformation of their world.

So many of you are already addressing my short list and are making a tremendous difference in the lives of children around the world. Please share your successes and your stories with me at [president@iste.org](mailto:president@iste.org).

**Editor's Note:** Trina's complete address is available at [http://center.uoregon.edu/ISTE/NECC2008/program/video\\_on\\_demand.php](http://center.uoregon.edu/ISTE/NECC2008/program/video_on_demand.php). ■