

Champions for Children™ as Champions for Change

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The school year begins with potential and promise. Anxious and enthusiastic parents send off their treasured children – sometimes for the first time. Students stream through the school doors feeling brave, cautious, self-conscious, and hopeful all at once. Teachers prepare for another year of challenges and possibilities while working to establish the right mix of what has worked in the past and what will best ready kids for the future. And you? You are expected to lead them all.

This day—this year—is not the same as the last. Change has continued to happen at exponential speeds. Over the summer months, the kids entering your schools have likely spent 585 hours on media, about one-third of those hours on the Internet and about one-fourth of those in front of the TV. More text messages will be sent on the day you read this than there are people on the planet. The kids you see walk through the school doors today may pursue college majors or be employed at jobs and use technologies that have not yet been created. **The kids are different because of their experiences and their futures.**

The human, intellectual, and language balance in the world is changing, too. In the minutes it takes you to read this, 60 new babies will be born in the U.S., 244 in China and 351 in India. Both countries have more honors students than the U.S. has children. In 2006, both China and India produced over twice as many college graduates as did the U.S. All college graduates in India speak English. In eight years, it is predicted China will be the number one English speaking country in the world. **The world is different because of populations and priorities.**

Education is compelled not only to respond but to provide visible leadership as these transitions occur. **There are several things you can do to prepare your learners, teachers and communities for the future.**

1. Become informed and share information about the changes taking place in the workplace and the world.
2. Ask yourselves what changes need to be made to accomplish your school/district mission for an unknown future.
3. Adapt your staff hiring and training practices to support a culture of change.
4. Use internal and external resources to redefine and communicate the essential skills that will be required for successful graduates in addition to the current “basic skills,” i.e. massive information management, global communications skills, and self-directed learning competence.
5. Let your communities know how your schools will be changing to meet the needs of the future.
6. Consistently use and update communication “tools” including e-mail, Web sites, blogs, podcasts, cable television, etc.

Some of the above information has been taken from Shift Happens by Karl Fisch, assisted by Scott McLeod, shifthappens.wikispaces.com

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