CASBO Briefs

December '09/January '10

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President's Message

A few thoughts from Sherri DiNello, CASBO's President

I'm sure that as I write this message to start the New Year, I should be thinking of something really profound to say, but, honestly I am still trying to figure out how to pronounce the year. How ever you are saying: two thousand ten, twenty ten, Y2K plus 10, it is hard to believe it has been ten years since we wasted so much time planning what to do when our computers blew up?

It really is amazing to think back just one decade at how much has changed. In terms of technology alone, ten years ago, somehow my family survived with 1 cell phone (mine), 1 computer, 1 email account (mine), no ipods and 1 game console (Nintendo) and there was no such thing as MapQuest. Life was so simple; I just didn't know it then. As I look around my house tonight, there are 4 cell phones being charged, 3 computers in use, 5 email accounts being checked, 4 ipods floating around and 3 game consoles (Play station, Wii and Xbox) down in the basement and I can't leave out the newest toy, a GPS set up in the car.

I take my cell phone with me everywhere I go even though no one calls me. I seem to only receive emails and texts because somehow in the last decade we have lost the art of conversation. I mean really think about it, a new language was developed during the past ten years. Hav u lrnd how 2 read it. LOL ;-)

Think about the changes in your office in the past 10 years. In the year 2000 could you imagine that someday your Superintendent would request less than a 5% budget increase, teachers agreeing to a GWI of zero and freezing on step, using local dollars to fund students in your town that choose to go to a magnet school and filing quarterly reports on stimulus money. I think not.

I cannot imagine the changes in store for us during this new decade. One thing is for sure, we will continue to be in for changes and challenges so don't get too comfortable.

I would like you to know that your leadership team will be meeting in March to review our strategic plan. I would love for you to share your thoughts or vision for CASBO with me via phone or email so I can share them with the full board. Think about what contributions you can make to CASBO over the next decade and what do you feel CASBO should offer you.

Member Recognition—Jack Levine

The United States Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Radiation and Indoor Air is delighted to announce that Jack Levine has won a 2009 Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools (IAQ TFS) Connector Award. This is a significant achievement, given the number and quality of applications received this year. Mr. Levine was presented with the award at a ceremony on January 14, 2010, at the EPA's IAQ Tools for Schools 10th Symposium in Washington, DC.

The selection panel was particularly impressed with his efforts to encourage school officials throughout Connecticut to embrace the *IAQ Tools for Schools* Program and utilize the Action Kit. As Director of Finance and Administration at Amity Regional School District, Jack Levine has been a leader in spreading the word about IAQ Tools for Schools Programs within Connecticut schools. Since becoming involved with schools' IAQ issues in 2002, Mr. Levine has encouraged school officials throughout the state to embrace the IAQ Tools for Schools Program and utilize its Action Kit. He also created a extremely innovative protocol of using a "Swat Team" of personnel to immediately address IAQ complaints and concerns. His dedication to the IAQ Tools for Schools Program led to Amity Regional School District No. 5 being awarded the National Excellence Award in 2006, and the National Model of Sustained Excellence Award in 2008. Mr. Levine also implemented the program at North Haven Public School, which won the National Excellence Award in 2004 under his leadership. Mr. Levine has made concerted efforts to communicate IAQ activities to internal school audiences and the larger community. He developed an IAQ Tools for Schools Newsletter to highlight the District's achievements, to credit custodians for their hard work, and to encourage staff to report any concerns they may have.

Mr. Levine's leadership has been recognized by the Connecticut Association of School Business Officials (CASBO) as the 2007 Celebrated School Business Official in Connecticut and by the Connecticut State Board of Education. Mr. Levine also serves as the CASBO representative on the Connecticut School Indoor Environment Resource Team.

The panel was impressed with his being recognized by numerous state-level organizations for his hard work. This award recognizes Jack as an outstanding "IAQ Champion" who has fully embraced the true meaning and spirit of the IAQ Tools for Schools Program. It is the agency's hope that additional individuals and schools throughout the region, and the country, will follow in his footsteps in an effort to improve IAQ in their schools.

The National *IAQ TfS* Connector Award recognizes outstanding individuals and organizations promoting healthy IAQ in schools by taking action aligned with the *IAQ TfS* Framework for Effective School IAQ Management and in the spirit of the *IAQ TfS* Connector. The *IAQ TfS* Connector is the central communication and networking platform for the *IAQ TfS* Program, offering resources that foster mutual assistance and support in implementing IAQ management programs within the nationwide *IAQ TfS* Network. EPA's Connector resources include a listserv, e-newsletters, special events, and other broad, national efforts to bring the *IAQ TfS* network together as a community. Winners of the National *IAQ TfS* Connector Award are individuals and organizations that demonstrate a significant dedication to student and staff health and wellness, and have taken steps to leave a positive, lasting impact on school buildings, staff and students and the entire community.

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Conquering the Digital Divide

Most of us prefer to walk backward into the future, a posture which may be uncomfortable, but which at least allows us to keep on looking at familiar things as long as we can. Although this article is written for association executives, it is equally applicable to your workforce, and more so, to your district in terms of student learning.

Thinking about generational differences in terms of age is akin to taking comfort in looking at the familiar while the real, profound changes occur beyond our zone of awareness. Young workers have lived their entire lives with PCs, the internet, and video games. Their brains are truly wired differently, and associations must learn how to spark these minds. — Charles Handy

Introduction

When we speak of generational differences, we often immediately fall into discussions of generation X, generation Y, millennials, and most recently, generation Z (2001-2011). We deploy these traditional demographics because this is the way we've been taught to think about generational diversity in our membership and workplace. Sociologists and demographers slice the generations into neat 10-year columns and extrapolate life experiences that amount to, essentially, cultural differences. The generations experience life through varying cultural lenses. Understanding the lens helps provide insight into how we view our world and our place in it.

Like so much else, the advent of the digital era challenges this construct. Recent research shows that dividing the generations according to age blocks may be, as Handy says, walking backward into the future. Thinking about generational differences in terms of age is akin to taking comfort in looking at the familiar while the real, profound changes occur beyond our zone of awareness in our blind spots. The challenge that Handy lays down is to step out of the familiar and into the less comfortable position of the unfamiliar.

This step into the unfamiliar demands a new way of thinking about the generational divide, specifically the cognitive differences between those who were born into the digital era, the "digital natives," and those who were not, the "digital immigrants." Because digital natives are heavily influenced cognitively and culturally by the advent and use of video games, this discussion must also examine the impact of these games on the development of character, sociability, and leadership in the digital native generation, also known as the gaming generation. This generation has much to offer associations both as members and as employees.

Recognizing their abilities and strengths will help position associations to take full advantage of the rich contributions digital natives can and will make when properly deployed. An awareness of differences between digital natives and immigrants will help mitigate the confusion and frustration that often occur when two people from vastly different cultures try to communicate without fully understanding that they use the same language to very different ends.

Digital Natives vs. Digital Immigrants

Digital natives are those currently 35 years old or younger, and in aggregate they are so large a group that they currently outnumber even the baby boomers (in the United States there are 90 million digital natives and 70 million baby boomers)[1]. Born into a digitally connected society, they have never known what it is like to live without computers and video games. Digital natives, born after 1974, grew up with digital games either at home, at the mall, or in a movie theater.[2] The demarcation of 1974 is significant because that is the year the first video game, Pong, appeared. That remarkably simple Atari game, no more than a black screen with vertical lines and a dot, ushered in a multi-billion dollar gaming industry and, with it, vast cognitive changes that the research community is just beginning to recognize and plumb.

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Green Buildings Strategies = Ease Fiscal, Energy, Wellness

Article by Mitch Kogut, Education Energy Project Coordinator, TRANE, Email: mitch.kogut@trane.com, Phone: 860.678.3319

Our schools are in trouble and an increasing number of school business officials are looking to green construction strategies to address the issues. The challenges are all too familiar: Disappearing budgets, increasing responsibilities, growing student populations, and aging infrastructures. Interior environments may be in disrepair, often with inadequate HVAC systems, poor acoustics, even substandard plumbing.

Can "green building strategies" help? Research suggests "yes." Defined by the U.S. EPA, green building, sometimes called sustainable building, is the practice of creating healthier and more resource-efficient models of construction, renovation, operation, maintenance, and demolition. More often, green school designs are based on the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, the national consensus green building standard.

Green building takes into account the building's entire lifecycle impact. Using an average of 33 percent less energy than conventionally designed schools, green schools pay lower utility bills than conventional schools. Green building can also reduce schools' use of other resources. For example, green construction can lead to a 32 percent reduction in water use, according to "Greening America's School."

Moreover, decreasing such operational costs means freeing up budgets to fund teachers and other expenditures that directly impact student learning.

Considerations for going green If you've decided to try on the potential benefits of green building in your school system, there are a few crucial considerations ahead. The first issue generally raised in regard to any construction, but particularly green building, is budget. When building green, schools must plan for slightly higher initial costs, but keep in mind that green building will create savings that will almost always pay for the added costs. A few options exist that could ease this budget burden. For example, explore funding alternatives, such as performance contracting, which provides financing for facility improvements that have longer-term payback through guaranteed energy savings, as well as incentives from state and federal agencies.

One Connecticut school district took this approach at an intermediate school. Changes made through a PACT™ (Performance Agreement for Comfort with Trane), reduced the electrical consumption of their HVAC system by 50% and their oil consumption of their HVAC system by 50% and their oil consumption by 42% and achieved an Energy Star rating for them.

Green building demands a careful, thorough approach. Consider the following steps in order to ensure your system's green building success:

Assemble a team with your district's demands in mind. The school's design and planning staff should select architects, engineers, and systems solutions providers who fully understand the district's financial and performance objectives and can work closely with district administrators to develop solutions.

Set clear goals for the project, which might include reducing energy consumption, designing superior learning environments, increasing student performance, improving health and safety, supporting community values, sustainable operation, meeting community objectives, or others.

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Digital Divide (Cont'd)

Consider:

- Microsoft conservatively estimates the gaming market to be approximately $9 billion.[3]

- Ninety-seven percent of American children ages 2-17 have regular access to video games. Eighty-six percent play on a console like Xbox, PlayStation, or Wii. Seventy-three percent play games on a desktop or laptop computer. Sixty percent use a portable gaming device and 48 percent use a cell phone or handheld organizer.[4]

- The Sony PlayStation alone is in 25 percent of all U.S. homes. In fact, PlayStation is the biggest success in Sony ís history and the source of nearly half its profits.[5]

- Five out of 10 Americans—about 145 million consumers and employees—play video games in one form or another. Thirty-nine percent of computer gamers are women.[6]

Of those who play massively multiplayer online role playing games (MMORPGs)[7], [u1]with World of Warcraft and The Sims Online being two of the most popular, 43 percent are ages 18-49, 35 percent are younger than 18, and 19 percent are 50 or older.[8] The average time spent playing MMORPGs per week is 22 hours.[9]
Natives are extremely comfortable around computers and computing; they do not consider computers and the internet to be a major "technological advance." Rather, computers just are. Natives swim effortlessly in the technological waters while digital immigrants, those born into an analog world, notice the water all the time and frequently remark on the fact that it's wet. The water will always feel a bit foreign to them.

This phenomenon manifests in stories immigrants tell each other, marveling at natives' skill. One colleague enjoys the story of his 8-year-old nephew. Observing his mother about to discard a damaged laptop, the nephew nagged for permission to take it apart. Anticipating a mess, she relegated him to the back yard. Within an hour he came back inside eager to demonstrate a newly functional computer. "At eight years old!" the uncle exclaimed. The child thought nothing of it. Just as earlier generations took electricity, the telephone, radio, and television for granted, today's technologies aren't innovative novelties to those born to them. They are an unnoticed part of the fabric of life.

There is a big difference, however, with the impact of today's technologies as opposed to those introduced prior to the immigrants' birth. No prior technological advance has had such a profound cognitive impact as computing.

Those who grow up with computers and gaming think in ways far differently from those who did not. Natives grow into adults who process information in radically new ways. "They leap around," says William Winn, head of the Learning Center at the University of Washington Human Interface Technology Lab, "It's as though their cognitive structures were parallel, not sequential."

Neuroscientists have discovered that different kinds of experiences lead to different brain structures. No longer is the brain considered "set" by age three. Today's research shows a much more pliable brain, one that changes and adapts, depending on the inputs. As a result, digital natives have developed four distinct capacities[10] that are critical to any association's success in the 21st century:

- **Distributed cognition:** The ability to act meaningfully with tools that expand mental capacities;

- **Collective intelligence:** The ability to pool knowledge and compare notes with others toward a common goal;

- **Networking:** The ability to search for, synthesize, and disseminate information;

- **Negotiation:** The ability to travel across diverse communities, discerning and respecting multiple perspectives and grasping and following alternative norms.

Because of their ability to think in parallel structures and to take in hugely diverse information simultaneously, natives possess a uniquely improvisational skill set. They are adept at thinking and acting "in the moment." It is through gaming that natives developed the ability to adopt alternative identities for the purpose of exploration and discovery. This gives them the ability to consider alternative points of view and to play around with concepts when considering new ideas or perspectives. They understand simulation and how to interpret processes in order to make them more effective. Most important, they are able to quickly survey the environment and focus in on the most important details. They have the facility to easily track the flow of information regardless of platform or means.[11]

What is clear is that associations "that 'get' games will unlock assets at every level of their workforces. Associations that don't will wonder where all their best employees went."[12]

Article was published in the ASAE Journal of Association Leadership by Susan E. Fox, CAE

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Member Spotlight is an opportunity to get to know a fellow member better or catch-up with a retired friend. Thank you to Danielle Batchelder for serving as writer and editor of this column.

Holly McCalla, Business Manager
Griswold Public Schools

Holly McCalla has just recently joined our CASBO family. Holly began her School Business Manager career at Griswold Public Schools as of November 13, 2009! Holly is new to the public sector. Before accepting the job as Business Manager, Holly worked in the hotel industry. Holly held numerous positions within the hotel industry for the past 15 years but her last position was as a General Manager for a Connecticut based Marriot Hotel.

Holly was born in Jamestown, NY and grew up in a tiny town called Sherman, NY where Holly said, "There are more cows than people!" Holly spent her adolescences living in NY. When it was time to go to college, Holly went to Mercyhurst College in Erie, PA where she received her Bachelors Degree in Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management with a Minor in Meetings and Conventions Management. After college Holly moved to Detroit, MI for two years then came to Connecticut for 7 years. In 2004 Holly moved to Syracuse, NY for 4 years and then moved back to Connecticut in 2008 (For Good). Holly currently lives in New London with her husband, Darrin of 7 years, and her son, Kaleb.

Holly grew up on a dairy farm where her parents put her to work around age 10! Other than working on her family's dairy farm, Holly's first jobs were as a hotel maid at Webb's Motel in New York and as a candy and gift shop clerk at Goat Milk Fudge Factory in New York.

I have had the pleasure of getting to know Holly over the past couple months. Holly enjoys joking around and is a fun and energetic person as many of you will soon learn. When asked what her favorite thing about this profession was, Holly's response was, "I thought this answer was the same for everyone... budget season?"

Holly's desire to become a school business manager stemmed from wanting a career that was outside of the hotel/corporate world that would allow her skill set to transfer as well as creating a better balance between work and family. After Holly had her son she soon realized that working long hours, nights, weekends and sometimes even holidays was not what she wanted anymore. She wanted to spend more time with her husband and son while still being a successful career woman.

Holly's favorite way to spend free time is relaxing with her family either watching a sporting event on TV or being at one in person. Holly's ideal vacation spot is anywhere that she can be with her entire family. However, "good weather and cold beverages are a bonus." If Holly could be anywhere in the world, doing anything she wanted right now, she would be in an "RV (a big one!) with 10 members of her family on a 3 week vacation traveling across the country...(National Lampoon's Vacation, anyone?)"

I wonder if Holly would still feel that way after spending the first couple days in an RV with that many family members!!! YIKES!

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Green Building (cont'd)

Continued from page 4

Use a whole-building approach that takes all the building's systems and how they interact with one another into consideration. An integrated approach will lead to optimal building and occupant performance and also help secure funding through government grants and incentives.

Consider LEED certification. The LEED certification and documentation process has been designed to be more user-friendly than ever, and the process is now entirely on-line. Steps to LEED:

- Register your intent to certify before breaking ground.
- Submit design phase credits at the early stages and then move to the construction phase, enabling your team to receive ongoing feedback throughout the project's progression.

Once the building is completed and all the documents have been submitted, USGBC will review the building and award a LEED certification based on how many points the project earned. LEED on-line is currently available for new construction, commercial interiors and existing building applications.

Learn from your peers. Your local U.S. Green Buildings Council chapter will be able to help you find a green school in your area.

Worth the look

When faced with mounting fiscal, energy, and wellness challenges, more and more school boards across the country are employing green building strategies – some with the aid of alternative funding, such as performance contracts, grants and government incentives. Their successes are in themselves encouraging – and are all more the reasons for us to take a look as well.

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What's New

SDE Manager Named

Please join us in welcoming Eugene Croce as the Manager of the Bureau of Grants Management at the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Eugene has been with the State Department of Education for nearly 32 years, most recently as a Fiscal Manager in the Bureau of Fiscal Services. His experience in internal operations and grants processing/reporting will be invaluable as he takes on his new role. Eugene can be reached at 860-713-6466 or Eugene.Croce@ct.gov .

CASBO Member Database Upgrade

The finishing touches are being put on the new upgraded membership database. It is scheduled to go live in early February. Some of the changes you'll see include:

Record set-up: The district and the individual will have separate records with a relationship between the two. This will allow for multiple individual records tied to one district record

Demographic information collection: District information such as square miles, enrollment, budget, etc. will be maintained in the district record which will allow for benchmarking and easy data collection

Customizable searches: Members will be able to search for other members based upon the demographic information. For example, you are interested in districts in your county with an enrollment of X,XXX and X number of school sites, you'll be able to search for and obtain a list of those particular members.

More info to come along with online training.

CASBO Calendar

Leadership Meetings

February 11, 2010

May 20, 2010

Quarterly Workshops—

Hawthorne Inn, Berlin

March 5, 2010—
REGISTRATION WILL BE ON LINE SOON — CHECK THE WEBSITE

Institute '10—Hartford Marriott

June 3-4, 2010

ASBO Annual Meeting—Orlando

September 24-27, 2010