Community of Practice for Local and International Collaboration

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Communities of Practice (CoP)

- Communities of practice are groups of people who share a passion for something that they know how to do and who interact regularly to learn how to do it better.” (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002)

Three Elements of CoP

a) A Domain of knowledge: Common purpose and shared issues (Identity, Value, and Membership)

b) A Community of people: The ways members interact with one another (based on Mutual respect and Trust)

c) The shared Practice: What members are developing (A set of ideas, tools, information, stories and documents)
What is BCT Network?

Building Community through Telecollaboration

- BCT Network is a province-wide initiative with educators and administrators from English school boards across Quebec.

- “To encourage, facilitate and support collaboration among students, teachers and educational leaders to enhance ICT-supported learning across the community.”

Objectives of BCT Network

- a) To build an online CoP to support collaboration across Quebec.
- b) To facilitate the just-in-time learning of ICT tools and eventually include students in collaborative projects.
- c) To encourage professional conversations amongst teachers and educational leaders within the BCT Network.
How does BCT Network work?

- 50 Elementary School Teachers from 9 School Boards
- Four Face-to-Face BCT Professional Learning Sessions
- Online Communication and Collaboration
  - Sakai Discussion Forum
  - BCT Website (http://bctcollaboration.wikispaces.com)
The Evolution of the BCT Network

Phase I (2007-2009)

ICT use
Collaborative
reflection

Teacher Practice

Student Learning Activities & Outcomes

Phase II (2009-2011)

ICT use
Collaborative
reflection

Leadership Participatory Design

Teacher Practice

Student Learning Activities & Outcomes
Not a static project.

Evolved according to what the teachers’ needs are.

“BCT Face-to-Face meetings, they evolved because of what the feedback was from the teacher.”
Collaboration between students
Collaborative Classroom Projects: Global Warming
Collaboration between teachers
Collaboration in a School

People who have different abilities
- What we’re doing with computers
- How we use them in our classroom
- What type of training we want to have
- How we can support each other

Teckie Tuesday Group
Teckie Tuesday Group Meeting
International Collaboration

“Learning network of teachers around the world

“What is really fascinating to me is being in touch with teachers in Australia. I can see what they are doing in their classroom.”
Lessons Learned: Advice to Teachers

- Not be afraid to ask
- Learn as you need
- Be surrounded by people
- Join and stick with it
- One step at a time
- Not to give up
Lessons Learned: BCT Success Factors

- Amazing network of teachers who respect each other and communicate very well
- Supportive administration (time, place, and tools)
- Incredible desire to learn and to share the knowledge with other teachers
- Building professional learning opportunities
Challenges and Considerations

- How to satisfy the diverse needs of teachers with diverse expertise;
- Jump starting and scaffolding a culture of sharing and reflection; and
- Stimulating a higher level of participation on-line.
Implications for Community Level

- Clearly identified goals of the group - Revisit and confirm the goals periodically;
- Cultivating a safe, respectful atmosphere;
- Importance of moderator, facilitator, lead teacher; and
- Joint design of Participation framework and guideline
Implications for Organizational Level

- **Technology**: Technology at the school board level and teachers' technological proficiency (BUT.. Pedagogical competency is first~!)

- **Motivation**: Teachers’ actual needs, expectations, and their practical situations - Teacher leadership and teacher ownership

- **Time to participate**: Time constraints and their voluntary participation

- **Project goals**: The shared visions and goals among teachers

- **Sustainability**: Transfer of ownership and accountability to the school boards (or other organization)
Final Remark

“Our duty is to prepare our students for the 21st century.”

“Learn as you need.”
THANK YOU!

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