

**Ellis, K. (2003). Maine laptop initiative. *Edutopia*. Video retrieved from <http://www.edutopia.org/mli-video>**

The video shows the effect on teaching and learning of the Maine state-wide initiative, begun during a time of budget surplus, to provide not only a laptop for each middle school student, but the training for each teacher to support incorporating innovative use of this new tool in the classroom. The video focused on science, which is useful for me in building my vision project, where I want to encourage the science teachers to use the library, since they currently do not. The MIT researchers, including Dr. Seymour Pappert had preliminary conclusions that students were more engaged and learned more with the laptops than before. Teachers and students emphasized that the creation of interconnected work, where different products were linked, increased student collaboration skills. The computers came with many great applications which could be used to create presentations of finished products, and the publication and sharing of student learning at the end of the process was considered one of the most useful and exciting improvements available to students with the laptops. The governor of Maine, who was interviewed, reminded us of the power of “*everyone*”—all had them; the laptops were a tool for increasing equity.

**Platoni, K. (2009, December). California goes digital. *Edutopia*. 5 (6). 14-16**

In the current financial situation California cannot provide the access to computers or readers to make this initiative practical, but the state has begun the process of moving toward open source, free, and digital texts. Currently the state adopts new texts every 6 years, which can be a problem especially in Science. State-reviewed PDF's could be updated every 2 years. Also, through non-profits like CK-12, teachers can cut and paste material from reviewed Creative Commons licensed texts to create and adapt their own

‘flexbooks’, which they can also text-edit. Teachers can also make ‘playlists’ of material and invite others to comment or add. The etexts also have many of the great digital usage aids, such as searchable text, audio files, and hyperlinked keywords. Students can even access such content on cell phones, which are frequently owned even by lower income students. The US Dept. of Ed. prioritized online and multimedia content in its most recent Plan. In 2008 350 million was allocated by CA for open source instructional materials; 600 million is what was paid for new texts in 2007!

**Rich, M. (2009, February 15). In web age, library job gets update. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/16/books/16libr.html?pagewanted=1&\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/16/books/16libr.html?pagewanted=1&_r=1)**

This is a very charming article with a great embedded video. I shows Stephanie Rosalia, who is trying to do everything we are learning about in class in an elementary library in immigrant community of Brighton Beach in Brooklyn> Even though she’s in an elementary school, I am getting ideas from her for my Vision Project—like the grant she wrote for a Smart Board and 29 laptops for lessons in the library. She had a great information literacy class where the students searched a website which she had made—it looked real, but was full of erroneous information on Christopher Columbus. The article had an overview of changing school library and librarian roles, and cited statistics about how library services are one of the first things to be cut in budget crises, even though they are directly in support of pressing achievement goals. Ms. Rosalia started off on the right foot by introducing herself to colleagues as “the information literacy teacher” and offering to collaborate with them on lessons. Teachers say she has taught them how to ask more challenging research questions (no more bird units!) and how to do a better job themselves in assessing the Internet. At the end of the video Ms. Rosalia says, “The library should be the center of the school, and it’s a pity when it’s not”. It was very inspirational.

**Martin, L. (2009) Blue Coat School Library Refurbishment Update Retrieved from [.http://vimeo.com/7329019](http://vimeo.com/7329019)**

This video shows the end results of the refurbishment of a British school library. Grant money was used, and there are no before pictures, though several people described the old space as dingy and boring. The new space looks like any generic newer American school library, and the technology is basic, but the students are so enthused about the library because they were asked for and gave input into the library's re-design, and they can now see that their recommendations were incorporated. For my vision project, I now feel that is a 'duh'—have to do it.

**Valenza, J. (2009, October 14). My 2.0 day and the response/rant about our cover argument. *School Library Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/blog/1340000334/post/1530049753.html>**

Well-known Library Media Specialist Joyce Valenza shares an overview of her day, which shows how Web 2.0 technology is embedded in her planning, instruction, and professional development. She uses Twitter for staying updated on news, adding important content to her pathfinders as it comes in, to maintain their currency. She consults with teachers about resources such as streaming video available for use in designing more effective and engaging math lessons. She uses Skype and Google documents to work on professional collaboration with her AASL committee. She worked with students who would be using wikis and Noodlebib to create trailers for their summer read, investigating other possible tools such as Glockster and also possibilities for digital publication of the final products. It was very inspiring to see what can be done with these tools when they are fully incorporated, and made me consider why Joyce Valenza is able

to accomplish all this when other librarians can't seem to find the time or resources. There was a discussion at the end of the article about implementing new technology. One woman wrote a very thoughtful response about one of the challenges faced by librarians at unsupported or under funded schools. Joyce Valenza's response was an Iacocca quote—"lead, follow, or get out of the way". I have to say it always galls me when someone uses Iacocca as an example of great leadership: a. without corporate welfare, his skills would have been irrelevant, b. That turn-around was in no way a permanent or genuine change. On the one hand, I agreed with her that you make change by insisting on change and making it happen. On the other hand, I found myself in sympathy with the responders. A librarian who has virtually no funding for student access to technology can write grants. Good. Let's look at the Web 2.0 day and clear the space for that old-fashioned word-processing task, and let's remember that some school librarians have no support people at all. The minutes in the workday are finite.

**California Department of Education (2009, November 14). *School libraries*. Retrieved from <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/lb/>**

Wow—what a great collection of resources for use by a librarian trying to preserve the library and her job! There is an amazingly thorough list of standards for each grade level, and the daunting list of skills ought to cause a District to think twice about cutting teacher-librarians, at least if the skills are tested on the achievement tests! There is also a link to the standards for the facility—what the state recommends schools have by way of staffing, new books per year, etc.

Of course, these are yet to be approved—maybe the legislature will be too ashamed to recommend resources they are so far from being able to provide! There are also 3 foundationally useful sites for finding and learning Web 2.0 library tools.

**Cicchetti, R. Transitioning to a learning commons. [in press]**

[Concord-Carlisle Regional High School]

This article describes step by step the process followed in a Concord MA high school to turn a dusty, over-filled library into a modern Learning Commons. A great thing about the process described is that, other than her princely budget for assistants, the process was not expensive, relying on judicious decisions (weeding, etc), elbow grease (shelf-moving), and, of course, a different vision about what a library learning space should be. The vision clarifies the parts of such a Commons—instructional work needs to happen; collaborative learning and creativity; the love of reading, and then also teacher/staff development. The main impetus for the change comes from refocusing on the library as a space for student learning—everything else is decided based on that. First a lot of useless old stuff was cleared out. It almost sounded like their old librarian had that hoarder's psychosis. Through relatively small local grants they set up an 8-station media lab and acquired some comfortable and portable furniture. The library staff redirected some District technology into the library—a Mac cart, some stationary computers, an interactive board for the instruction area, and a large display screen to run news ads announcements. The remaining material in the library was reorganized to be easily navigable by students.

When a beginning had been made Ms. Cicchetti bribed her way into departmental meetings with cookies, so that she could have a chance to present her proposal for

collaborative instruction. From her data it seems, as in most schools, that she still has a job to sell Science and Math. However, library use by both individuals and classes is way up.

Cachets and staff have also developed a standards-based curriculum for information literacy instruction, and the library has also developed into a place for teacher learning, where new tools and collaborative innovation can be explored. Next year they plan to rededicate as a learning commons.

The whole process of cleaning out, re-arranging, and reimagining a whole big school library sounds like so much fun

**Whelan, D.L. (2008, January 1). Do school libraries need a double shot of espresso? *School Library Journal*, 1/1/2008**

I was considering installing a café in my vision project library revamp, so I was happy to find this article. Jim Chadwell, the Principal of a high school in Texas, wanted a Starbucks/Barnes and Noble type atmosphere, and the school now has a Java City franchise in the library. On a smaller scale, Texas LMS Jacey Dailey went to Wal Mart and purchased two Black and Decker Home Café systems.

Research such as that done by Richard Sweeney shows that ‘millennial’ are more likely to support services that provide more individual choices and options. School libraries in the article that have instituted cafes have found visits and checkouts have risen. Concerns voiced about cafes included stains and odors from spills and vermin attracting trash, but it sounds as if these problems can be ameliorated. A more serious concern is the involvement of large corporate franchises in schools.

On the whole, creating cafes in libraries seems to have benefits which outweigh the problems. They provide an atmosphere where students feel respected and trusted, and

they strengthen a positive association with books.

**Wells, S. (2009, March 1). iPod Touch middle school pilot.**

**Message posted to <http://www.iste-community.org/forum/topics/ipod-touch-middle-school-pilot>**

**Ledesma, Patrick. The iPod touch: Managing a classroom set. Message posted to <http://edtechbytes.com/?p=173>**

I am considering writing a grant for a set of iPod touches for use in the English Dept., and also wanted to include them in my vision project, so I was glad to find these postings. Mr. Ledesma discusses the nitty-gritty of how to manage these resources so they don't get broken or destroyed. Syncing 29 iPod touches while making sure you saved all the data somewhere is a fairly time-consuming undertaking.

The Wells posting describes a pilot in using the I Pod touch. AVID classes used it with the understanding that as student leaders they would have to share in the evaluation and in the education of others. The school has interdisciplinary teams and sets of iPod touches were shared among these teams. The teachers like many of the apps, especially Wordbook, Brain Tuner, Whiteboard, and of course all the included applications.

At \$ 200-400 it makes sense to purchase these for student research. For the teachers, I really hope they all have laptops too, and are just using the iPod for lesson planning. I certainly love that iphone for research on the fly (and even occasionally calling people), but I wouldn't want to do my school business on it!

**Morris, B. (2005). The Emerging school library media center from the past into the future. *Knowledge Quest*, 33(5), 22-26.**

This article is a few years old, but many of its visions for evolving library media centers still remain in the future. Morris predicts, perhaps playfully, that libraries will be called

‘cybraries’, and librarians ‘cybrarians’. She predicts that they will become, as information managers, among the most valued experts in the school. Reviewing the sites of teacher librarians such as Joyce Valenza, one can certainly see that this is occurring in some places. When it is not occurring, it may be, as Valenza seems to imply, that the librarian has not been assertive or creative enough to forge a path toward a new future. It may also be that some obstacles are proving difficult to move. Morris talks about the smart phone-type devices students will have, and we do see movement in this direction, as some schools strive to provide a laptop for each child, and others experiment with the iPod touch.

Morris points out that there has been concern among teacher librarians that their status is low, especially in an area where information skills are so crucial, reading ability is more important than ever, and research has shown so clearly the benefits of the library media center. Lack of technology, professional development, and funding are some of the obstacles to progress she discusses. She gives an overview of states that are putting content online, and says “Online distance learning is the instructional model for the future”. The author was so upset when the conference speaker didn’t see a future for librarians, but other content area teachers are disposable, apparently. I thought that was kind of funny. I teach a course where a percentage of the curriculum is delivered online, and the attention span of a struggling student for remedial online content is only a little longer than it is for traditional delivery—without the personal relationships forged, these kids do not succeed.

**Baule, S. (2005). Planning CONSIDERATIONS FOR Library Media Center**



**Facilities. Library Media Connection, 24(3), 14-15.**

This school superintendent has great practical advice based on experience for planning a library media center, either from scratch or during improvements. One of his main pieces of unanticipated advice is not to set your center up so that pieces of it can easily be commandeered. For example, if the librarian sets up a separate information skills classroom, then the principal can easily schedule another class in there—think in terms of flexible space and moveable walls. Not only does this protect the territory, but it's better for the varied uses and set-ups needed for the students. He emphasizes the superiority of more flexible, portable technology and gives great advice about lines of sight and lighting (natural is great, but don't forget about the needs of projecting images!