

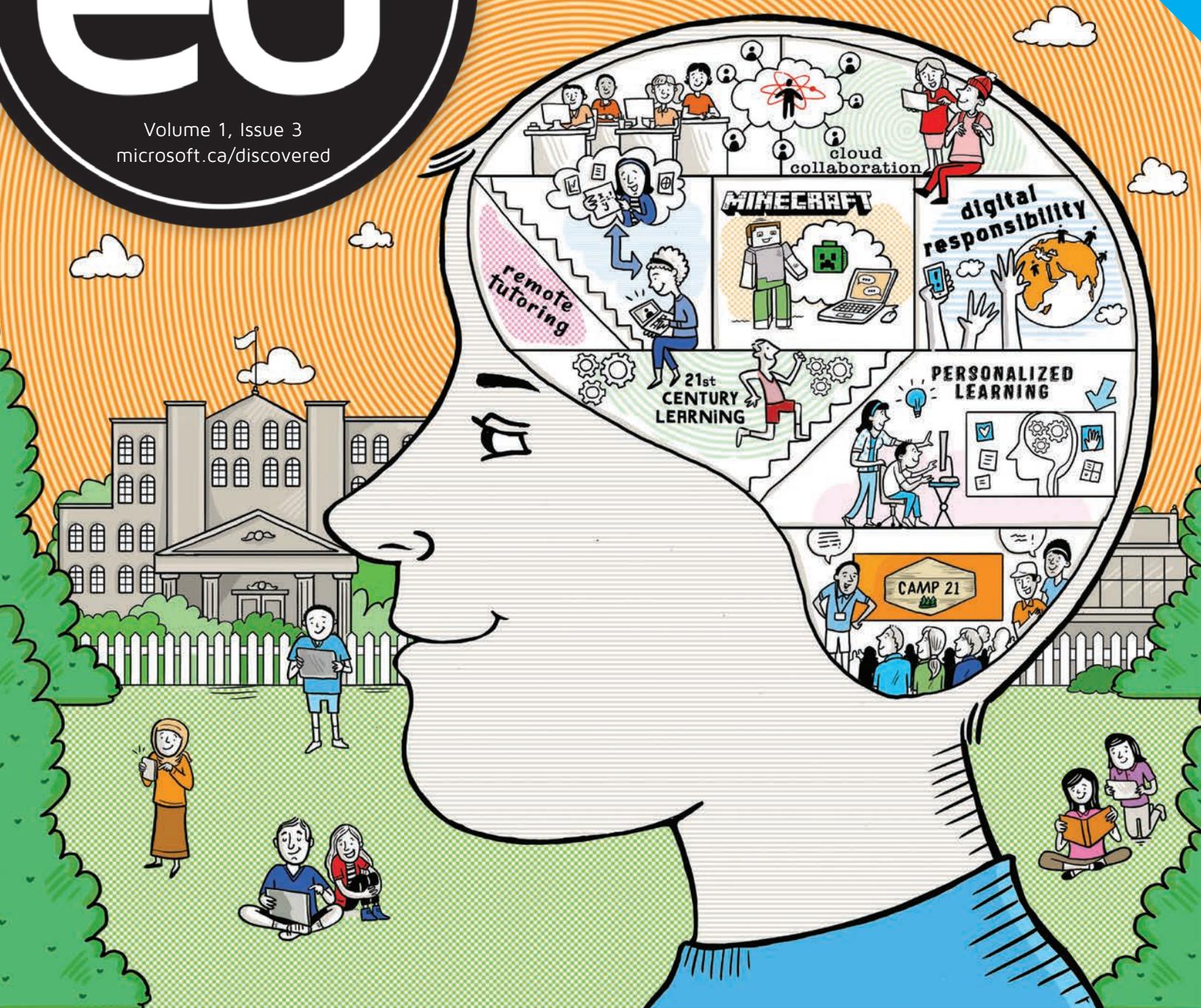
Education  
Discovered

# ed

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LONG LIVE LEARNING



**HOMEROOM**  
SHOWCASE SCHOOLS  
Beacons for change



**LOL: LOVE OF  
LEARNING**  
Remote tutoring in BC



**HAPPENINGS**  
CAMP 21  
Preparing teachers for the  
digital classroom



**CLOUD  
COLLABORATION**  
Virtualizing a campus community



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# WELCOME

## PUT THE FOCUS BACK ON PEOPLE

If there's one message coming across loud and clear as I travel around the world, visiting with educators, students and parents, it's this: innovation is driven by people, not technology.

Some of the most creative ideas in education today originate with what I call silent stars — passionate educators who are making amazing things happen. Not only are they imagining what is possible, they're enabling people to achieve it. They don't start with the latest technology and figure out how to apply it; they start with an idea and determine how to make it happen.

It's a simple yet powerful shift based on the notion *Ask First, Then Do*. Ask yourselves 'How do we get students to be more successful?' or 'How do we grow achievement?' or even 'How can we connect students to our community in new ways?' Then select technology as a tool to drive those changes.

That's how to achieve transformation that's holistic and sustainable. And it's the only way technology will become the fabric of a school and a tool for learning as opposed to simply a cool, new toy.

A few years ago, when we were launching our first Microsoft Innovative Educator program at a tough inner city school, I remember having all sorts of fancy ideas for bringing technology into the classrooms. Then I asked parents what they wanted most. Their answer stopped me short.

They said they wanted to keep their children safe, a response that underscored just how important it is to place our focus on people first, technology second.

At Microsoft, we're all about discovering, celebrating and encouraging these innovative educators. Transformative change is already under way across the education sector and we want to partner with you to drive it forward. Let's create a bright future together.

**Anthony Salcito**  
Vice President, Microsoft Worldwide Education

Do you have a silent star in your community?  
Tell us what they're up to on Yammer at <http://aka.ms/education-discovered>

# SHOWCASE SCHOOLS: BEACONS FOR CHANGE

*When you're trying to find your way, it helps to follow a guide. That's the spirit behind Microsoft Showcase Schools, an invitation-only program that recognizes innovative Canadian schools.*

Earlier this year, three of Canada's Top Five Showcase Schools participated in the Connect 2015 conference. Meet Chad Taylor, Principal, Tamworth Elementary School, ON; Cal Armstrong, Director, Teaching & Technology Innovation, Appleby College, ON; and Tom Rees, Assistant Principal, Monsignor Fee Otterson School, AB — leaders of change who hope to inspire others. Here's a snapshot of their exchange:

## How are you using collaboration tools in your schools?

**CHAD:** OneNote for me is a game-changer. It started out as a special education project to solve the explosive binder dilemma. Now, no student loses their sheets, assignments or school work; it's in OneNote and they can access it from anywhere.

**CAL:** We introduced laptops in 1998 and pen tablets in 2004, but we never achieved that huge pedagogical shift in the classroom until we introduced OneNote four years ago. It was the one thing that propelled tablet use across our school and motivated the deepening of collaboration.

**TOM:** Moving to Office 365 is freeing up our server and helping boost collaboration within our school. We have 700GB on our server and right now, every time I log on, there's a big red warning telling me we have 16GB left. Once the teachers get moved over to Office 365, our server will be free.

## What are your strategies for bringing teachers along?

**CHAD:** It starts with enthusiasm and a willingness to step outside the box. At every staff meeting I hold a brief professional development session so everyone understands it's okay to take risks. Have I had pushback from staff? Yes. But my answer is: 'Do what's good for our kids and I'm here to help you.'

**CAL:** When we decided to go with OneNote, our approach was: 'This is now available if you want to use it.' Within weeks, 85 percent of our faculty was using it. It's now mandated across the school because of the positive feedback we've received.

**TOM:** We have quite a few teachers who are really on board, and many others who are excited about technology, so it's been very much a trickle-down effect. We'd like to see everybody using OneNote because we think it's beneficial for kids as well as administrators.

## How is your new vision for learning impacting kids and parents?

**CHAD:** As more teachers use tools like OneNote to communicate, collaboration with parents is growing and I'd like us to be even more transparent. We don't need to hide what we're teaching. It should be out there so we can solicit feedback.

**CAL:** I can go into any teacher's OneNote notebook, see what they're teaching, how they're doing it, grab a sample and talk to them about it. Never before have I been able to go into so many 'classrooms' so many times throughout the year and collect the excellence that is going on.

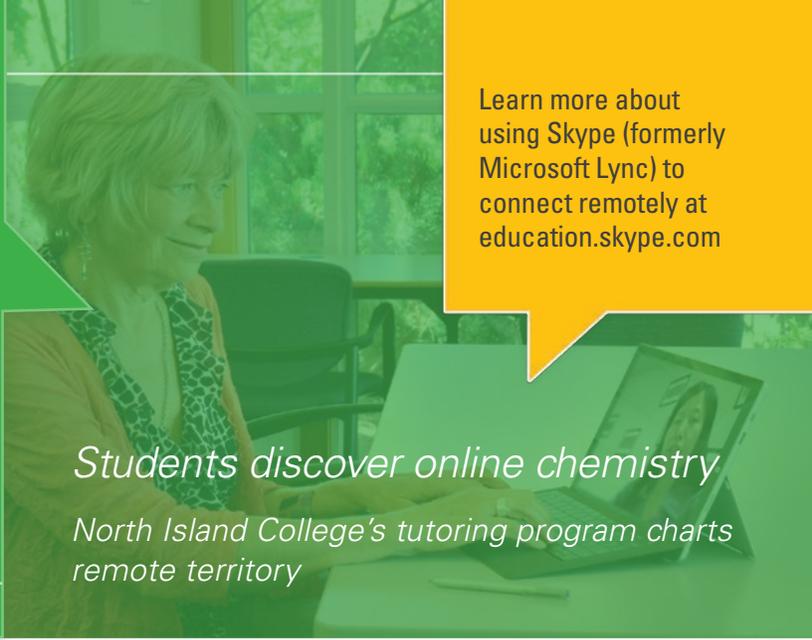
**TOM:** Our difficulty in education is that children today learn in a different way than we learned. The Showcase Schools program helps those teachers who feel uncomfortable with technology get to a point where they feel a little more at ease. As long as you're willing to stick your toe in, you will find things that are going to be beneficial for you and your students.

Is your school an Office365 environment? Do you use Microsoft tools to impact learning? If so and you'd like to create an engaging 21st century learning environment, contact Lia De Cicco-Remu at [liade@microsoft.com](mailto:liade@microsoft.com)



# LOVE OF LEARNING

Learn more about using Skype (formerly Microsoft Lync) to connect remotely at [education.skype.com](http://education.skype.com)



*Students discover online chemistry  
North Island College's tutoring program charts  
remote territory*

It's late on a Wednesday afternoon and Daniel, a first-year Atmospheric Science student at North Island College (NIC) in B.C., is preparing to meet his Chemistry tutor. He signs out a tablet from the library, signs into Microsoft Lync and within seconds connects to his tutor, Julia, a third-year student located a 35-minute drive away.

For the next hour they pore over documents and illustrations, and even discuss questions stored on Daniel's Facebook page. For Daniel, it's as though she's seated next to him.

"At first I didn't think it would work," says Daniel. "It came as a surprise to me how well we can see each other, write on a screen and discuss things."

Daniel and Julia are among a growing group of students taking part in NIC's Peer Tutoring program. Launched in 2008, peer tutoring is a free service that covers most disciplines. Two years ago, the college made a strategic decision to boost the program's reach by linking students and tutors online.

"We don't have a full roster of tutors at every site, so adding the online capability extends our ability to deliver services," says Sheila Doncaster, NIC's peer tutor co-ordinator.

Distributed learning is an integral part of NIC's history. It started out as a distance-only college in 1975 and today operates multiple campuses in Campbell River, Comox Valley, Port Alberni and Mount Waddington, as well as several community outreach programs.

Given the very large and remote nature of the geographical area it serves — like Flores Island where it's a 90-minute boat ride to the nearest store — the college was an early adopter of videoconferencing and continues to embrace newer technologies. When the peer tutoring program was looking for a remote platform, Microsoft Lync on Surface 3 tablets was an instinctive choice, says Kevin Walters, director of IT Infrastructure and Ed Tech at NIC.

"We gave it a try and it's been a huge success," says Walters, noting that tablets, pens and headsets are available for sign-out at each campus. "Participants access active documents so it's as if they're writing on the same copy. It's an amazing collaborative tool."

Daniel studies at NIC's Comox Valley campus. When he required the services of a Chemistry tutor and no one was available on-site, Doncaster recommended he connect with Julia who studies at the Campbell River campus. Though hesitant at first, they soon realized that connecting online was no different than being in the same room.

"There is a tendency for students to want face-to-face if they can have it and I appreciate that," says Doncaster. "Though our experience is limited to date, the technical ability of some students is quite astounding and we find that remote tutoring is readily adopted by these students."

NIC offers everything from plumbing, nursing, business, fine art, culinary art and healthcare programs to academic upgrading and English-as-a-second language. In addition, the school serves a diverse student population, including a large number of Aboriginal students, both active and retired military students, international students, and students with disabilities. Remote peer tutoring is new ground and is expected to grow.

"Tutoring improves relations between students," says Julia, adding that she learned just as much from Daniel as he did from her. "Using the whiteboard in Lync is like chalking on a blackboard. It's just another way to get the message across that 'You can do this!'"



Have you discovered innovative ways to connect students?  
Tell us about them at [educationdiscovered@microsoft.com](mailto:educationdiscovered@microsoft.com)



# How Queen's University is harnessing the power of the cloud to foster collaboration and innovation

Learn more about Office 365 at [products.office.com/en-CA](https://products.office.com/en-CA)

## VIRTUALIZING A CAMPUS COMMUNITY

When Colin Zarzour has something important to share with his fellow students — whether it's a research paper or a potentially groundbreaking idea related to their campus-based tech startup — the fourth-year politics undergrad knows exactly where to go.

From any location and with whatever device he has handy, Zarzour logs onto Queen's University's cloud-based Office 365 suite of applications, opens OneNote, and logs the documents or ideas. As those ideas evolve or as new information is found, he can easily post notes or additional documents to the project hub for his peers to review.

"Collaborating on our startup using the cloud is really just an extension of the kinds of things we do in the classroom," says Zarzour. "It helps build a real sense of community, not just collaboration. All too often people use technology to replace person-to-person contact. But whether we're learning or building a business, I think that's the wrong way to think about cloud collaboration."

To emphasize his point, Zarzour shares a little more about Apollo, the campus-based startup he and three fellow Queen's students are building. Apollo serves as a hub to connect potential investors with companies seeking capital funding.

"We don't use the cloud to replace communications," Zarzour insists. "Instead, we use it to supplement them. For example, we use it as a memory hub for everything we read on our own time, and bank it in the cloud so our collective knowledge comes together. From here we can easily go deeper using programs like Word and Excel. Ultimately, the cloud enables us to keep the project in a single place that we can access anywhere."

### Virtual community spurs learning and creativity

The university's chief information officer and associate vice principal Bo Wandschneider had this type of interaction in mind when he first started exploring collaboration services. Not only did he recognize the role cloud-based applications would have in terms of student learning and productivity, he also suspected it would help foster an even more vibrant campus community. He was right. Offered free to students, Office 365 has not only expanded the learning resources at Queen's, it has also become an integral part of what Wandschneider refers to as the university's "interactive residential experience."

"When you go into Office 365, everyone around you is from Queen's," he says. "So you virtualize that community. It's just like



walking into a classroom and knowing that everyone is part of the institution. And when you walk into Office 365, everyone there is from Queen's as well. You can't do that if everybody brings their own email account."

While Queen's opted for a "passive implementation" of the university's cloud services — participation isn't mandatory — Wandschneider reports that student acceptance is high. And he's equally excited by just how far students like Zarzour and his peers are pushing the technology's boundaries.

"We're letting them run with it," Wandschneider says. "Students have neat ideas and creative ways for utilizing these tools, so we can learn from them. And if we aren't responsive to their needs and desires with our sandbox, they're going to go out and find their own sandbox. I'd rather keep them in our virtual residential experience."



Does your university or school encourage collaboration by providing cloud-based tools and apps? Share your experiences with us at [educationdiscovered@microsoft.com](mailto:educationdiscovered@microsoft.com)

Learn how you can introduce 21st century learning skills to your school at <https://www.educatornetwork.com/pd/21CLD/Overview>

# PERSONALIZED LEARNING

By **CONNIE DAVIS**

Connie Davis is a Teacher Librarian and Educational Technology (ET) Catalyst at St. Mark's Community School in Saskatoon, SK.

## *Transforming our classrooms with 21st century learning*

Today's students have grown up with technology, and as a result are able to use the latest hi-tech devices as if it's second nature. How these students receive information is vastly different from even a decade ago.

This accessible technology allowed all students to engage differently in class. Their learning became contextual by allowing them to find quick answers to fill learning gaps. Furthermore, students with learning challenges were able to engage, integrate and use 21st century skills to become more involved in the mainstream classroom. Using apps like Book Creator to tell stories and Windows Live Movie Maker to create stop animation movies, all students now communicate equally.

My conclusion? While the use of technology levels the playing field, the use of 21st century learning skills creates a common set of expectations. The use of Windows technology like Surface Pro 2 really does engage kids, giving them the opportunity to do their best learning while giving them the confidence to try something new. Being in a 1:1 environment allows them to choose the correct tool for the task, while building knowledge in context.

In schools with a high immigrant population such as mine, having access to devices with built-in apps, like Bing Translator, allows students who speak minimal English to do grade-level work and actively participate in class projects. In fact, we've seen our English Language Learners (ELLs) go from quiet and introverted to animated classroom leaders and school role models. Technology helps them find their voice and be confident to share it. We've also seen how this new approach to technology in the classroom has led to improved research skills, heightened critical thinking, cultural awareness and creativity.

The key to this success? Early adoption. It's much better to teach 21st century learning skills from the very beginning and build on them each year. In fact, we're so confident about 21st century learning skills and personalized learning at St. Mark's that we're moving out of pilot mode and are working toward making a full paradigm shift.

“The use of Windows technology like Surface Pro 2 really does engage kids

At schools across Canada, educators are recognizing how technology can create an accessible and inclusive learning environment that reflects the way students use it. St. Mark's Community School in Saskatoon is no exception, and it was my privilege to oversee the launch of a pilot program here three years ago that saw students in one class receive lessons adjusted to focus on 21st century learning skills such as global learning partnerships, digital literacy and collaboration.

Now in grade 5, these students have been taught in this style since grade 2 and I've seen a real transformation in their increased confidence, their desire to learn, and their engagement level. These students are now using devices in a much more meaningful way than simply as consumption tools. Through personalized learning, they're being empowered to share and build on their knowledge by connecting outside the classroom, creating cross-curricular understandings, and connecting across age, language and class barriers. In short, these students have developed their voice and are using it, through technology, to make a change in their world.

This past year, one of the school's grade 8 classrooms was equipped one-to-one (1:1) with Surface Pro 2 devices.



Want to learn more about St. Mark's Community School's experiences with 21st century learning? Contact Connie Davis at [cdavis@gscs.sk.ca](mailto:cdavis@gscs.sk.ca)



# PROGRAMMING FOR SUCCESS

*Despite his challenges with literacy, Bradley Monteith intends to create a computer game one day. Thanks to his school's willingness to think outside the box, he just might.*

Bradley, a senior at Charles P. Allen High School in Bedford, NS, has autism. Though high-functioning, he essentially can't read or write. In fact, most days he'd rather be anywhere other than in school.

When Science and Technology teacher Paul Geddes saw Bradley's name on the roster for his Grade 12 computer programming course in 2014, he was left scratching his head. "I didn't know what I was going to present to this young man that would be appropriate for his learning level, that would encourage rather than discourage him," says Geddes. "I was concerned about how I was going to meet his needs in my course."

At about the same time, Geddes discovered the Microsoft Virtual Academy, a free online training environment that delivers on-demand courses designed to help learners proceed at their own pace. *Introduction to Programming with Python – For Beginners* jumped out as an obvious choice for Bradley.

Geddes helped Bradley set up his free online account which he can access from both home and school. During class time, Bradley put on his headphones, logged in and watched instructional videos, typing out code and replaying the instructions as often as needed. In one term, he taught himself how to declare variables, how to input data and how to concatenate statements.

"We're amazed at the progress he's made," says Geddes. "I have four introductory textbooks on Python in my library and they can't touch that video. It's phenomenal."



"Access to the academy has enabled Bradley to learn programming," adds Mary Middleton, a Learning Centre teacher at Charles P. Allen. "His dream is to build a video game one day. He has the idea in his head, he just needs to know how to put it all together and this is the beginning step for him."

Like many students with autism, Bradley works well with routine. He also depends on adults in the school to support him with daily tasks, so being able to work independently is a "big deal," says Middleton. "It's so empowering for him because he's not relying on anybody else to help him," she says. "It's not always easy as educators to find the right tool to match the right student. We got really lucky with this one."

Bradley the newfound programmer has some firm ideas about how to improve existing games like Minecraft. He also looks forward to developing his own.

"After high school, I would like to make games but I need to know more about programming first," says Bradley, who considers Python a practice language. "Programming is like a machine where you put the pieces together to make it work."

Moving forward, Geddes expects to see Bradley back at it this fall. "We've lit a fire," he says, adding that Bradley did well in his final Computer Programming 12 exam (including writing a Python program) and had a very successful semester. "Hopefully this is something Bradley will continue to engage in long after he graduates."



Finding the right assistive technology is no easy task. Do you have similar success stories to share? Drop us a line at [educationdiscovered@microsoft.com](mailto:educationdiscovered@microsoft.com)



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# CAMP 21

Follow Camp 21 on Twitter: #MSFTCamp21, or visit [microsoft.com/en-ca/web/education/summer-camps](http://microsoft.com/en-ca/web/education/summer-camps) for news of upcoming events.

Preparing teachers for the digital classroom

# HAPPENINGS

## TEACHING DIGITAL RESPONSIBILITY

*When it comes to online safety, it's not just kids who need educating*

From the devastating effects of cyberbullying to the appalling impact of online predators, Paul Gillespie had seen enough. The former Toronto policeman decided to take action by co-founding the Kids Internet Safety Alliance (KINSA), which helps protect children in an increasingly connected and often dangerous world.

To get the message across, KINSA has distributed learning materials to some 400,000 Canadian students in grades 3-6. And it created NobodyStandsAlone, an anti-cyberbullying website and campaign aimed directly at educators and children.

"Every child is connected, and there's never going to be enough 'good guys' to keep an eye on them all," says Gillespie. "So the only way to keep children safe is through education and awareness. It really needs to be in the curriculum, and frontline teachers need to be trained."

Training frontline teachers is exactly what Dr. Robin Bright does. A professor of education at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta, Bright makes it her mission to ensure her students receive at least some coaching in the areas of digital literacy and responsibility.

One of her go-to resources is a MediaSmarts initiative called *Use, Understand, and Create: A Digital Literacy Framework for Canadian Schools* which highlights six key elements of digital literacy that help keep kids safe: ethics and empathy, privacy and security, community engagement, digital health, consumer awareness, and finding and verifying.

"Sometimes it's a bit of an eye-opener," Bright says, adding that it challenges many student teachers to think critically of their own online habits. "They'll check their social media pages and question whether their postings are appropriate for their new position as a teacher. It can be a real wake-up call."

More than 200 educators from across Ontario descended upon the Toronto suburb of Woodbridge recently to participate in Camp 21, an interactive technology workshop aimed at empowering K-12 teachers by providing the tools and skillsets needed for the digital classroom.

Hosted by the Microsoft Educator Network, a global support network dedicated to improving student learning, this fun professional development (PD) event was the first of six scheduled to take place across Canada.

Highlights included keynote addresses from Corinne Hoisington, associate professor of information systems technology at Central Virginia Community College in Lynchburg, Va., and Ontario teacher/web developer Brian Aspinall. Numerous workshops were also available, providing hands-on experience with tools such as Sway, a recently launched web presentation app that enables users to work collaboratively across devices on projects that combine text and media.

According to Aspinall, events like Camp 21 are popular due to their ability to deliver hands-on learning combined with useful curriculum connections. "Not only

do teachers receive PD with respect to the tools they're introduced to, they also receive tips on how to use them to teach curriculum. Events like this go a long way to providing the bridge between pedagogy and technology," he says, adding that he's planning to participate at future events in the series.

Attendees were also introduced to the Microsoft Innovative Educator (MIE) program, a global initiative geared to improving student outcomes by encouraging teachers to find new ways to use technology in the classroom. The program offers the tools and training needed to enable teachers to spearhead innovation in their schools and encourages them to share their success with their peers. In addition to their camp completion certificates, Camp 21 participants received MIE badges and were encouraged to apply to the MIE Expert program, a three-year program offering additional professional and career development opportunities.



Did you participate in Camp 21? Email us at [educationdiscovered@microsoft.com](mailto:educationdiscovered@microsoft.com) and let us know what you learned!