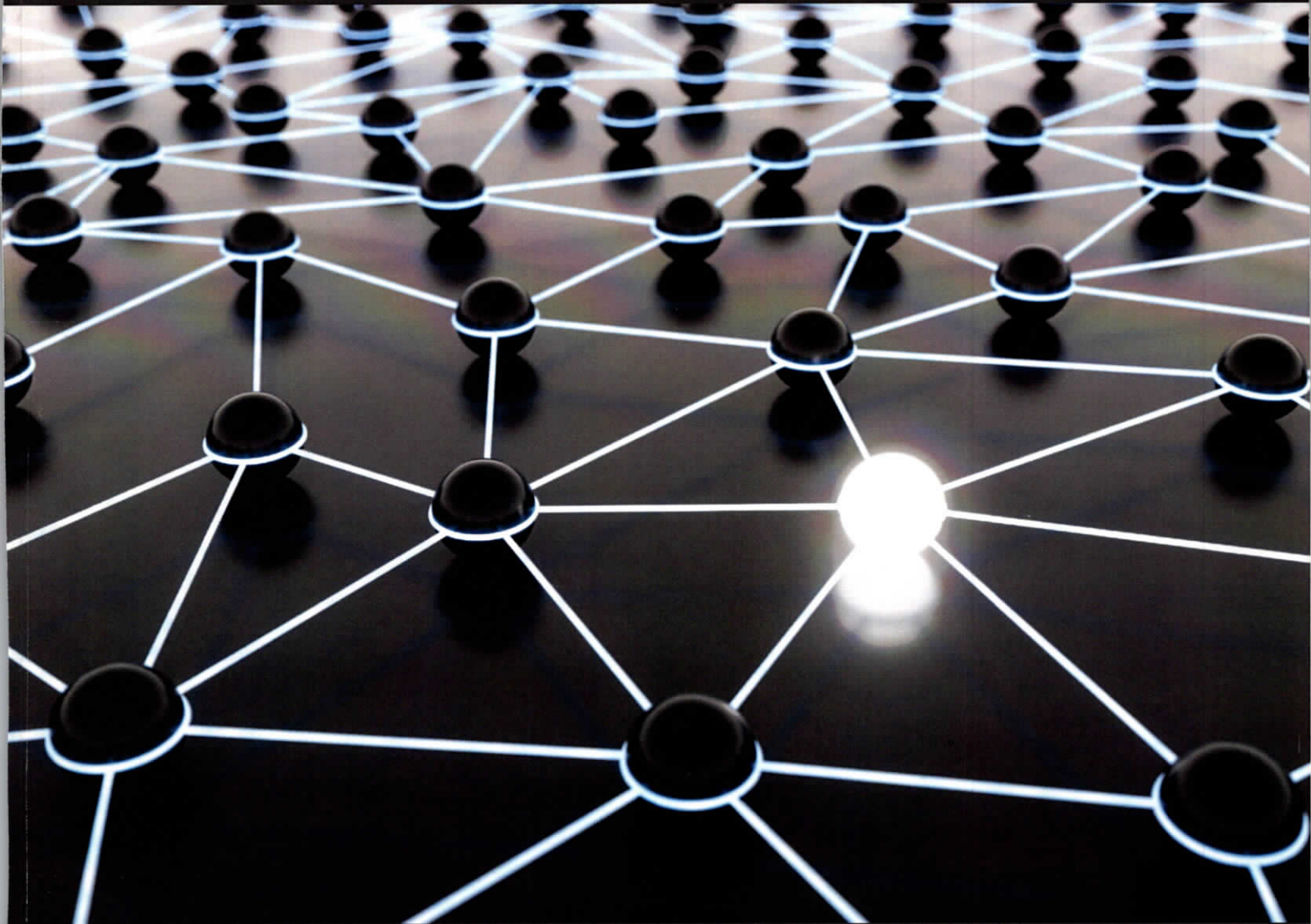


# *Connections:*



*Papers of the Treasure Mountain Research Retreat,  
Nov. 4-5, 2009, Charlotte, North Carolina*

*Edited by David V. Loertscher*

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# Connections

**Papers of the Treasure Mountain Research Retreat**

November 4–5, 2009  
Charlotte, North Carolina

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Note on decorative elements used throughout the book. The Chinese symbol used designates the idea of connections.

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## Other Voices in Education

David V. Loertscher

The idea behind the main topic of Treasure Mountain #15 is to make connections between our advanced thinking of school library media programs and ideas outside our immediate field. There seems to be a giant tug of war going on in the field of education between those who favor "coverage" and direct teaching in order to demonstrate high scores on state and national testing and those who are promoting more constructivist ideas of inquiry, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, and the push to use Web 2.0 tools and cloud computing. There are hundreds of competing voices for us as teacher librarians to listen to and compare to our own thinking. It would seem that rather being isolated from the mainstream of educational theory and practice, we should be in a leadership position. That stance has not been an easy one for us to achieve. We need to keep trying.

Below are a few voices along with others that will be reported at the conference that might assist us in determining our journey. No attempt has been made to be comprehensive. Rather, here are just a few sample ideas to consider.

### Reading

- In September, 2009, an article was published in the *New York Times* describing Nancy Atwell's position on children having choices in what they read. There were over 400 replies to that article on line, many saying that kids should be required to read the classics. Nancy responded in a video giving the six myths about reading. This video was posted on her publisher's website at: <http://www.heinemann.com/>  
Questions: What connection does choice in reading have with leveled reading and the study of exactly the same literature across various grade levels to the development of the learning commons in the world of information and technology?
- A Library Without Books? A very spirited discussion occurred in Sept. 2009 about the Principal, James Tracy of the Cushing Academy (39 School St., Ashburnham, MA 01430-1500 (978) 827-7000) who is discarding the bulk of book in the library to do digital and create a sort of learning commons.  
[http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2009/09/04/a\\_library\\_without\\_the\\_books/](http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2009/09/04/a_library_without_the_books/)  
Question: What role do we see for print material as the digital world and transfer of print to technology continues to happen?

## Technology

### Balancing Engaging Education and Online Student Safety

Broadcast email from THE Journal on Sept. 15:

<https://mail.google.com/mail/?shva=1#inbox/123bf4e01f60fbbf>

"We have teachers who want to use the internet for all kinds of content and experiences for our students, but we have tech coordinators who are locking down our networks. What do we do about that?" It was a question posed by Kathleen Barnhart of the Illinois Board of Education, but it could have been asked by anyone working in education today. Drawing the balance between safety and providing the best instructional experience is rapidly becoming one of the toughest issues in education.

Barnhart asked the question at a forum provided by the State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA), and she posed it to Aneesh Chopra, White House chief technology officer, and Jim Shelton, the assistant secretary for innovation and improvement at the US Department of Education. Both had interesting answers.

Chopra, who served in a similar role for the Governor of Virginia and worked with the Virginia Department of Education on a number of projects, noted, "The typical role of the IT leader in an organization is cost management of decisions around procurement, etc, and it is really about risk mitigation." He went on to say that while it is essential to have the "lock the network down" voice, you also need someone who will say "there are ways to involve students and content from the internet." Then, you find a balance between those two voices.

Shelton's answer paralleled that of Chopra. He said, "It is incumbent on all of us to create the environment in which people can take a little risk."

So how does a district balance safety and learning? There is not a simple answer; there are many aspects to consider, from policy to tools to training, all of which are necessary.

Recognize that safety and learning are everyone's responsibility. Students, teachers, parents, and IT directors all have a stake in ensuring safety and learning. A clear, well-explained and consistently enforced Acceptable Use Policy signed off by students, teachers, parents, and the school district is a critical beginning. Policies that clearly comply with CIPA and other state and federal laws and are easily explained to students, educators and parents also are vitally important.

Provide high-quality, flexible and comprehensive tools. IT directors need an integrated system of tools to protect students against predators and other personal threats as well as to protect the network and users against spam,

viruses, malware, and other technology threats. These solutions also can save money by optimizing the network and saving storage space formerly needed for unwanted email.

Provide training and dialog about what is possible. IT directors need training and support on how to use these tools effectively and efficiently. However, educators also need to know the strengths and limitations of the tools. The voice of risk mitigation and the voice of learning need to talk about **how** things can be done and **how** challenges can be overcome, and not just accept either/or answers. With the proper tools, both sides can discuss under what circumstances open access to the Internet can take place or laptops can be taken home and used on other networks safely. Completely shutting down a capability of a laptop or a Web 2.0 site to protect students is no longer a viable option.

Create an environment where "people can take a little risk." This takes knowledgeable leaders who understand how tools can help protect students, but it is only the responsible application of those tools that can create the best learning environment for students. Knowledgeable leaders will not just toss responsibility for IT over the wall and say it is the IT department's problem, but will encourage - and participate in - the dialog Chopra talked about.

For more information on these and other related issues please visit the  
CIO's Source for Safety and Learning  
Lightspeed Systems  
1800 19th Street  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Question: What steps are teacher librarians taking to trade access for teaching responsibility?

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Tom Barret, a teacher leader in technology in England, does presentations like this one: [http://docs.google.com/presentation/view?id=dgzzw5hw\\_52dkpjk9ff](http://docs.google.com/presentation/view?id=dgzzw5hw_52dkpjk9ff) and makes them available to the world through his blog at: <http://tbarrett.edublogs.org/>

Question: What do teacher librarians do with such tech savvy folks in their schools? Are we reading to work along side such folks?

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