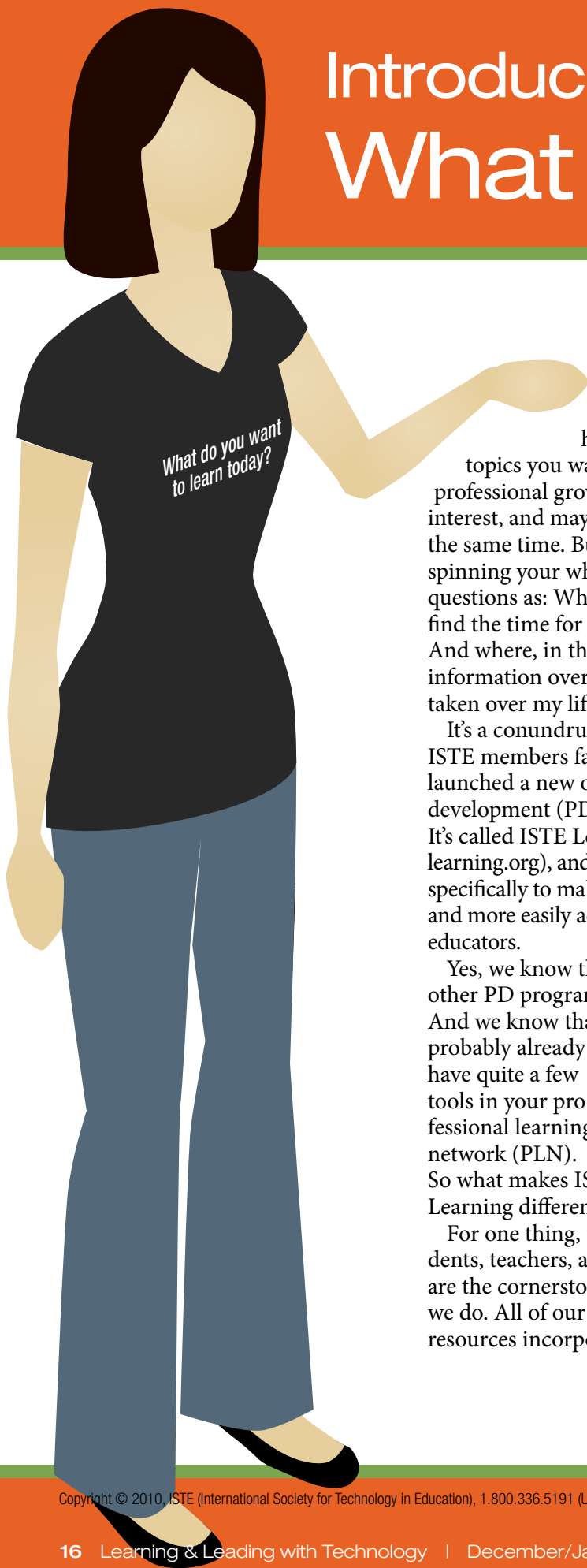


Introducing ISTE Learning What Do You Want



What do you want
to learn today?

If you're anything like me, you probably have a long list of topics you want to explore for professional growth and personal interest, and maybe even both at the same time. But you end up spinning your wheels on such big questions as: Where can I possibly find the time for one more thing? And where, in the midst of the information overload that has taken over my life, do I start?

It's a conundrum that a lot of ISTE members face. That's why we launched a new online professional development (PD) program to help. It's called ISTE Learning (<http://istelearning.org>), and we designed it specifically to make PD both fun and more easily accessible for busy educators.

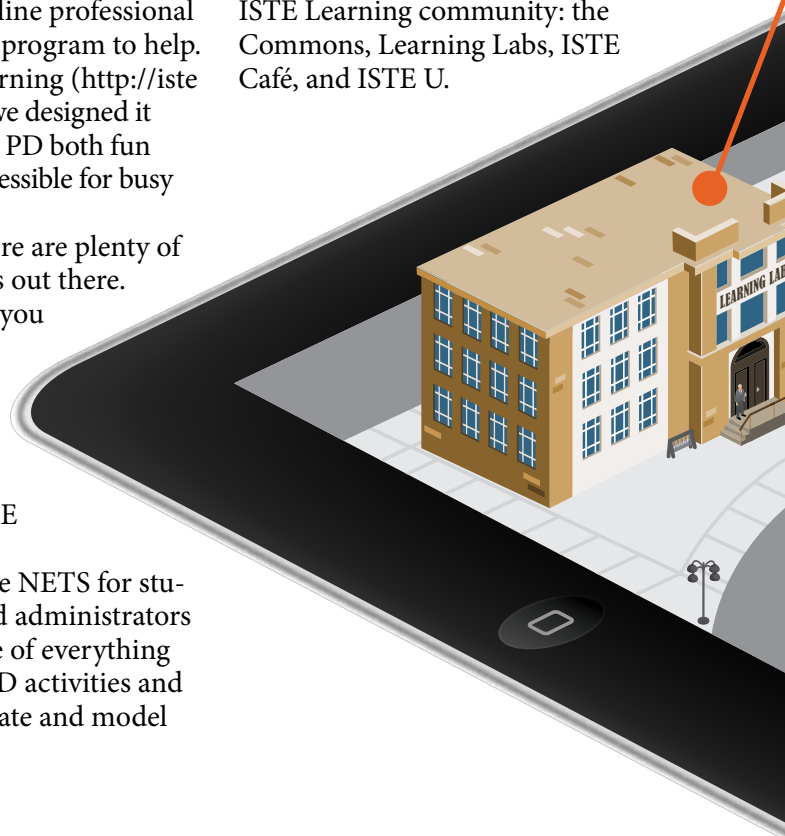
Yes, we know there are plenty of other PD programs out there. And we know that you probably already have quite a few tools in your professional learning network (PLN). So what makes ISTE Learning different?

For one thing, the NETS for students, teachers, and administrators are the cornerstone of everything we do. All of our PD activities and resources incorporate and model

the NETS so that you can see how they work and how you can implement them in your own classrooms, schools, and districts.

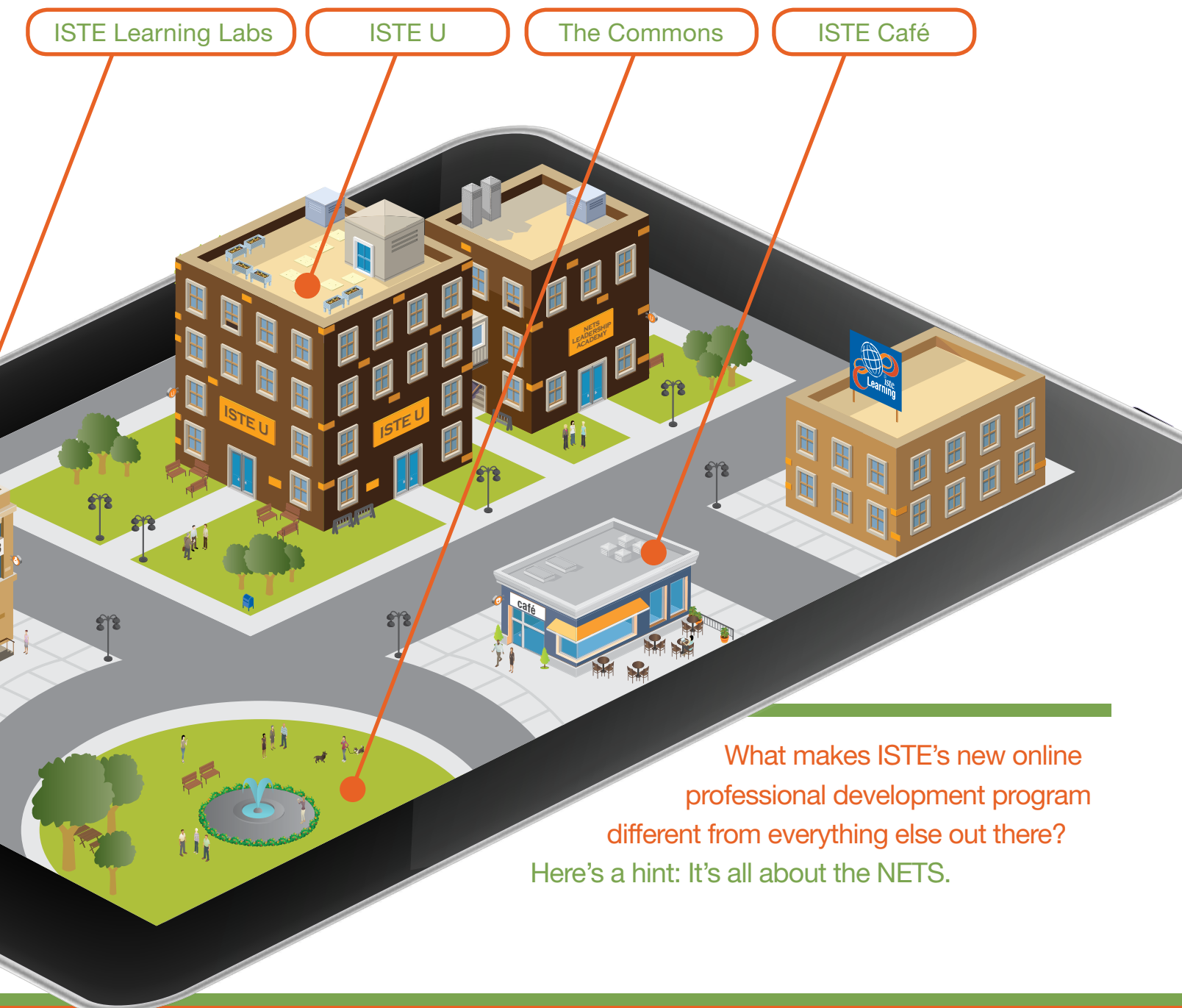
We also listen. ISTE members have told us through direct contact, on surveys, and at the conference what they were most interested in learning, and we pulled that information together into a comprehensive online community where anyone can find the right professional development to meet his or her own needs, interests, and schedule.

Want to know more? Come with me on a tour of the hotspots in the ISTE Learning community: the Commons, Learning Labs, ISTE Café, and ISTE U.



to Learn Today?

By April Hayman



What makes ISTE's new online professional development program different from everything else out there?
Here's a hint: It's all about the NETS.

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Used as a professional development resource by the Stanford School of Education and the Exploratorium, K12IMC.org is a non-profit resource, maintained by Dr. Bonnie Tenenbaum.

Check it out today!

<http://www.k12imc.org/iste>

At the Commons—the gateway into ISTE Learning—you will find bite-size resources meant to help you increase your knowledge and skills in five minutes or less.

The Commons

As I said, we know that you have only so much time and energy for personal learning. So we want to make it as fast and easy as possible. At the Commons—the gateway into ISTE Learning—you will find bite-size resources meant to help you increase your knowledge and skills in five minutes or less. For example, in the two minutes it takes you to watch “Introduction to Project-Based Learning,” an excerpt from one of ISTE’s Technology in Practice (TIP) webinars, you will find out the difference between activities and projects and get started on creating projects for a student-centered classroom.

All of the learning opportunities in the Commons—which range from full-length *L&L* articles and ISTE book chapters to podcasts and webinar excerpts—are free, immediately applicable in the classroom, and rooted in the NETS. My favorite feature is the NETS Flipside, where you can see how a unit or lesson aligns to the NETS for Students (NETS•S) as students participate in the lesson and, on the flipside, what that same unit or lesson looks like to a teacher using the NETS for Teachers (NETS•T).

Another favorite is ISTE Learning’s blog, the Buzz, where staff from

ISTE’s Education Leadership Division offer insights into projects we are working on, our views on professional development, and where we see educational technology heading in the future. For example, in “The iPad and Professional Development” blog post, ISTE Learning’s project manager, Kelli Harrington, reflects on her active discussions with educators who use the iPad and how it might be used as a tool for professional development and in the classroom. These thought-provoking posts give you the chance to join in the discussion directly with ISTE.

The Commons is the place to start getting acquainted with the ISTE Learning community. If you’ve got a couple of minutes, you can learn something new with one of our quick, free multimedia chunks of information.

When you’re ready to go deeper, you can head over to a Learning Lab for an in-depth lesson, to the ISTE Café to connect and learn with other ISTE members, or to ISTE U for a facilitated online course. Unlike the Commons, which is free to all, entry to these three areas is exclusive to ISTE members and costs approximately \$20–\$200 per activity.





Each Learning Lab is a private site centered on a single topic with background information, real-world examples, and hands-on activities, all based in the NETS.

Learning Labs

The name might suggest wild-haired scientists, but the Learning Labs are not so much about chemical explosions as they are about hands-on exploration set at your own pace. Each Learning Lab is a private site centered on a single topic with background information, real-world examples, and hands-on activities, all based in the NETS. Right now, we have a variety of topics to choose from, including Web 2.0, project-based learning, games and simulations, and digital citizenship.

And as ISTE Learning grows, so will the topic choices.

No matter which topic you choose to dive into, as an ISTE Learner you will get to experience a lesson firsthand before applying it in your classroom. In the Web 2.0 Learning Lab, for example, you might create a Vocaroo voice recording and an Animoto presentation to explain why digital age skills are important. During these activities, you will receive hands-on practice with several Web 2.0 tools while incorporating the NETS•S 1: Creativity and Innovation, demonstrating creative thinking and constructing your own knowledge

using technology. The emphasis is on the student experience, but you will also examine the purpose behind the activity and determine how it might help you meet the NETS•T.

Of course, you'll also need to know how to develop lessons that incorporate the tools you've been training on. That's why the Learning Labs provide real-world examples and a lesson-planning process to help you integrate what you've learned in your classroom in a way that meets the NETS. Each grade range has its own example that details what a lesson looks like in the classroom as well as the products that real students have created as a result

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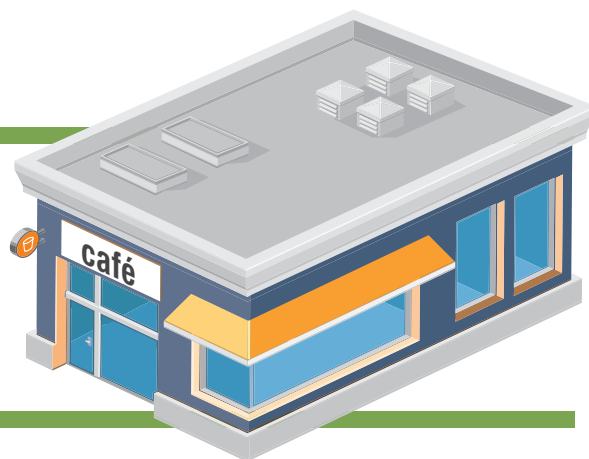


Journal of Research on Technology in Education

www.iste.org/jrte



The ISTE Café is the place to connect and collaborate with professional educators from around the world.



of the lesson. You will even have the opportunity to “help” a teacher in a scenario by making decisions about what types of technology to use, which NETS are being met, and activities that incorporate both.

Practice makes perfect, but eventually you have to take the step of creating your own lesson plans. Each Learning Lab guides you through the lesson-plan development process so that, at the end, you will have a topic-specific, NETS-based lesson that you can use right away in your own classroom.

ISTE Café

The ISTE Café is the place to connect and collaborate with professional educators from around the world. You’ll be learning while growing your PLN.

Just like you would in a real-world café, the first thing you should do in the ISTE Café is find a place to sit. You might choose an existing Topic Table or a Round Table, or you can even create your own table if you don’t

see one dedicated to your area of interest. To keep the activities moving fast, each table will have limited seating, but there might be multiple tables for a popular topic. Everything in the café is asynchronous unless otherwise noted. This not only lets participants work at any time from anywhere with people around the world, but also allows for deeper discussion and reflection. Although the café doesn’t have official facilitators, experts and other educators moderate each table to keep the conversation on track and answer questions.

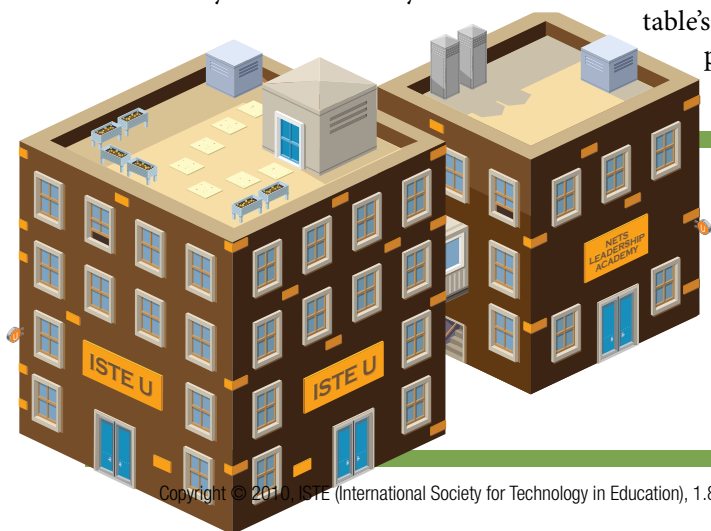
If you aren’t sure where to start, try taking a seat at one of the Topic Tables. Each of these follows its own format, which is determined by the topic. The learning experiences are rich in interaction and collaboration, yet they also result in immediately usable products. For example, at a project-based learning table, you might participate with other learners in a project, allowing you to experience it from the student’s perspective while receiving guidance from the table’s content and your peers as you create your own project.

You could also opt to participate in a discussion at a Round Table, where participants can delve into answering a different broad but thought-provoking question each month. Table mates work together on an answer to the question during the month using any collaboration tool they choose, and at the end of that time we publish their conclusions in the Commons so educators around the world can learn from and respond to it.

ISTE U

ISTE U is the culmination of the ISTE Learning experience. As you would find in any university, the learning opportunities at ISTE U are facilitated, pedagogy-driven courses that can help you master a variety of subjects. But here you’ll also participate in fast moving activities, ongoing communities, and opportunities to develop, maintain, and transfer digital age skills to new situations.

The first of ISTE U’s offerings is our NETS Leadership Academy. These courses are for anyone interested in the NETS and change leadership. Each class consists of three to five modules that use both asynchronous



As you would find in any university, the learning opportunities at ISTE U are facilitated, pedagogy-driven courses that can help you master a variety of subjects.

and synchronous hands-on learning. You will graduate from the NETS Leadership Academy with a better understanding of what the NETS are and why they are so important to the future of education.

Future ISTE U courses, which will be facilitated and last six to eight weeks, will focus on such timely topics as Web 2.0, project-based learning, action research, and digital assessment. These courses will also be offered on our sister site, www.isteonline.org. ISTE Learning is working toward offering continuing education units and academic credits through partnerships with colleges and universities.

What Do You Want to Learn Today?

ISTE Learning is meant to be a multi-faceted learning experience, and there is a lot to see, learn, and do throughout the community. But don't get overwhelmed. Just take a deep breath and answer this: What do you want to learn today? Then have fun exploring ISTE Learning, where you'll find the answer to that question and the knowledge you're looking for.

Watch for ISTE Board nominations to open after the first of the year!



Resources

ISTE Learning: <http://istelearning.org>

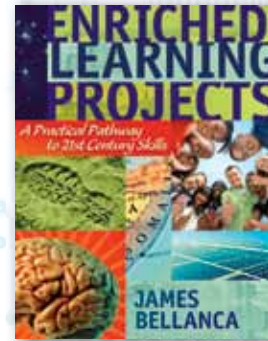
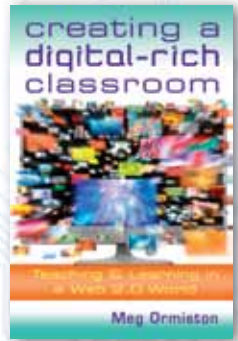
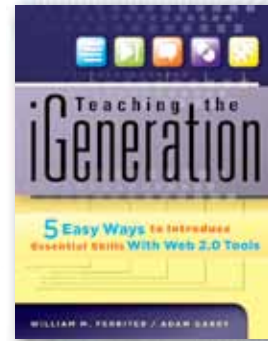
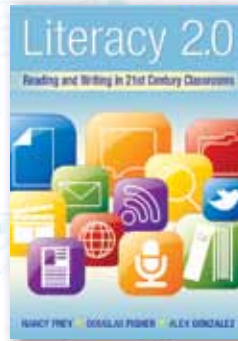
ISTE Online: www.isteonline.org

The Buzz, "The iPad and Professional Development" by Kelli Harrington, The Buzz: <http://istelearning.org/istelearningblogs/thebuzz/the-ipad-and-todays-educator>



As ISTE's instructional designer, April Hayman creates courses for online and face-to-face professional development. Before coming to ISTE, Hayman developed master's-level courses for universities and colleges across the United States.

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