# Literacy in the Digital World:

## Emerging Tools and Innovative Activities for the Twenty-First Century Learner

**Monday, June 4th, 2007**
**Centre for Leadership and Learning**
**300 Harry Parkway South**
**Newmarket**

**Lunch @ 12:30 pm**

Facilitated discussions will provide participants with opportunities to share new insights into the impact of digital literacy for teaching and learning

**Session begins @1:00pm**
**Session ends @ 3:30pm**
**Rooms 102 and 103**

Free and open educational resources as well as participatory technology tools which enable learners to generate content and ideas, not simply passively receive it, are drastically changing educational opportunities for students as well as the expectations of their teachers, schools, and school districts. The learning world is flattening in front of our eyes! As this occurs, the skills demanded of learners and teachers are shifting. New forms of literacy must be emphasized and tested. At the same time, the role of professional development expands significantly and simultaneously becomes increasingly demanding and vital. Not too surprisingly, there is mass confusion and debate regarding the use of emerging technologies in schools. Battles reign regarding how to embed Web technologies for effective fully online and blended learning opportunities in K-12 education. Emerging participatory and interactive technologies (e.g., podcasts, wikis, blogs, social networking software, etc.) as well as online gaming and simulations, virtual worlds, collaborative technologies, open courseware, learning portals, and mobile computing are providing learning opportunities never previously imagined. In this session, Bonk will discuss the digital literacy implications of these technologies, while also detailing examples of their use in innovative educational activities (e.g., cross cultural blogging, online language programs, learning sign language from a video iPod, student radio programs, student generated wikibooks, etc.) which motivate students and creatively engage them in rich and deeper forms of learning. He will also highlight the important role of professional development to assist teachers and leaders to gain the instructional intelligence that supports twenty-first century literacies. Of course, the ultimate goal is to empower learners and give them more responsibility for their own learning, while equipping them with skills to succeed at high levels in new world economies. When done, Bonk will also prompt a discussion of what digital literacy skills and competencies are required to survive in this age. During this time, he will point to ways in which blended learning provides opportunities for addressing these skills not only for students but also for timely teacher in-service training and professional development.

Curt Bonk is a former accountant and CPA who received his master's and Ph.D. degrees in educational psychology from the University of Wisconsin. Dr. Bonk is now Professor of Instructional Systems Technology at Indiana University and adjunct in the School of Informatics. Curt is President of CourseShare and SurveyShare (see http://mypage.iu.edu/~cjbonk/). He can be contacted at (cjbonk@indiana).

# Teachers, technology and students:

## Teaching outside of the triangle

Students in our schools today, who do not know a world without digital technology, are different from previous generations of students in the ways that they learn, share, work, communicate, and socialize. And as new technologies become available they are quick to embrace, adapt, or reject them. This poses a significant challenge for teachers who typically are not as comfortable with technology as their students are. In this talk, Dr. Owston will argue that we need to think beyond conventional approaches to teaching and learning with technology if we are to engage and motivate students now in our classrooms. He will discuss the implications of this for teacher professional development, curriculum, and educational policy.

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Dr. Ron Owston is Professor of Education, founding director of the Institute for Research on Learning Technologies, and former Associate Dean of Field Development at York University. He is internationally known for his work on analysing the contribution of the Web to education. He is the lead researcher for the ABEL program's project Learning Connections www.learningconnections.on.ca and the external evaluator for Health Canada's online courses in epidemiology for health care professionals. His website is at http://www.edu.yorku.ca/~rowston