24/7/365 Schooling

The Profound Implications

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Globally the pathfinder schools are moving at pace away from the traditional 'stand alone' mode of schooling - where the teaching is done within the walls of the physical place called school - and are increasingly adopting a digitally based 24/7/365 mode of schooling where learning and teaching happens anywhere anytime.

The implications for schools, government and society in general of this shift are profound. What we are witnessing and need better understand, is a marked shift in a core social process, 'school', that we have as a society unwittingly accepted as a constant. Any transformation will not only impact on most people's lives but also those undertaking and supporting the schooling.

By embracing a more socially networked mode of schooling that places the learner and learning at the centre, schooling is being continually transformed as it seeks to use the digital technology to better support and enhance student learning every day of the year. This process:

- lowers the school walls,

- increasingly integrates the in and out school learning,

- actively involves the parents in the teaching

- and takes advantage of increasingly sophisticated digital ecosystems

Twenty plus years ago Lipnack and Stamps (1994) presciently identified that in the digital and networked world the need to attend a physical place to learn would be lessened.

Today that reality is being built upon.

On first appearance the pathfinder schools look the same as the traditional schools. However while they have their students attend at the normal time, use the same curriculum and tests and show the same kind of student care the digital ecosystem that underpins their every operation continually changes their modus operandi. The increasingly mature ecosystem integrates the in and out of school learning and teaching, stimulating the on-going evolution and transformation of the schooling. It help creates an organisation, an ecology, a culture that positions the schools to adapt their operations at pace to continually accommodate the increasingly sophisticated technology and the ever rising client expectations.

24/7/365 Schooling

24/7/365 schooling is a digitally based higher mode of schooling based on trust and respect, where the school is willing to distribute the control of the

teaching and learning process, and to empower and genuinely collaborate with its total school community in the holistic anytime, anywhere teaching of each child.

It is using the village to educate the child.

The school is doing what astute families have done for centuries in nurturing their children from birth onwards, using the context and the apt moment to teach their children, quietly assessing their development and working to have each child take charge of its learning.

One is looking at is the balanced integration of the in and out of school teaching and learning, where the school as the chief educational architects shapes the process and while continuing to provide the intensive teaching better identifies those interpersonal, intrapersonal and cognitive attributes where the professional teachers can profitably collaborate with the homes in the enhancement of the desired attributes.

It is a mode of schooling whose uptake is and will continue to be developed.

It requires genuine collaboration with the parents, the community and as the children age business – a development that Lee and Ward identified in *Collaboration in learning* (2013), a collaboration that invariably begins when schools move to a digital operational base and start socially networking.

It requires the school to be willing to relinquish its unilateral control of the teaching and to distribute it, in the process trusting, respecting and empowering all within the school's community – something that invariably only begins in a significant way at the socially Networked evolutionary stage (Lee, 2014), (Lee and Broadie, 2015) and the school moves into the BYOT phase.

Ideally it needs the total school community to have normalised the use of their personal digital technologies and to have an ecosystem, a culture that encourages all within the school's community to build on that digital platform.

One is thus looking very much at a higher order mode of schooling apparent from the Digital Normalisation stage (Lee, 2014) (Lee and Broadie, 2015) and beyond. It is not the 'exam cram' type of schooling found in some Asian societies or indeed one that requires teachers to work inordinate hours, outside the agreed working conditions. Rather it is a mode of schooling for a digital and networked society where astute educators take advantage of the sophisticated technology to collaborate more effectively in educating the young.

Traditional School

Largely unwittingly traditional, paper based schools have become highly insular, inflexible and dated organisations increasingly divorced from the real world. They;

- operate as they have for decades within the school walls,

- within set hours each week and year,

- focussing almost exclusively on the teaching and learning within those walls,

- using year after year the same organisational structures and practises,

They, like other paper based organisations, find it difficult to quickly adapt to meet society's ever rising digital expectations.

That insularity is reinforced by school executives who believe they know what is best educationally for each child, who perceive their role as an educational expert is to inform the parents – the clients – what is appropriate for their children and who should unilaterally decide what and what not will be taught and assessed, and indeed what and what not digital technology will be used within the school.

Again, possibly unwittingly, in so doing they have over the last decade reinforced their isolation by erecting tight cyber walls, sought to create virtual walled communities, banned the school use of the student's digital technologies and at times become paranoid (Marsh and Lee, 2010) about the dangers of the digital and the need to protect the young.

In their funding they expect to be provided the entire requisite funding from government, to be free to deploy those monies as they wish and to run only those programs funded by government.

The desires and needs of the customers, the clients rarely rate a mention. The little collaboration there is with the parents or children is invariably focussed on advancing the school's agenda. While sometimes said flippantly many a school executive has commented on the need to keep the parents out of the teaching.

The reality is that that the in-school teaching occupies less than 20% of the children's learning time annually. The children and their parents have by default been handed total responsibility for teaching and assessing their children in the remaining 80% of time – without any assistance from the school or government.

Schools have been very slow to recognise the extent and nature of the student learning occurring outside the school walls. It is usually not until the Early Networked stage do they see the burgeoning digital resources and educational expertise in the student's homes, the home's normalised use of those resources, the vast untapped potential outside the school walls and to recognise the importance - and ease in a networked world - of genuinely collaborating with the homes and wider networked community in providing each child a more individualised, apt and better holistic education.

None of that recognition is evident in the traditional stand-alone schools, or indeed the educational agencies supporting them.

In brief one is talking about insular, inward looking, risk adverse, largely constant, strongly paper based schools, where the principals unilaterally control all teaching and show little desire to provide a schooling for a rapidly evolving digital and networked world.

The Contrast

In general terms one can contrast the two modes of schooling in the following way.

Traditional Paper Based Schools	24/7/365 Mode
• **Constancy and continuity**	• Ever changing, ever evolving, ever transforming
• **Insular analogue mindset**	• Digital and networked mindset
• **Teaching, in school only within set hours**	• 24/7/365 anytime, anywhere teaching involving all the 'teachers' of the young
• **Teaching using 20% of children's learning time**	• Quest to 'teach' (scaffold) 100% of children's learning time
• **Unilateral control of the teaching**	• Distributed control of the teaching
• **Whole of class teaching**	• Increasingly individualised, differentiated teaching
• **Solitary classroom teaching, invariably behind closed class doors**	• Increasingly collaborative 24/7/365 teaching, anywhere anytime
• **Distrust – of most staff, parents, students and digital technology**	• Trust – in staff, parents, students and digital technology
• **Disempowered parents, students and most staff**	• All empowered – staff, parents and students
• **Minimal home-school collaboration, with teachers unwilling to let homes interfere in teaching**	• Extensive genuine home-school – community collaboration in teaching and resourcing
• **Pronounced home – school teaching divide**	• Marrying of in school and out of school teaching
• **Scant recognition of out school student learning**	• Recognition and building upon out of school student learning
• **Paper operational base**	• Digital operational base
• **Predominantly paper based**	• Normalised use of digital and

instructional technology	networked instructional technologies
• **School controls choice of ICT**	• Individual trusted to choose own technology
• **Tight control of student Net access and banning of use of their personal technology**	• School encourages the students to use own technology in school and responsibly use the Net
• **School website use peripheral**	• School website core to all operations
• **Teachers instruct students on digital technology mechanics**	• Teachers recognise and build upon student's competence with own digital technologies and apply that functionality in higher order teaching
• **Relatively lower order, simple organisation**	• Ever higher order, evermore complex organisation
• **Tests as school's prime educational focus**	• Holistic connected world education as prime educational mission
• **Loosely coupled organisation**	• Tightly integrated school ecology
• **Structured, tightly planned, linear school development**	• Shaped, often seemingly chaotic and messy big picture, non linear school evolution driven by many
• **Monies provided determine programs offered**	• Programs offered use both monies provided the school plus increasingly the pooled resourcing made available

It is suggested in comparing the two modes that you reflect back on Mal's previous article on Why Schools Have to Go Digital to Remain Viable (Lee, 2015) as the latter provides greater context. You might also like to glimpse what this looks and feels like in schools through the 3rd Millennium Learning Award videos at http://www.naace.co.uk/thirdmillenniumlearningaward

Bear in mind the attributes of the 24/7/365 mode listed are ever evolving and that within a year or two will likely further evolve.

Implications

Our desire with this article is in part to document the emerging mode but perhaps more importantly to alert schools, school communities, educational decision makers, tertiary educators and politicians to the development and myriad of major implications that flow.

By genuinely and more fully involving all parents in the schooling of their children one is irrevocably changing the nature of schooling. By engaging young people much more fully in their learning and in growing their personal responsibility for this the time and concentration invested grows very substantially, enabling much more learning to be achieved from the same financial input into the schooling system.

There are implications for teacher training and development, the nature of the teaching, curriculum and student assessment in the 24/7/365 mode, resourcing, school governance and how systems best facilitate and support the evolution of all their schools, the pathfinders and the laggards.

How do education authorities ensure some degree of parity of school offerings when working with evolving complex adaptive systems?

And they are but a few of the implications that flow from the shift.

Conclusion.

The digital technology is having the same profound transformative impact on schooling (Lee, 2015) as it is upon all other paper based organisations.

As educators, as a society it is important we understand that reality and seek to shape the future accordingly.

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