

Designing Thriving Schools[®]



More than a leadership workshop ... an unprecedented experience for educators to discover new ways to:

- Accelerate learning
- Maximize staff performance
- Improve organizational effectiveness
- Save time and resources

“

... a virtual endless array of new ideas for integrating strategy, technology, and people to improve student and staff performance.

”

Jana Craig,
Educational Technology
Director, Kansas State Department
of Education

Designing Thriving Schools®

Designing Thriving Schools® is unlike any seminar or in-service meeting you have ever attended in the past. It's a fun and energizing process that uses an innovative deck of cards to stimulate the free flow of ideas. Designing Thriving Schools is more than just a **learning** experience ... it's a **doing** experience.

**We took
the WORK out of
workshop**

Designing Thriving Schools combines ...

- **concise information** about new and existing technologies
- **new insights** into current, research-based teaching, learning, and organizational strategies
- the **creativity** and **brainpower** of your educational stakeholders
- and the **consultative input** of our experienced professional facilitator

... to generate actionable **solutions** to the unique challenges and opportunities facing your schools today.

Designing Thriving Schools can help you now!

There is really no limit to the types of issues that this process can help you address. Following are some of the areas in which Designing Thriving Schools has generated powerful, effective ideas:

- **Implementing “No Child Left Behind” mandates**
- **Revitalizing school improvement strategies**
- **Generating a new level of excitement about how technology can improve the teaching and learning process**
- **Coordinating support for bonds and referendum issues**
- **Improving personal communication and interaction among staff, students, parents, and community stakeholders**
- **Synchronizing technology, instructional, and staff development plans**
- **Establishing meaningful and productive dialog between technical staff and instructional experts**



It's not the technology — it's how you USE it

Technology transforms the world in which we live. It can make the impossible possible and is the key to doing more with less. Designing Thriving Schools will show you how ... in an interactive card game format.

We've selected the most significant new and emerging technologies and incorporated them into an innovative set of cards. Each Technology card includes a short description of what these technologies are and how they can be used to accelerate learning, improve staff performance, and increase organizational effectiveness.

Some of these technologies are new ... others you may already have. Still others may be on your "wish list." The power of this process is that it will help you not only better understand technology, but view it from a fresh perspective. With an arsenal of new ideas for how technology can be used to facilitate teaching, learning, and organizational processes, you can unleash the potential that already exists in your schools.

The right strategy CAN make the difference ...

Too often, when we get a new tool, we use it with an old mindset. Without clearly identified strategy, we run the risk of implementing technology for technology's sake, underutilizing the tools at our disposal, or purchasing technology for the "wow" factor.

Designing Thriving Schools provides a synopsis of the most relevant educational strategies — featured on our Strategy cards. They include research-based, best practice, and even successful business strategies — offering a wealth of insight that might otherwise remain outside the field of view for individual participants. As groups read and discuss the strategies, they begin to unlock their own creative energy. Building upon one another's ideas, they select and prioritize specific strategies and then combine them with enabling technologies to achieve their objectives.

Dealing with unexpected change

As an optional exercise, teams explore how change can actually be a positive factor ... when they plan for it. Challenge cards — representing changes such as government mandates, shifting demographics and competition for students — encourage teams to consider the importance of contingency plans. They'll learn how to deal with unexpected change and build flexibility into the strategic process.

“

... The interactive group process simulation was the most stimulating learning experience we have had in many years.

”

Dr. Mark J. Sosne,
Superintendent,
Pender County School System,
North Carolina

Strategy #29

Differentiate Instruction

(Address Your Students' Learning Needs)

Have you ever asked yourself, "What am I going to do with these kids?" Today's teachers still contend with the essential challenge of the one-room school house - how to teach students who span the spectrum of ability, readiness, personal interests, cultural diversity, learning styles, and world experiences. They often struggle to meet the growing demands of their diverse classrooms. Effective teachers who differentiate instruction use strategies such as "tiered assignments," in which all students complete part A of the assignment, but parts B, C, D, etc. offer every student a personal choice or way of working that addresses his or her individual learning style, ability or interest. Teachers who identify and address different learning needs of every student know it is not an "either/or" but a "both/and" world.

Ask yourself: Would our students learn more if we identified and addressed their individual instructional needs?

Technology Card #9

Web-Enabled Education

Web-enabled education uses intranets or extranets to deliver asynchronous or real-time educational programs. Think of this tool as combining the Internet with the concept of distance learning. Universities already offer degrees via the Web and many high school and business courses are provided over the Internet. Some of the instruction is real-time, instructor-led using audio and/or videoconferencing and some is computer-based educational programming that is self-paced, interactive and often uses simulations.

Ask yourself: Do we have educational programs that could produce new income streams and/or deliver instruction more cost effectively over the Web?

Technology Card #35

Knowledge Sharing e-Communities

Knowledge sharing electronic communities reside on a Web site or listserv and serve members who share a common expertise or interest. The topic can be centered around a professional discipline where members share their best practices and solutions (e.g., guidance counselors, early literacy experts, coaches, principals) or a mutual interest of the members it serves (e.g., students sharing a passion for sports, parents of special needs children, staff integrating new technology). The keys to successful e-communities are a focus on knowledge sharing, a sense of common values, and topics centered on the common expertise or interest of the members it serves.

Ask yourself: Could we enhance collaboration and participation in learning if we implemented e-communities of practice or interest?

A case in point ...

In the wake of disappointing results on their state standardized test, a Midwestern school district was exploring ways to improve fourth grade math scores. Although the initial reaction was to re-evaluate, and possibly revamp, the curriculum, they decided to put the Designing Thriving Schools process to the test and see what alternative solutions might arise.

As educators read and discussed the cards, one strategy in particular — **Discover the Power of Data as a Design Tool** — captured their attention. One participant noted that perhaps they were putting the "cart before the horse" by not thoroughly analyzing the test results before embarking on solutions. They already had access to a powerful technology — **Data Mining and Modeling Software** — that would enable them to disaggregate the data into more meaningful information.

By closely analyzing all test scores, educators made a surprising discovery — the largest discrepancy existed among students who had entered the district after second grade. Furthermore, the number of years in the district had a significant impact on performance at all grades. At this point, it became clear that classroom strategy, rather than curriculum, would provide the greatest potential for improving math scores.

Teachers selected **Differentiated Instruction** as the best strategy for accelerating the learning of students who transferred into the district. With a clear direction and focus, they were then able to identify two more technologies to assist them in implementing this new approach:

- **Web-Enabled Education** could be used to offer students access to content specifically geared to their individual needs for remediation or acceleration.
- **Knowledge Sharing e-Communities** could provide teachers with a forum for exchanging best practices and reflecting on their instructional decisions. These online communities could also give students the opportunity to develop improved study skills by sharing ideas with their peers.

In the end, Designing Thriving Schools proved to be a valuable tool for determining the most effective course of action. By clarifying that curriculum was not at the root of the issue, they saved valuable time and resources that might otherwise have been spent addressing the wrong problem!



Designing Thriving Schools®



The process
is dynamic
because you
have input



Designing Thriving Schools was a vehicle for jump-starting some powerful dialog about the future of education and our school.

Dr. Mary Goedert,
Principal, Madison
Elementary School,
Detroit, Michigan



Think of Designing Thriving Schools as a “conceptual refinery” that helps you distill your large list of “could-dos” into a short list of “must-dos.” Your short list of unbelievably powerful strategies and enabling technologies holds the potential to transform your district’s ability to achieve educational goals at virtually every level — individual, classroom, department, school, district, or state.

Designing Thriving Schools employs an exclusive set of cards — describing educational technologies and strategies — to stimulate and direct creative thinking among participants. The cards use easy-to-understand definitions and thought-provoking examples to unleash high-level dialog that is collaborative, interactive, and solution-oriented.

In groups of four to six people, participants read through the cards and interact as a team to gain new insights into educational technologies and strategies. They then explore how these ideas can be used to accelerate learning, improve staff performance, or increase organizational effectiveness. Reflection questions act as catalysts to ignite and encourage the spontaneous exchange of new and powerful ideas. Teams then select the technologies and strategies that are most relevant for resolving their current issue and putting their school on a path to thrive.



Invest in your future

See how Designing Thriving Schools can spark the imaginations and creativity of your finest thinkers. We will tailor a workshop to match your organization’s unique challenges or opportunities. Although most programs are one day in length, we can customize one to meet your needs and budget — from several hours to a week-end administrative retreat. Regardless of which approach you choose, you’ll come away with a short list of actionable strategies to help your schools thrive now and in the years ahead.

Contact us at 248-375-0003.

Or visit our website at www.DesigningThrivingSchools.com

About Burrus Research

This research and consulting firm specializes in helping organizations understand and creatively apply technology to shape a positive future. Our Education Division has taken us into thousands of schools, and our Business Division has consulted with some of the world's leading corporations, including Yahoo, Microsoft, American Express, eBay, Lockheed Martin, Northwestern Mutual Life, and Sara Lee, to name just a few. Over the years we have found that businesses and schools generally are not using the technology they already have to their fullest advantage.

We offer unique insights based on personal experience. Plus we can share masterful solutions that have been used successfully in businesses around the world, many of which can translate to schools as well.

About the Authors

Designing Thriving Schools programs are facilitated by co-author **T.C. Roekle**, a highly respected national speaker who draws from more than 30 years' experience in the field of education. She has served as an award-winning classroom teacher, secondary and elementary school principal, curriculum director, assistant superintendent, and adjunct professor.

She has also spearheaded many major efforts in the areas of educational leadership, standards implementation, technology integration, and school reform aligned with the "No Child Left Behind" initiative.

T.C. Roekle was twice nominated National Teacher of the Year and has been the recipient of numerous other administrative honors, including six consecutive state Senate tributes for creating a statewide reading initiative. She has been a national committee member of the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and continues to serve on a diverse range of advisory boards.

T.C. Roekle is the President of T.C. Roekle & Associates. She is a highly respected educator, co-author and active member of the National Speakers Association (NSA), speaking nationwide on topics related to educational leadership and change. She also is an administrative consultant at all levels of education.

Daniel Burrus is the founder and CEO of Burrus Research Associates, Inc. He is one of the world's leading business strategists and technology forecasters and serves as a strategic advisor at the highest level to Fortune 100 companies. In this capacity, he has helped hundreds of clients develop successful competitive strategies based on the creative application of leading-edge technologies.

Burrus is the author of six books, including the highly acclaimed *Technotrends*[®] which has been translated into thirteen languages. He also publishes the popular monthly *Technotrends*[®] Newsletter, read by business executives worldwide for more than two decades.

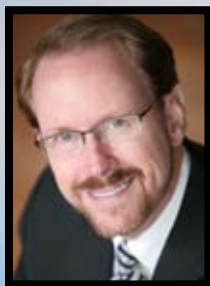
T.C. Roekle & Associates

Contact us at 248-375-0003.

Or visit our website at www.DesigningThrivingSchools.com



T.C. Roekle —
Co-Author; Facilitator;
Award-Winning Educator.



Daniel Burrus —
Co-Author; Founder and
CEO of Burrus Research
Associates; named by
the *New York Times* as
one of America's top
three business "gurus."