

This is a section of [doi:10.7551/mitpress/8909.001.0001](https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/8909.001.0001)

Quest to Learn

Developing the School for Digital Kids

**By: Katie Salen Tekinbaş, Robert Torres, Loretta Wolozin,
Rebecca Rufo-Tepper, Arana Shapiro**

Citation:

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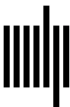
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DOI: 10.7551/mitpress/8909.001.0001

ISBN (electronic): 9780262294164

Publisher: The MIT Press

Published: 2010



The MIT Press

School Design Team

The bulk of the work for Q2L to date has been completed by members of the core team, with ongoing work to be supported in an increased capacity by our cadre of core advisers.

Q2L is an ambitious undertaking that has required (and will continue to require) a development process drawing on the experience and expertise of many different individuals. This process has been highly collaborative, reflective, and research driven, and it is currently led by a small core team, which is responsible for the material presented in this proposal. In addition to the core team is a larger group of advisers who serve as sounding boards and who will play an increasingly critical role as we move forward. In future phases of the development process, we anticipate bringing on more expert teachers to guide curriculum development, a number of parents representing community and parenting concerns, and students drawn from populations of the school programs we have been working with to pilot platforms and pedagogy.

Core Design Team

Katie Salen, Institute of Play and Parsons the New School for Design Katie Salen is the executive director of the Institute of Play and Professor, Design and Technology, at Parsons the New School for Design. Coauthor of *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals* (2003), a textbook on game design, as well as *The Game Design Reader* (2005), she is currently working as lead designer on a digital game developed to teach game design to middle school and high school youth. She recently served as editor for the volume *The Ecology of Games* (2007) for the MacArthur Foundation series Digital Media and Learning and is coeditor of the *International Journal of Learning and Media*. She writes extensively on game design, design education, and game culture, including authoring some of the first dispatches from the previously hidden world of machinima.

Robert Torres, Design by Design Robert Torres has worked as a teacher, school principal, and education consultant since 1988. His work has focused mostly on school design, and he currently runs a not-for-profit business that designs small progressive high schools across New York City. Robert wrote and produced a documentary film on the impact of poverty on his Puerto Rican family in New York. The film, *Nuyorican Dream*, premiered at the Sundance 2000 Film Festival, was acquired by and aired on HBO, and has won numerous awards in the United States and abroad. The documentary offers observations about the legacy of colonialism, the inadequate American inner-city educational system, and discrimination. Robert has a master's

degree in policy and school administration from Bank Street College of Education and was a Stanford University research fellow. He is currently pursuing a doctorate at New York University focused on games and learning.

Rebecca Rufo-Tepper, East Side Middle School Rebecca Rufo-Tepper has been working in the New York City public-school system for eight years. She is currently a literacy coach at East Side Middle School, a public school in Manhattan, where she previously taught eighth-grade humanities for five years. Rebecca is a professional development facilitator for the Holocaust Educators Network in New York City and the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. She has published a teaching guide with Simon & Schuster for Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and has worked with PBS on developing lesson plans for its *In Search of Shakespeare* series. She is also a doctoral student in the Urban Education program at the Graduate Center, the City University of New York, where her research focuses on a professional development model known as "Japanese lesson study."

Arana Shapiro, Flat Toads Arana Shapiro has been working in the field of education for ten years. Her first teaching position was in the Inglewood Public School District (California), where she taught for three years. In Inglewood, she served on the district curriculum review team helping to develop and implement new curriculum in this small district. Upon moving to New York City, Arana began working at Teachers College, Columbia University's Early Childhood Education Program. At Teachers

College, she helped develop the Early Childhood Education Department's new student teacher program by visiting New York City public-school classrooms and finding appropriate placement and mentorship for Teachers College students. It was during her work at Teachers College that she began working with a group of educators to develop curriculum for a new school, The School at Columbia University, and subsequently became a founding faculty member of The School in 2003. Arana's desire to bring new media technologies into the classroom prompted her to migrate from the classroom to the technology team at The School and later to the lead educational technologist position at the Ross Institute, where she integrated technology into K–12 classrooms at both the Ross School in East Hampton and the Ross Global Academy Charter School.

Loretta Wolozin, Parsons the New School for Design Loretta Wolozin, educator, designer, and hockey mom, teaches and coordinates the research and writing curriculum for the master's in design and technology at Parsons the New School for Design. Long ago, when there were no jobs for teachers, she put her teacher's credential and English literature master's to work as education editor for more than twenty-five years at Houghton Mifflin (Boston). She built the K–12 Teacher Education list, collaborating closely with authors on print and media publications, from acquisitions through production. Her article "Look—Duck Feet: Kinderboard on Kindertable Goes to Classrooms," in *TIES: The Online Magazine of Design and Technology Education* (www.tiesmagazine.org/archives/dec_2002/), describes her experience as design researcher and participant testing a

novel, table-top installation prototype in two New Jersey public elementary schools.

Core Advisers

Robert L. Hughes, New Visions for Public Schools Robert L. Hughes was appointed president of New Visions in June 2000. A prominent lawyer, he formerly served as deputy director of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity, a coalition of parent organizations, community school boards, concerned citizens, and advocacy groups that seeks to reform New York State's education finance system to ensure adequate resources and the opportunity for a sound basic education for all students in New York City.

Gloria Rakovic, New Visions for Public Schools Gloria Rakovic joined New Visions in 2002 after having served as a principal in urban and suburban environments, including three public New York City high schools. Dr. Rakovic has an extensive background in high school redesign, alternative education, and group facilitation. She helped found and served as principal of both Park East High School and the High School of Telecommunication Arts and Technology.

James Paul Gee, Arizona State University James Paul Gee, formerly the Tashia Morgridge Professor of Reading at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, is the Mary Lou Fulton Professor of Literacy Studies at Arizona State University. His latest book, *Why Video Games Are Good for Your Soul* (2005), shows how

good video games marry pleasure and learning and have the capacity to empower people.

Mizuko Ito, University of Southern California Mizuko (Mimi) Ito is a cultural anthropologist of technology use, focusing on children and youths' changing relationships to media and communications. Her research group at Keio University studies mobile phone use, and she is working with Peter Lyman, Michael Carter, and Diane Harley on a multiyear project concerning digital kids and informal learning, with support from the MacArthur Foundation.

Nichole Pinkard, University of Chicago, Center for Urban School Improvement Nichole Pinkard is a senior research associate (assistant professor) at the University of Chicago's Center for Urban School Improvement, where she serves as director of technology for the center and as director of the Information Infrastructure System project. Dr. Pinkard plays a leading role in the Urban School's engagement in the ongoing process of researching problems around the integration of advanced technology systems into urban schools.

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This book was set in Stone Serif and Stone Sans by the MIT Press.
Printed and bound in the United States of America.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Quest to learn : developing the school for digital kids / Katie Salen . . .
[et al.].

p. cm. — (The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation reports on digital media and learning)

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-0-262-51565-8 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Information technology—Study and teaching—United States.

2. Computers--Study and teaching—United States. 3. Internet in education—Australia—United States. I. Salen, Katie.

LB1028.5.Q84 2011 371.33'44678—dc22 2010015788

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