

# CONSTRUCTIVATION

CONSTRUCTS & CONCEPTS INTERNATIONAL'S EDUCATION INNOVATION QUARTERLY

JANUARY 2017

## Advantages of this Newsletter

The purpose of this newsletter is to *inform, ignite and invigorate* consumers, providers and stakeholders of educational services to P-12 children and youth, who are concerned about growing educational opportunities for students. While it is the hope of the publisher to answer questions and stimulate conversations that can translate into policy for the equitable education of ALL children, there is also an emphasis on providing information for those marginalized and typically under-informed populations. They too must make educational decisions that will uplift their future generations to be economically self-sustaining and have global market impact.

## What is “CONSTRUCTIVATION”?

The name of this publication is a term coined by merging *aspects* of two concepts: **Constructivism** and **Innovation**. Neither term is novel to educators. However, for those non-educators who provide community services to today's youth, I offer the following explanation. Simply, these terms represent a 21st Century approach that explains the work needed for the successful development of those students and communities who are typically economically, racially, and culturally marginalized. This publication along with quarterly, non-traditional “gatherings” for kingdom educators will serve as a *think tank* and *practice exchange* for those who are committed to overcoming assumptions and deficit thinking about students and their communities. (continued on p. 2)

*If there is a ‘Kinder and Gentler’ way to Blow the Trumpet and Sound the Alarm around the threat of the demise of public education as we have known it, then consider me a trombone!*

*Jewel J. Faison, Ph.D.*



A fable that reveals the difficulty but necessity of change. Which character are you? Watch a video explanation of this concept at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5X8-l\\_S00Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5X8-l_S00Q)

## In This Issue

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- Changing our minds about instruction, and who we must become in order to successfully serve ALL children
- Dates to remember
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A comprehensive meaning of constructivism is: a philosophy or a way of thinking that embraces the natural curiosity of every child to intake information – intellectually, emotionally and spiritually, from their environment (culture) to make meaning of their world and discover how they fit best into that world (purpose). A person's interactions and ideas all synergize to create an individual's *way of knowing*. The contemporary use of the term includes this sociocultural perspective as espoused by Lev Vygotsky.

Innovation is simply the act or process of inventing or introducing something new. In **CONSTRUCTIVATION**, the goal is to stimulate creative thought and encourage safe spaces for new discussions and experimentation for *next* practices of learning which challenge present-day *best* practices.

The goal is to equip all educators of our children with the common language, strategic thinking and relevant practices that are necessary to produce and undergird creative, knowledge-based teaching and learning.

**REMEMBER:** *Smart ain't something' dat you is; It's something that anyone can become when given the **RIGHT** opportunities!*

#### EDUCATIONAL FORECASTING: WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON?

## Why we can't WAIT...

An article in the December 26, 2016 Washington Post entitled, "**How Indiana's school voucher program soared, and what it says about education in the Trump era,**" eclipsed an earlier living room conversation in which I'd engaged just the day before. During that discussion, I had conceded that although I felt a little uncomfortable, I certainly was not willing to ask probing questions of battle-weary public school educators. "We must take the *'time'* to bring everyone along" - and as an educational consultant it is my job to be the "*kinder, gentler Jewel*" that can facilitate required change! I'd learn those words almost 20 years earlier when I was brought into a situation with the express mandate to stimulate CHANGE while making sure that I remained popular and loved! [AN OXYMORON] Then I read the Washington Post article again. My heart sunk as I realized that the **forecasted** competition that I had framed when speaking, *kindly and gently*, with current public school educators about the sense of urgency needed to embrace reform efforts, has now become the **climate report** in education! Charters and vouchers **are the new public education**. In other words, soft strokes and warm fuzzies are real misperceptions when communicating the urgency needed to navigate an effective course for educating ALL of America's children.

Allow me to digress for a moment. I am personally fascinated by systems theory and the building of people and processes to make systems meet and exceed expectations! I have a younger cousin who is a P&G manager and we spar often about our work. She talks about things like setting clear goals/objectives, including the team in the approach to the work, measuring progress, accountability, end results and rewards.

It is unthinkable at P&G to continue a work-plan that does not deliver the planned results. And of course, I make the strong argument that the same is true in education! Then I re-read the article. (*Right click and paste into your browser to read the article*).

[www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/how-indianas-school-voucher-program-soared-and-what-it-says-about-education-in-the-trump-era/2016/12/26/13d1d3ec-bc97-11e6-91ee-1adddf36cbe\\_story.html?postshare=7821483105602089&tid=ss\\_fb&utm\\_term=.bb823432d28d](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/how-indianas-school-voucher-program-soared-and-what-it-says-about-education-in-the-trump-era/2016/12/26/13d1d3ec-bc97-11e6-91ee-1adddf36cbe_story.html?postshare=7821483105602089&tid=ss_fb&utm_term=.bb823432d28d)

If there is a 'Kind and Gentle' way to Blow the Trumpet and Sound the Alarm around the threat of the demise of public education as we have known it, then consider me a trombone! I'll alert educators and all who will listen that the need to re-think our work with an honest commitment to raise the sense of urgency and stimulate near *supernatural* creativity, is upon us!

Today's school alignments quickly become tomorrow's plateaus. The hierarchical bullying and professional disrespect of classroom teachers and other education servants has resulted in a steady decrease in students who choose education as a major field of study according to the *National Center for Education Statistics*. The same report shows that of the 6 fields of study in which the largest number of degrees are conferred, Education is the only one showing a significant decrease in the number of students enrolling in the field between 2004-2014.

Additionally, with the current ranking of American education being around the middle internationally and an America's economic rank of 3rd in the world,



Trump picks billionaire Betsy DeVos, school voucher advocate, as education secretary

Washington Post, December 26, 2016 Edition

the need for CHANGE in how we educate the masses of children is looming!

Public school educators are becoming an obsolete breed! We must re-equip teachers and parents to prepare the creative class needed for America's future. However, educators must imagine beyond what has been - **Possibilities!** Problem solving thinking is compulsory! The time to do it is NOW... **we can't afford to WAIT!**

PHENOMENON-BASED LEARNING & INSTRUCTION

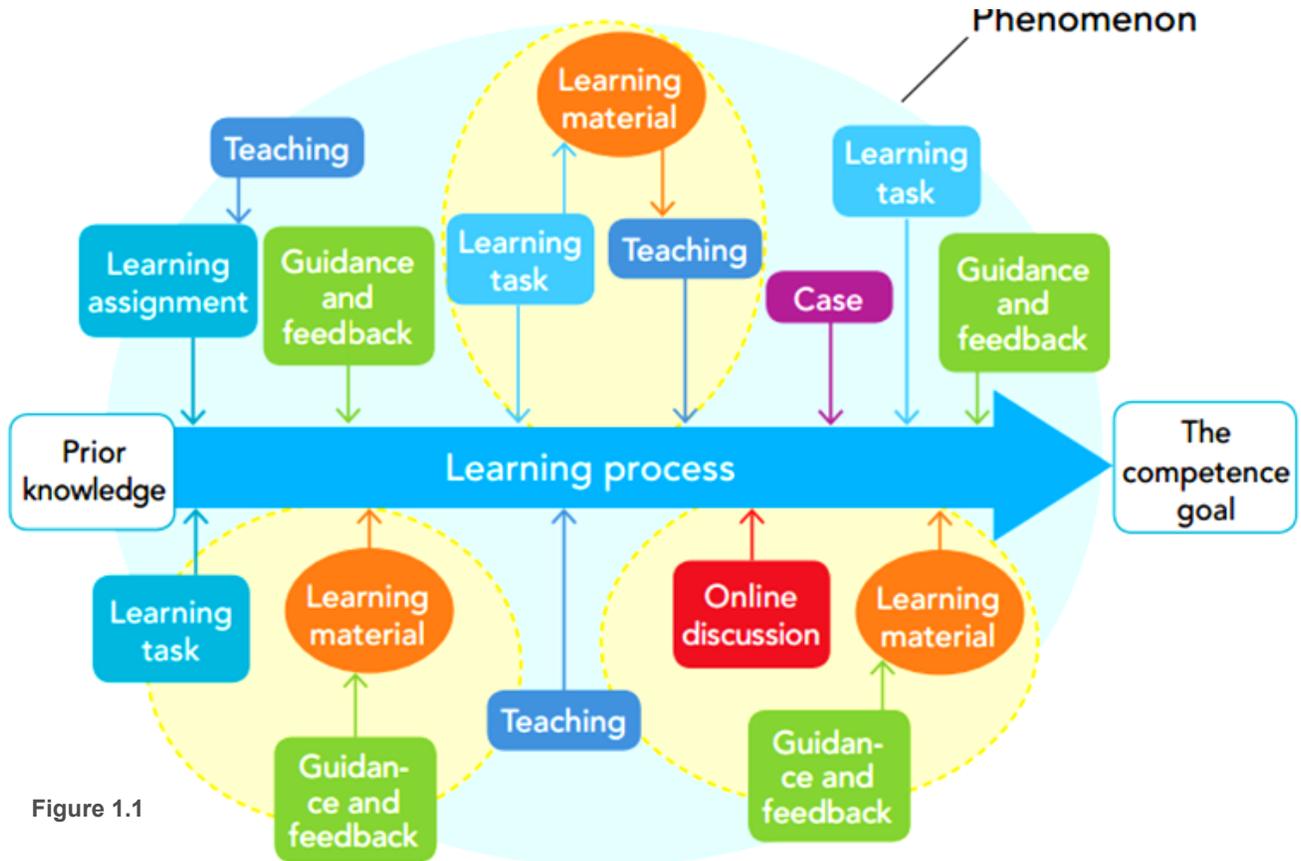


Figure 1.1

Figure 1.1 <http://curiousmindmagazine.com/goodbye-subjects-finland-taking-revolution-education-step/>  
 THE ABOVE DIAGRAM WILL BE A PART OF THE KINGDOM EDUCATION DISCUSSION ON FEBRUARY 25, 2017 ~ 1:30 p.m.  
 THE SUNSHINE CENTER ~ 706 BALDWIN DR., ALBANY, GA 31707

**Dates To Remember:**

**January 11, 2017**

- ◆ 2017 Georgia Education Summit, Georgia State Capitol, 206 Washington Street S.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30334

[www.eventbrite.com/e/2017-educate-ga-summit-tickets-28305886669](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/2017-educate-ga-summit-tickets-28305886669)

**January 16, 2017**

- ◆ Roland Martin, TV ONE CEO, Charter School / Voucher Advocate Tuskegee University, 1 pm

**January 17, 2017**

- ◆ GSBA Student Policies & Waivers, Bibb County Professional Learning Center, 2007 Riverside Dr., Macon, Georgia

**February 25, 2017 & April 29, 2017 ~1:30 p.m.**

- ◆ Kingdom Educators meeting, 1:30 pm, 709 Baldwin Drive, RSVP at: [jewel.faison@yahoo.com](mailto:jewel.faison@yahoo.com)

# Changing our Minds about instruction...even for the least of these

The tremendous convergence of Media and Technology in America's schools has brought with them instructional challenges for many classroom teachers. The ease of information retrieval has left many educators questioning the role of teachers. However, Finland, which is said to be #1 in the world in providing education that is learner centered, has moved ahead *again* challenging innovations that make a difference in the life-long learning and future careers of students.

Figure 1.1 above is a diagram that represents the process of this new thinking in classroom instruction. However, close examination of the model reveals something surprisingly familiar. In the late 1980s I discovered, as a parent who happened to be a classroom teacher, that the public school could not accommodate my curiously vocal and bright son. The helplessness felt as parents was overwhelming until we found *The Paideia School* of Atlanta. As a first generation upper working class family we found that the sacrifice of placing our son (and later our daughter) in a rich environment that accommodated and stimulated their early learning, was worth it! My own re-education from a traditional authoritarian parent/ teacher to one that respects and supports every child's individual needs, helped to produce reflective thinkers who today lead others.

On **February 25, 2017, 1:30 p.m.** at the Kingdom Educators meeting, the Finland Model will be discussed from a parent's as well as an educator's perspective. Join us by RSVPing at: **Email: [jewel.faison@yahoo.com](mailto:jewel.faison@yahoo.com). YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS IT!**

# The Practitioner's Practice

Over the Holiday, I had the awesome privilege of interviewing two students who are now attending HBCUs at Morehouse College (2nd Year) and Clark Atlanta University (1st Year). Both are graduates of an Albany (Dougherty County), Georgia high school. I was simply *awed* by their wisdom and insight. I promised to pass our discussion about students' college prep needs on to other educators and parents:

- ◆ Teachers who aren't creative thinkers, produce students who aren't creative. Therefore, when you get to college you are not prepared for the CRITICAL THINKING that is required.
- ◆ Abolish Cornell Note-taking Techniques and replace it with Meta-cognitive Note-taking. You must be able to synthesize and capture "meaning" and implications - not just summarize.
- ◆ Help students to take ownership for their success. No one gives you chance-after-chance to do what is required. Self discipline and personal responsibility is a MUST! Late papers in college don't get 10 points off - YOU FAIL! So Stop the practice of 2nd and 3rd chances.
- ◆ NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND; left ALL students behind!
- ◆ More academic rigor in high school is needed to successfully transition to college. Currently, the leap (in terms of difficulty) between high school and college can be overwhelming.
- ◆ Encourage students (especially males) to TALK about their feelings. Stuffed emotions that are put in the fire of academia is an inevitable EXPLOSION!
- ◆ Make Jesus a relevant friend and not an overpowering master - 'Cause you will need to really KNOW HIM!

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*New website under-  
construction*

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

**TO:**

EDUCATORS, PARENTS, & STAKE-  
HOLDERS WHO ARE COMMITTED TO THE  
GROWTH OF FUTURE GENERATIONS  
WHO CAN **OCCUPY, BARTER, TRADE &**  
**DO BUSINESS** IN A GLOBAL WORLD