

2016 TECHNOLOGY TRENDS & TOOLS

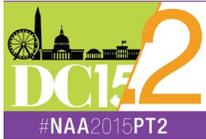
FOR THE AFTERSCHOOL PROFESSIONAL

Technology is playing an increasingly large and important role in professional development at NAA. Technology allows us to deliver professional development differently, and offers more flexibility and personalized learning for our community. It's also providing greater opportunities for afterschool professionals to connect and engage with each other. Here are **6 TECHNOLOGY TRENDS FOR 2016** that will shape how afterschool professionals enhance their skills, demonstrate their knowledge and build their networks.

TOP TREND #1

Last March, as we wrapped up yet another successful Annual Convention, we asked ourselves, "How can we capture this content and training, and share it with professionals who weren't able to attend?"

BRINGING the BEST to YOU



The answer? Part II for the convention, in the form of a completely **VIRTUAL CONVENTION!** Bringing the "best of the best" presentations from the live conference—as ranked by conference attendees—together with a library of resources and networking opportunities resulted in a highly engaging and informative learning experience for all who "attended"!

Given the strong positive evaluations and feedback from both the presenters and the attendees, plans are already underway for another Virtual Convention in fall 2016.

TOP TREND #2

DIGITAL BADGING is gaining attention in many industries as employees seek to gain knowledge, demonstrate their competency in specific skill areas, and chart career progress and growth. In a field populated with a diversity of educational levels and backgrounds, nationally recognized digital badges and credentials have the opportunity to enhance the credibility of both individuals and the afterschool profession at large. In 2015, with support from the Noyce Foundation—and in partnership with Click2Science PD—NAA awarded 44 STEM digital badges to afterschool professionals in three states. Expansion of this project and the addition of new issue-specific badges in 2016 will continue growth of this pioneering professional development opportunity.



TOP TREND #3



In early 2015, NAA was awarded funds from the Robert Bowne Foundation to support afterschool leaders in improving their emotional intelligence. Nineteen afterschool leaders from around the country were accepted into this virtual professional learning community. Along with the value gained by connecting with distant peers, the **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EQ) FELLOWSHIP** has also proven to be a great opportunity for

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I appreciate the efforts for this virtual convention. I was unable to attend the convention this year and missed it immensely! This is **A CHANCE TO NETWORK, LEARN AND RECONNECT** with others who share my passion for OST.

—Billie Jo Bakeberg,
Director of Kids Club,
Spearfish, SD

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2016

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individuals to learn through a structure that might otherwise have only been supported by an in-depth, in-person educational experience. NAA is exploring how this model can be replicated to create additional virtual professional learning communities in other areas. The EQ Fellowship is proving to be engaging and effective, thanks to some easy and affordable technology tools used by the participants.

TOP TRENDS #4 & #5

SLACK, an online collaboration tool that allows groups of people to share resources, message each other, and archive documents and conversations, works well for groups that don't meet face to face all of the time.



The great thing about both of these resources is that they are free or very low cost and are quite simple to learn how to use, making them great for out-of-school time programs and initiatives.

—Jen Brevoort, *Development Without Limits*, and Learning Designer and Facilitator of the NAA Emotional Intelligence Fellows program



ZOOM is an extremely simple video conferencing tool. It allows you to see all of the participants and speakers and to share your screen. You can also record meetings. Zoom is inexpensive and easy for participants to work with.

TOP TREND #6

Having been around for nearly a decade, **TWITTER** is arguably not a new trend. Sometimes referred to as the “virtual watercooler” where colleagues can meet to discuss relevant topics, Twitter is more recently proving to be the place where individuals—especially educators—are connecting and sharing resources. Twitter Chats provide access to current and important information shared by experts and peers around a common topic of interest. Participants can also learn by reading, interacting and sharing—via Twitter, and links to valuable articles and resources.



@NatAfterSchool



The Fellowship has provided me with various connections and expanded my professional learning community. Through this experience I have gained a deeper understanding of my practice through PEER TO PEER LEARNING, GUIDANCE, AND EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS AND DISCUSSIONS. The group is also connected via Facebook through an online 30-day exercise challenge that pushes the group to keep our bodies and minds healthy!

—Jessica Juarez,
Communities in Schools of Chicago

