I want to teach and I want the time to be an excellent teacher. So far, these two things have not exactly worked hand-in-hand for me. I think that the key to integrating technology is not location, equipment, environment, or clientele but, teacher education and preparation. Since I have, happily, already come equipped with an overwhelming desire to integrate technology in my classroom, in my dream school of the future, the teachers have the time. Maybe they have a teaching partner or a qualified instructional aide or one day per week to plan, or what about an early dismissal day once a week? Teachers have got to have the time to plan together, learn from each other, attend in services, and further their education, especially in the area of technology.

We, as advocates for our profession and our children, need to become active in the process that dictates the shape of education. We need to push for smaller schools, smaller class sizes, better prepared teachers in terms of daily planning, continuing education in technology, methods and content, administrators who support their staffs financially and philosophically.

Many people say that we can’t afford any of this. What is it costing us in the intellectual infrastructure we have not provided for our future leaders? I heard a commercial for the California Lottery advertising that last year the Lottery gave California schools $4,000.00 per classroom. What a great start.
Teachers need to have the time to be more involved in budgeting, grant writing, obtaining corporate sponsorships, leading teacher workshops and trainings. We need to be free to take an active role in the decisions that are being made about education in our district and in our state. My favorite statement about the future was said by Margaret Mead: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” What are teachers, if not that group that Margaret Mead speaks of?

A big part of doing different things will be to try something whether we are absolutely positive it will work or not. It will be an e-xperiment, a crap shoot, a sprinkling of the loved one’s ashes and then standing up wind to see where they settle. A good start is to build the school within the school. Make your class the one that people are always wondering about. Call it something different and maybe it will become that. Pick an area of the room and make it the “Think Tank,” call the students ‘constructors’, tell them you are their ‘spirit guide’, invite the parents to a party instead of a conference. If I can take my class on a virtual field trip, maybe we can have a virtual year. I had a Humanities Professor once who told the whole class, on the first day, that we didn’t have to be good students, we just needed to pretend to be good students. He went on to explain that if we only did the things and practiced the methods that good students did, we would never have to actually become one. What if I just pretend to be a teacher who fully integrates technology and, has all the time in the world. When I look out on that sea of smiling faces in my classroom, I just pretend that there are only 15 of them and that we have all the space, equipment and resources we need? What ever we envision, we can make real. Maybe our real question is not how to do different things but when to start.