

## LEARNING 2025 Network Connections — October 2021

### Thought Leadership

#### Operating in a VUCA World with Ray McNulty

Since the onset of the COVID pandemic, our daily routines have been ruled by a public health crisis unlike anything most of us have seen. We feel frustrated, annoyed, overwhelmed, afraid, concerned and unsure of what to do next. The U.S. Army War College described a similar, collective emotional experience after the Cold War as a VUCA world, characterized by the Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous.

In K-12 education, successful leadership in a VUCA world requires systems to manage two types of performance simultaneously: tactical and adaptive.

- ◆ **Tactical performance refers** to proven practices that we already know work in our system — what are often termed as best practices.
- ◆ **Adaptive performance builds** for a future based on emerging educational strategies that show promise in meeting the needs of learners in new situations.

Most educational systems focus on the tactical side. But school systems that are future focused see the need to build processes that look ahead more often than they look back. District leaders ask themselves, “What is the future of learning?” and “Why is understanding the future important to us?” They understand they are educating students for the VUCA world.

In a two-part video presentation along with supplemental resources, Ray McNulty describes how district leaders need to build on the adaptive performance of their school by developing emerging practices that will meet the needs of the future — what Ray refers to as “next practices.”

See this link for more by Ray McNulty on the subject of VUCA:

[July 28, 2021 - Leading in a VUCA World, featuring Ray McNulty](#)

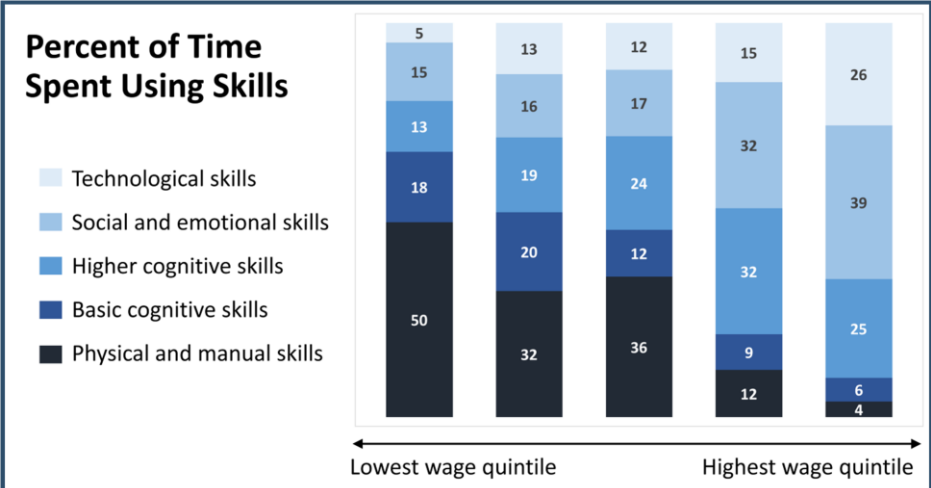


#### Workforce Skills that are and will be in demand during — and after — COVID

Most skills that companies are increasingly focused on developing are Social and emotional; Advanced cognitive; & Technological. They are also the skills that workers in the U.S. will need to learn in order to move into higher wage brackets.

Very little growth is expected in low-wage jobs post-pandemic. McKinsey & Company research now projects that high-wage jobs will incur the majority of growth in labor demand.

As the chart to the right illustrates, more two-thirds of displaced low-wage workers who spend time using Physical and manual and Basic cognitive skills will likely need to acquire skills that occupations in higher wage brackets demand to remain employed.



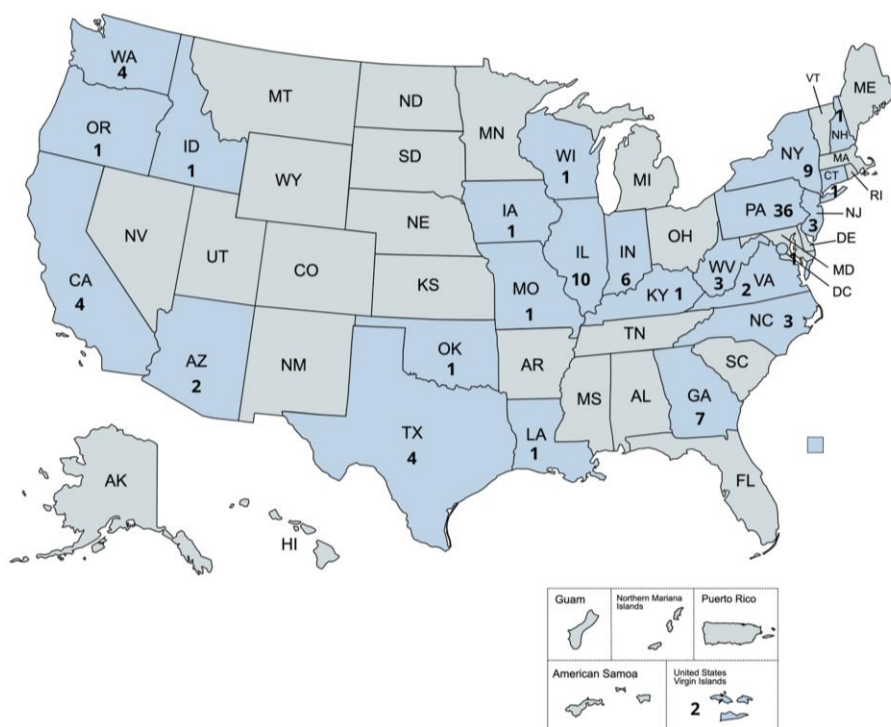
### Did You Know?

#### Changing Demographics (2010 to 2020)

- ◆ Multiracial population increased by 276% to 33.8 million
- ◆ White alone population decreased by 8.6%
- ◆ Adult population (over 18) grew 10.1%
- ◆ Under 18 population declined 1.4%

Source: U.S. Census: 2020 Census Statistics Highlight Local Population Changes and Nation’s Racial and Ethnic Diversity  
<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/population-changes-nations-diversity.html>

## Demonstration System Network



**106 Districts Nationwide**

### Points of Light: Ensuring Equitable Access and Opportunity for All Learners

#### John S McCain III School, Buckeye Elementary School District, AZ

A School Culture that is future-driven and fosters growth for ALL learners; where children are embraced and valued equally regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, social-economic status or disability, is what John S McCain III aspires to. A school where ALL children are loved and respected, viewed for their humanity and their boundless potential. John S McCain III School was constructed on time and under budget during COVID-19 and has been named by AASA as a “Demonstration School”. The school plans to host tours for the Network and others.

The educational program at John S McCain III is specifically focused on C-STEM and humanities, designed to ensure students' curiosities are stoked, their gifts and talents encouraged, and their love of learning untapped so they sustain their success and well-being throughout their lives. Academic and social-emotional learning outcomes are well documented through the school’s Professional Learning Teams. The teachers went through a completely different kind of interview process, ensuring alignment and commitment to the true personalized learning approach that only occurs when teachers instruct and assess, and learners learn on a growth model continuum.

Looking deeper at John McCain III, you will:

- ◆ **See an example** of a new school with a systemic redesign, including an intentional relationship-based culture founded on the premise that ALL students are valued and have access and opportunity to quality learning experiences.
- ◆ **Understand the process** of engaging a community-wide group of stakeholders in the development of a new school that fosters robust learning experiences and joyful spaces using C-STEM and humanities as the center educational program for ALL learners.
- ◆ **Understand how to fully implement** anti-marginalization approaches to teaching and learning that include multiple opportunities for learner voice and choice.

## Points of Light

### Bannockburn School District 106, IL

#### Instructional Coaching Team

- ◆ Starting internal “Growing our School Community” focus groups (e.g., Instructional Technology, Mindfulness/SEL, Community Building, Student Leaders, Building Inclusive Communities), which will be discussed at every monthly staff meeting and Institute Days.

#### Partnership with our Parent Organization (BSPO)

- ◆ Organizes our hot lunch program.
- ◆ Holds monthly meetings where the administrative team is included for conversations.
- ◆ Provides community events that include all stakeholders (students, staff, families).

#### Community Partnerships

- ◆ Deerfield/Bannockburn Fire Department (*Partners with our Middle School STEM team and uses the fire truck for our annual egg drop competition.*)

#### STEM Lab

- ◆ New addition to our building for our K-8 STEM program (2,000 sq. foot addition).
- ◆ STEM Facilitator integrates empathy into her units for all grade levels (e.g., 3D designing prosthetics for a stuffed animal and then collaborating with *Lurie’s Children’s hospital for donations.*)



#### Mindfulness

- ◆ Staff mindfulness team has won recognition for excellence from the Illinois State Board of Education.
- ◆ A Peaceful Place has been established to allow small groups of adults and children to gather for mindfulness activities.
- ◆ Middle School Mindfulness team provides mini lessons to our K-5 classes on mindfulness practices, breathing techniques/body scans, regulation strategies and more by doing a whole-group demonstration along with reflecting in a mindfulness journal.
- ◆ Middle School Mindfulness team took charge in creating our “Peaceful Place” which includes the furniture chosen, decorations put up and tools that are used throughout the space (ex: coloring station, sensory station, positive quotes around the room, manipulatives, weighted blankets, etc.).

## Upcoming Events

### Learning 2025 Network Professional Learning Series:

**Topic:** Early Learning and Whole Learner  
**When:** Oct 7, 2021, at 4:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

**Topic:** Future Ready Learners  
**When:** Nov 4, 2021, at 4:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

**Ignite! Sessions** at each Professional Learning Series.

Want to showcase your school system’s progress: Email us at [Learning2025@aasa.org](mailto:Learning2025@aasa.org)