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***Living and Leading in a Digital Age: A Narrative Study of
the Attitudes and Perceptions of School Leaders about
Media Literacy***

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Abstract

Students graduating from K-12 education need media literacy skills to engage, participate, and learn in a world in which literacy must keep pace with rapidly changing technologies. Given the significant roles school administrators play in providing leadership and vision to their schools, this narrative study addresses the research question: What are school administrators' perceptions of, and attitudes about, media literacy? Through the stories of six K-12 school administrators, we highlight the connections of their experiences and attitudes to the actions they take to support media literacy learning, and their visions for technology, instruction, and learning in their schools.

Keywords: *media literacy, school administrations, K-12 education, school leadership, narrative research, educational technology*

Access to digital technology is a gatekeeper for students' ability to develop media literacy skills, and administrators are the ones who are in the position of making decisions that are crucial to opening up this gate. In their position as policy makers and leaders, principals play a crucial role in deciding to what extent technology is integrated into the curriculum (e.g., Anderson and

Dexter 2005; Begley and Leithwood, 1990; Dawson and Rakes 2003; Mulkeen 2003; Pelgrum 1993; Polizzi 2011; Serhan 2007). When principals have a vision for their school, knowledge of current technology, and a leadership style that supports teachers, their technological literacy is also strongly correlated with teachers' technological literacy (Chang 2012). However, principals' knowledge of technology and media literacy may be hindered by a lack of licensure requirements or course offerings for administrators regarding educational technology (Schrum, Galizio, and Ledesma 2011). Lack of access to technology tools and network connections are key obstacles to the integration of media literacy in schools (Jenkins 2006; Serhan 2007). These prior studies have taken a broad approach to addressing the impact of administrator's attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs regarding educational technology and have found correlations. The current study seeks to narrow this focus to one intended outcome of the use of technology in schools: media literacy.

Arguing for the expansion of the term literacy, Hobbs (2011) maintained that the traditional definition of the term that includes reading, writing, speaking and listening is no longer sufficient because communication and expression now take so many different forms that the concept of literacy must encompass all modes of sharing meaning. The term media literacy aligns to this expanded definition of literacy as it currently applies to education and is supported by "The Core Principles of Media Literacy Education" from the National Association for Media Literacy Education.

In view of the expanded definition of literacy, which necessitates access to and use of digital technology, this study addressed the research question: What are school administrators' perceptions of, and attitudes about, media literacy? This narrative study chronicles the stories of six K-12 administrators focused on their conceptualizations of this new definition of literacy, and the links between their personal experience, engagement, and beliefs, as well as their visions and support for media literacy in their roles as school administrators.

The results of this study highlight a consistency among participants in their positive attitudes toward the need for media literacy and the overarching belief that students need technology to develop their media literacy skills in school to enhance learning and preparedness for the future. However, each of their stories reveals very different reasons for supporting media literacy learning, and very different means of implementation and current practice in their schools.

School Administrators and Digital Technology

School administrators have an important leadership role in creating conditions and modeling actions that tie the use of digital technology to collaborative, social, and innovative learning practices (Fullan and Langworthy 2014). A national study (Project Tomorrow 2012) found that school

administrators make above average use of personal technology as compared to teachers and the general public. However, they face challenges in supporting the use of technology. According to the 2013 report, “74 percent of technology leaders [are] acknowledging that their ed tech budgets are less today than in the 2008/09 school year” (3); yet, 92 percent of these administrators agree that the use of technology is important or extremely important to student success (up from 77 percent in 2008) (Project Tomorrow 2013). However, personal use of technology and acknowledgment that its use is important to student success may not indicate support for use of technology to foster media literacy. For example, in a study of 310 principals from the southwest U.S., only 27% of principals indicated that a major function of technology in their schools was for instruction and less than 10% reported that a major function was for student learning (Waxman et al. 2013). Administrators’ personal experiences and beliefs about student learning, and the resources available and use of technology in their schools may often be at odds; however, each of these factors individually and in conjunction with one another influences the roles of technology and media literacy in schools.

Defining Media Literacy

One of the barriers to understanding how school administrators influence the roles of technology integration and media literacy is in how they perceive these constructs as separate and related entities. Is media literacy about analyzing and creating different forms of texts in different mediums (Brown 1998), does it refer to understanding and critiquing mass media (Ontario Ministry of Education as cited by Baker 2011), or is it about the principles for media literacy education from the National Association for Media Literacy Education (Bergsma et al. 2007)?

A comprehensive definition of media literacy or “new media literacies” comes from Jenkins et al, (2006) who define them as:

[A] set of cultural competencies and social skills that young people need in the new media landscape. Participatory culture shifts the focus of literacy from one of individual expression to community involvement. The new literacies almost all involve social skills developed through collaboration and networking. These skills build on the foundation of traditional literacy, research skills, technical skills, and critical analysis skills taught in the classroom. (4)

Jenkins provides not only a broad definition of media literacy that includes individual analytical skills, social skills and cultural implications grounded in the wide “media landscape” (4) that is available; he also develops this definition to create a comprehensive framework of the skills an individual needs to be media

literate. This definition of media literacy provides the foundation for this study in terms of our understanding of media literacy and how we interpreted the data as part of the study. In the next section, we explain how we used a narrative approach to highlight our participants' perceptions of, and attitudes about media literacy.

Research Design and Methods

Narrative research involves collecting stories and making meaning from them through collaboration between the researcher and participant (Creswell, 2013). The attitudes and perceptions of people originate in their life experiences. Life experiences refer to more than just the events in people's lives; they also encompass how a person thinks about, reflects on, and interacts with these events during and after they take place. People construct the stories of their life through the periods of time they recollect and then reflect upon. Because people make sense of the world through creating narratives of their experiences, it also make sense to study the world using narratives (Clandinin and Connelly 2000).

Participant Sample. The participant sample for this study is comprised of six K-12 administrators, including three assistant principals and three principals. Three are female elementary school administrators and three are male high school administrators. Convenience and chain sampling allowed us to find local administrators, each from different school districts in the same mid-Atlantic state, who had relevant experience and were interested in participating, and they were able to lead us to more participants.

Data Generation. The primary mode of data generation was in two interviews and a writing prompt from each participant. Prior to the interviews, we gave participants an overview of Jenkins' (2006) framework for media literacy to help reach shared meaning between each individual participant and the researchers regarding media literacy. Participants then responded to a prompt to create a written media literacy timeline in which they reflected on their personal experiences with media literacy (see the Appendix for two examples of media literacy timelines created by the participants). The initial interview occurred soon after each participant completed the assigned work and the second interview with each participant was conducted a month later. The participants had an opportunity to read and provide us with feedback on summarized interpretations of the data written from the point of view of the participant.

Data Analysis. We used Riessman's (2008) thematic analysis strategy to analyze the narrative data, in which data are interpreted using themes we developed in light of the data, the research question, and prior theories. We used the components of Jenkins' media literacy framework as a priori codes and developed additional codes to account for topics related to experiences, attitudes, values, and ideas not included in the framework. We used the coded data and

summaries approved by the participants to construct each administrator's narrative in the first person, capture their individual voices, and uphold the integrity of their stories. The narratives begin with chronologically arranged highlights of experiences with media literacy from different parts of their lives. The narratives conclude with the participants' individual definitions of media literacy and the vision they have for media literacy in their schools.

Results and Interpretation

Our data analysis resulted in distinctive narratives for each of our participants. The school administrators' stories provide glimpses into different parts of their personal experiences, values, and vision as school leaders and highlight their conceptualization of media literacy in these contexts. Each of the administrators in this study had an overarching positive attitude about media literacy in general, saw the need for students to develop media literacy, and articulated support for classroom instruction that includes technology. However, these manifested very differently in each participant's personal experiences and in their schools.

As we will see in the presentation of data below, the administrators' stories paint a picture in which their beliefs and attitudes about media literacy fall on continuums within each of the following four dichotomous points: (1) Technology integration vs. media literacy; (2) classroom instruction vs. student learning; (3) the development of students' literacy skills vs. content knowledge; and (4) an administrative leadership approach that values teacher autonomy vs. administrative control of curriculum and instruction.

Each of the participants emphasized each of the four points to a greater or lesser degree depending on their leadership style, beliefs about media literacy, and personal experiences. Ultimately, the administrators have very different profiles for the landscape of media literacy implementation in their lives and schools. We next report on the individuals who participated in this study.

Elizabeth: A Vision for Teaching

Elizabeth (all names are pseudonyms) situates her understanding of media literacy in terms of teaching and learning of skills that can be enhanced through the use of technology to support the needs of learners. Throughout her life, she has had rich experiences with technology and has developed sophisticated skills in navigating technology for use in her personal life and to support student learning. Her independent research on media literacy spurred by her participation in this study underscores the value she places in this concept. Elizabeth is an assistant principal in a rural elementary school serving 500 students in grades 3-5, of which 40% are identified as economically disadvantaged. On the standardized

tests given by the state, 72% of students passed the reading test and 65% of students passed the mathematics test.

In the passage below, she first explains her background with media and technology, then shares her understanding of media literacy, and finally outlines her vision for the use of technology in education:

When I was in middle and high school, I was lucky to have rich experiences with media and technology. I participated in radio broadcasting, and I took communications classes and learned how to use Dreamweaver. I got to play with tools to create layout spreads and designs for the yearbook. Since then, I have associated media with technology.

I taught elementary school prior to becoming an administrator and used technology frequently to enhance my instruction. I believe that what we do with technology needs to be driven by content and have purpose. I often started a lesson with a short video clip so students could connect class activities with a visual memory. We used virtual manipulatives that allowed for more opportunities to experiment than physical ones.

Recently, teachers in my school had the opportunity to apply for mini-grants to receive iPads. They had to write proposals to explain how they are going to use iPads to enhance learning. I support this approach because I want to see skills first. Particular technology tools are transient. Educators need to understand the skills we want students to learn and how we can use technology to help enhance these skills.

I want students to go home and say, 'I did a lesson on probability today'; I don't want them to say, 'I did a lesson on the interactive white board.' I work in a school where teachers primarily get this. I do not face resistance in terms of technology integration; but I am focused on supporting them to integrate technology in meaningful ways that will support student learning. I also support them through classroom observations and meetings by suggestions about online resources and how to use them effectively.

Media Literacy: We use terms in education that aren't always well defined. Media literacy is one of these. At first I saw it as how technology is integrated in K-12 schools, but now I understand that it is also about how we use different mediums to help students to create and share what they know and teach responsible ways to use media. Judgment is a critical media literacy skill that I want my staff and students to continue to develop as they work with different forms of texts.

Vision: I live and work in a rural area. I am not in favor of beginning initiatives that will exclude students from participating because they don't have access to devices at home. Overall, we are a very

technology rich school, so going forward I want to see us invest in highly qualified teachers. It is teachers, not programs, who have the biggest impact on student learning. Then, over time we need to strengthen the technological knowledge of our teachers and continue to adapt our teaching so students will continue to be successful beyond school.

As this passage reveals, Elizabeth has had rich and diverse experiences with technology in her own life that she was able to specifically trace to her own development of media literacy. Elizabeth supports innovative uses of technology in her elementary school that are purposefully driven by content and purpose for student learning. Elizabeth fosters students' literacy learning by supporting and training her teachers in integrating technology in ways that will support media literacy.

Steve: Supporting Critical Thinking

Like Elizabeth, Steve, our second participant, places a great deal of value on teaching: media literacy development will not happen if technology is not in the classroom and teachers need to learn how to use technology effectively; however, his vision for how and why this needs to happen is very different from Elizabeth's approach to change. He is eager to put technology tools into the hands of students and sees his role as central to making this happen by increasing resources available in the school and directing the use of technology in classrooms. Steve is an assistant principal in an urban high school of 1,750 students, of which 33% are identified as economically disadvantaged. On the standardized tests given by the state, 87% of students passed the English test and 75% of students passed the mathematics test. In this passage, he reveals his background, his understanding of media literacy, and her vision for technology in education:

When I was in high school, I had really good teachers who showed me how different countries involved in World War II had their own take on their objectives. That changed me forever in the way that I look at anything like political campaigns, the news; it's just that I have always been fascinated by the power of the media to manipulate.

When I was teaching, I would have my students use the Internet to do research and create movies. I was doing a lesson with the video editing app iMovie within days of discovering it. My students loved it. One thing that teachers often wonder is if the focus is on form or substance. I think this is something we are seeing in high schools: people are so taken in by the appearance that they don't always pay attention to whether it is academically sound.

I feel strongly about access. If we have resources available, I try to make sure that they are in the hands of students as much as possible. I wheel the carts out myself and put laptops in the classrooms. I came up with ways for teachers to share them and rules for how students could check them out.

Media Literacy: Technology has outpaced literacy for us right now. We have the ability to research online like never before. Kids now have the world at their fingertips and yet they aren't necessarily any more informed, more as in necessarily better. It is just a question of being a critic of things when you read. Technology right now is so advanced that if we don't teach kids how to be critics then they are going to end up being mediocre at best, instead of being able to really use it for all its worth.

I think of teachers as facilitators for students. For some teachers all that matters is that a product is created. It doesn't really matter if it doesn't make any sense. There are some who hold kids to a high standard where it is not enough to be published online but that the work meets the objectives of the unit or lesson and that your argument is solid and you supported it with reason. Media literacy learning depends on the quality of the lesson that the kids are exposed to. I think students need writing and researching skills for college and careers. They need to use technology to organize and manipulate data in ways that allows them to make meaningful decisions.

Vision: I think we need a canned media literacy curriculum, and there are companies that provide that. A really good one would include an online class, something interactive where the teacher can facilitate without having to generate each lesson on their own. I think teachers would become more comfortable and learn a lot, too, in that process.

I foresee some new software coming down the road that would change things: sort of that blended learning environment where curriculum is delivered through laptops and teachers take the role of facilitators. I think that is going to happen more and more. It is not necessarily great for everyone, but for kids that are struggling or are nontraditional learners, it would help them keep up with their peers.

As we can see from this passage, Steve centers his view of media literacy on technology and critical thinking. Steve's deep value of critical thinking and evaluation of media stems from his own experiences as a student, and shapes his belief that media literacy is best developed through the use of technology for reading, writing, and research of discipline specific content. He sees the role of the administrator as central to any changes in resources and instruction.

Michael: Culture, Time, and Space

Michael values teachers who use technology effectively to support learning, not just using technology for its own sake, but again with a very different path and reasons for implementation. He supports the possibilities that technology can provide while being more wary of the challenges impeding their implementation. Michael's goal is for students to understand perspectives beyond their own through purposeful experiences in simulation, transmedia navigation, and judgment – all tenets of Jenkins' New Media Literacy theory. He parallels the learning he wants students to engage in with how he has developed and utilized skills as a student and administrator. Michael is a principal in an urban high school with 1,400 students, of which 60% are identified as economically disadvantaged. On the standardized tests given by the state, 80% of the students passed the reading test and 47% of the students passed the mathematics test.

In this passage, he reveals his background, his understanding of media literacy, and his vision for technology in education:

Much of the coursework I do as a doctoral student deals with constructing and analyzing case studies aimed at applying and synthesizing. For instance, if something terrible were to happen, like a weapon in the school, I have to be prepared to make decisions. People want to know that things are under control, kids are safe, and we know what is happening. The simulations have direct and immediate application in my job: They are not only helpful, but they are critical to my learning.

I taught world geography, history, and media literacy. In geography, we deal with sources. We look at an event and seek to understand how it is played in the news and perceived in various contexts. For example, I had my students look at political cartoons on the same topic from the United States, Europe, and the Middle East to see how it was portrayed. We looked at how media is filtered through culture, time, and space. This is transmedia navigation.

In order for technology use to spread, there has to be a sense of need and champions who are going to get the message across. I have decided to not have uniform policies about the use of cell phones in classrooms. I have teachers who are using the cell phones effectively to support learning and formative assessment; and I have teachers who don't use them and are very happy not to have to. I have to allow teachers who are innovative to take risks.

We have a majority of students who are low SES at our urban school, but most students still have cell phones. Not all of the students have access to a printer, computer, or even a quiet place to study at home, but most kids are on social media. Yet in meetings with some teachers, I

hear them say: 'Paper and pen is never going to go away.' Often I disagree. Books and content delivery can be supported by digital technology. I see media literacy as hit or miss, rather than a deliberate effort to get those skills across in most classrooms. This deficit is supported by standards and tests that don't emphasize media literacy.

Media Literacy: Media literacy is about how people interact with the world around them. It is important to understand how messages are constructed, be aware of the weight of your own words, and think critically to make discerning judgments about what we read, see, and hear. As an administrator, I need to negotiate meaning with the local media, community, personnel, and students to build a community of support for learning.

Vision: In the future, I want everyone to have an iPad: access to the entire world in their hands. Education then becomes a conversation for collaboration and construction of media to support curiosity and learning. What does not change is classroom management: students have to be engaged in academics.

As we can see from this passage, Michael recognized and embraced the digital and non-digital applications of media literacy in his own life and its role and relevance in secondary education. Michael supports teacher autonomy and fosters a school community in which teachers can experiment and collaborate to introduce new pedagogy and technology. However, Michael cautions that long term, sustainable change to improve students' media literacy is currently far in the future.

Karen: From Local to Global

Similar to Michael, Karen sees the development of media literacy skills as the byproduct of effective instruction and teachers who see the potential in their lessons to go beyond the standard content rather than calling for a fundamental change in curriculum and instruction like Elizabeth and Steve. Karen's story centers on meeting the needs of diverse learners, supporting teachers, and effective instruction. Karen is a principal in a suburban elementary school serving 500 students in grades K-5, of which 38% are identified as economically disadvantaged. On the standardized tests given by the state, 77% of the students passed the reading test and 82% of the students passed the mathematics test. In this passage, she reveals her understanding of media literacy, and her vision for technology in education:

When I was in grade seven, Jimmy Carter had been president and the Iranian hostage crisis unfolded. I remember watching on TV: the same day that

Reagan got inaugurated, the hostages were released. In my twelve-year-old mind it seemed like the two events were related, that as soon as Reagan came into office, the crisis was solved as if he got this done on day one. Television did nothing to give the correct version of events. Tracing the events later, I figured out that it was actually President Carter who had negotiated the hostage release.

I think the shift from the term librarian to media specialist was made about 20 years ago at about the time when I got my master's in a field called Library Media. The shift occurred because libraries are not just books anymore. Now it's media, and today it is a lot of online media.

I try to support my teachers and to understand what they need to do their job more effectively. In my school some teachers do a good job of integrating media literacy in instruction. I think they just are more big-picture people, and realize that subjects are multifaceted and that you can bring in a lot of different ways to explore something instead of doing it the way we always have. They are open to trying new things. I feel it is even more important to use different media to teach and engage kids who present behavioral challenges. For example, we do project based learning in kindergarten. Once they created a pizzeria and another time a transportation station, and some kids who struggled with schoolwork like reading and math loved this: That was eye opening for me.

Media Literacy: Jenkins' framework helped define media literacy as more of a global term for me. I think now I understand it as the big picture, how media influences us, how we use media to interact with the world today instead of strictly being media-centered.

I think that in my school, media literacy is not the focus but a byproduct of other things that we are doing. If we are looking to cultivate higher order thinking and creativity in our students, some of these skills like the ability to multitask, or have good judgment or collective intelligence, etc. might happen as a result of other things we are promoting in the school.

Vision: I think we need to move toward a one-to-one environment with technology, and I would like to see it become more of an integrated part of the day. I think it is going to be very important that we teach kids to evaluate information effectively. They need to know what is accurate and appropriate.

Karen's background as a library media specialist parallels her value on teaching students to be able to understand media, but her perspective extends beyond media as information to consider how students can use media to interact with the world. She values creativity and innovation in her teachers and students. Her administrative role is to support teachers to help them meet students' learning needs. For Karen, media literacy is an outgrowth of effective implementation of pedagogy and technology.

John: Student Engagement

Similar to how Karen's experience as a library media specialist influences her perspective on media literacy, John's perspective is shaped by his background as a computer teacher. He is the most technology-focused of our participants and does not separate media literacy from technology literacy; yet like the others, he values technology for what it can do to support student success across the curriculum. His biggest concern is the disparity of access that his students face outside of school and dwindling funding to support technology initiatives in his district. He values leadership and sees himself as having a major influence on curriculum, instruction, and resources. He values technology in his own life for communication and efficiency, which parallels the role he sees technology taking in classroom instruction: for engagement, efficiency, and classroom management. John is a principal in a rural high school serving 250 students in grades 8-12, of which 58% are identified as economically disadvantaged. On the standardized tests given by the state, 72% of the students passed the reading test and 57% of the students passed the mathematics test.

In this passage, he reveals his background, his understanding of media literacy, and his vision for technology in education:

I had to constantly teach myself and take classes on the latest in software and technology tools to stay ahead of my students throughout my teaching career. I see the value of using technology tools for research and writing: it is efficient, practical, and fast. We have access to everything we need online. I came into teaching from a business background and taught computer and information systems classes. We had MS Office and Windows for the first time, and I learned and taught every new version as it came out.

I am involved in a multidistrict professional development program for principals, and we have iPads to collect and share observational data. In learning how to use the iPad, I took it home and played with it. You can't break it. It is a problem solving capability; I find it worthwhile and enjoyable to play in order to learn. These skills help me do my job more efficiently and effectively.

I have a major influence on my staff and students, and I try to support teachers to become instructional leaders. I am sometimes constrained due to budget and other factors, but I try to provide and allocate resources to support learning.

We have interactive white boards in every classroom. I recently observed a band class where the teacher was using software that the students could put in notes and record their playing. Then they could go to the computer and move the notes around. The students create songs. I see

examples like this in all of the content areas. There are major advantages in terms of student engagement, efficiency, and classroom management when using instructional technology.

Media Literacy: Media literacy and technology go hand in hand. Media literacy is information obtained through various sources of media that is made available through technology including hardware and software. What makes media literacy powerful is the engagement piece of participating in the learning. If people have the chance to use a device, they will have more of an opportunity to be engaged and involved, so they will learn more. Technology is a way for students to explore the world without leaving their seats.

Vision: My school is in a rural area with 75% of the county only having access to dial-up Internet. It is our responsibility to make up for this inequity of access in school, and students who take advantage of the technology to multitask and network will be more prepared. This is part of a skill set for the next 10-20 years that students won't be employable without.

As we can see, unlike the other participants, John has a singular focus on technology itself. He orients his understanding of media literacy in terms of information: students' ability to contend with all of the information that they have access to with technology. Like his experiences with learning technology tools on his own, he believes that his priority as an administrator is to provide students with access to technology tools that they can learn and use. Technology comes first and related skills will follow naturally.

Riley: More than just Technology

Our final participant, Riley, conceptualizes technology and media literacy as working together to allow students to contend with and communicate information on a global scale. Like Elizabeth, Riley refers to technology as a means of "enhancing" learning. Related to the lessons that Michael taught, Riley conceptualizes media literacy with a global view in how people communicate and make meaning. Her concerns about access are similar to those of John, but, like Michael, she also sees the hesitancy some teachers have for change. Riley is an assistant principal in a suburban elementary school serving 650 students in grades K-5, of which 13% are identified as economically disadvantaged. On the standardized tests given by the state, 77% of students passed the reading test and 73% of students passed the mathematics test. In this passage, he reveals his background, his understanding of media literacy, and his vision for technology in education:

When I was in school in the 60s and 70s, we had typewriting labs, we didn't have computer labs. All research was done through encyclopedias or journals. We hand wrote papers and assignments. In my undergraduate and even graduate education it was overhead projectors, tape recorders and video recording. In my undergraduate years, computers were talked about but they had not become mainstream yet. I think it really started to have an impact in education in the 1990s when my own kids were in school.

I believe I have a lot of influence. The principal and I work closely together and I have a lot of influence on the curriculum and professional development. Once we got interactive whiteboards for our school we made sure that the staff received training in their use. We focused our evaluations and observations on appropriate technology use. I think when teachers have a stake and a say they have more ownership. I feel that there needs to be more collaboration among administrators and teachers about the technology curriculum.

We sometimes forget that not all students have access to computers and Internet at home. So when we want to talk about online textbooks, or even the online components of our social studies books, we have to remember that. We did a program this year where we had students use an online program for math skills with a homework component to it, but a lot of kids said that they had a computer at home but not the Internet.

Media Literacy: All aspects of the media literacy framework are important, but I think judgment is the most important to help our students with so they can understand if information is accurate and reliable. I think media literacy includes more than just technology, it is how we use it effectively to communicate with other people and share our ideas not just across the country but across the world. Receiving, processing, storing and sharing information are all aspects of media literacy.

Vision: Ten years ago I could have never imagined what we have now. I would like to see more elementary students having access to media like iPads and using their phones in school on a regular basis. Students need media literacy skills, and they need to be able to write and communicate and present information. These are things you need in almost any field right now.

Riley believes that the role of media literacy is to allow students to develop the skills they need to evaluate media content and write and share their own ideas and information with others. Her perspective represents a balance between a need for instruction that aligns curriculum, standards, pedagogy, and

technology and a focus on meeting the needs of students by giving them access to technology and opportunities to develop skills that will help them to succeed in the future. To do this, she believes her administrative role is to facilitate a school environment where teachers are a part of the decision-making process in curriculum and instruction but with administrative input and guidance, especially in professional development and curriculum changes.

Discussion

Each of our participants situates their conceptualizations of media literacy within their own experiences, backgrounds, and values. Those aspects of the media literacy framework that were most familiar to the participants and part of their personal experiences were the ones that they understood and most advocated for in their schools. The differences among the cases highlight that media literacy and the use of technology are supported and integrated differently in each of the participants' schools based on their personal experiences, understandings of media literacy, and visions.

For example, John's focus on providing tools and access for his students contrasts with Elizabeth's vision for highly effective teachers. Their visions then manifest differently in how they provide resources and support for media literacy in their schools. John models and observes the use of technology in his school with the primary goals of engaging students and classroom efficiency. He largely conflates media literacy and technology and so believes that providing resources like interactive white boards is sufficient to meet the requirements of media literacy. Elizabeth values how teachers use tools to help students develop skills in content-area learning, so she provided classroom iPads only to teachers who could demonstrate how they would use them to help develop students' skills and meet content learning goals. Her approach provides more alignment for technology to be used as a support for student literacy development, but it is limited to the aspects of literacy that Elizabeth understands and values. Throughout the cases there is inconsistent understanding and implementation of media literacy, how technology is used to support media literacy (if at all), and the roles that administrators may have in advancing media literacy in their schools.

However, all participants articulated educational values that reflect a concern for equity, student learning, collaboration, and cultivating the ability to critically discern truth. Their positive attitudes toward media literacy are based on their experiences, including media literacy lessons they have engaged in or observed and their personal use of technology tools. They all play roles in implementing media-related policies in their schools and believe that they are facilitating the integration of media literacy by supporting teachers and/or providing professional development. They all use technology tools in their own lives and support their use to enhance student learning.

The participants noted a variety of challenges to media literacy integration. Common areas of concern include lack of funding and teacher training regarding media literacy, and uneven student access to technology tools and the Internet. Yet, despite the challenges, all participants have visions for the futures of their schools that include technology integration that will foster the development of media literacy.

The participants' individual conceptualizations of media literacy match their own experiences with media literacy and technology, and they do not specifically align with Jenkins' framework (2006). However, their perspectives do reflect a 50-year expansion of the definition of literacy, encompassing new modes of communication and technological devices (Hobbs 2011).

Conclusion

The overall positive attitudes and perceptions regarding media literacy among our participants are encouraging findings as the modeling of these attitudes by leaders can have a positive impact on the stakeholders in their schools (Chang 2012). However, the differences in the narratives of each of our participants emphasize the need for a comprehensive consideration of media literacy in partnership among education policy makers, administrators, and teachers. Clearly defined media literacy intended outcomes are needed in curriculum and standards to help inform administrators' decision making regarding technology tools, instruction, professional development, and student learning. Otherwise, support for media literacy learning experiences in schools may be limited by the personal experiences and knowledge of school administrators. The definition of media literacy itself is a critical area of potential difficulty that must be addressed in education policy for administrators' visions for schools to move past technology tools themselves to better encompass instructional practices and student learning that is made possible by these devices.

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Appendix Two Sample Media Literacy History Timelines

The participants were asked to create a timeline of their personal experiences with media literacy based on their own knowledge of media literacy and introduction to media literacy on the New Media Literacies website. They were not given any parameters for format or content. This appendix includes two of the timelines that were submitted by participants. Names and places have been changed to maintain confidentiality.

A.1: Elizabeth's Media Literacy History Timeline

Below is my timeline of my experiences with media literacy:

- First internet exposure
 - First experience with Internet in summer school as an elementary student. We learned about safe internet practices.
- First computer
 - We got our first home computer, a Tandy Sensation, while I was in elementary school. It was a gift purchased with the help of my papa. We had no internet connection. It was around \$2,000, but we were able to type papers and play Oregon Trail!
- Radio broadcasting
 - In middle school, I took an elective course in a synergistics lab as part of my coursework, and one of the modules I participated in was about radio broadcasting and we created our own simulated radio production.
- Hello! Internet connection
 - Our second computer was a Gateway. Mom and Dad paid for a monthly subscription to AOL, in which I got my first screen name. Many of my friends already had begun using instant messenger.
- Advanced communications
 - As a freshman in high school, I took a course in advanced communications in which we worked to create a daily broadcast to be aired for the school on a daily basis.
 - In this course, we each had to create our own website as well as our own video documentary. I chose to focus on my papa as a World War II veteran in the documentary.
 - We began to learn how to edit videos during this course with new hardware/software.
- AIM
 - I used to spend about an hour or more every night talking to my friends on AOL Instant Messenger. My computer was visible from my parent's room. My parents always reminded me to never communicate with people I didn't know. My parents would often check in with me to see what I was doing while I was online.

- AIM quickly became a substitute for talking on the phone. I found that I often used AIM to talk to people online that I wouldn't have talked to over the phone.
- I actually spoke to my future husband for the first time on AIM. He knew me through a mutual acquaintance, and he obtained my screen name. We became friends outside of the virtual world, and later started dating!
- Wired in—first cell phone
 - I got my first cell phone when I turned 15. I lived in a rural area in which all my friends were long distance to call, and having my own cell phone allowed me to call my friends without paying outrageous fees.
- Photojournalism
 - I participated in photojournalism (aka yearbook) for three years, beginning as a copy editor and later becoming the editor-in-chief my senior year.
 - We moved from print photos to digital photos during my experience. We interviewed students, wrote stories, and learned about accurate/honest reporting.
- Facebook
 - In college, I became exposed to Facebook as a freshman. I did not become a Facebook member immediately...I was guarded about the idea of sharing my personal information online. Later during college, I became comfortable with Facebook and learned about the privacy features. I wouldn't say that I was ever a die-hard Facebook user. I mainly used it to keep up with friends from high school and see the pictures that my friends posted.
- Computer science
 - I took a semester of computer science during college; I learned more about the technical aspects of computer science. It was a course that focused more on the technical aspects of computers.
- School of education: teaching with technology
 - Within the school of ed, I took two courses about technology integration.
 - I became an edublogger as part of my coursework, which later was discussed in an article on edweek.org. I was also featured on the PTO central website.
 - I liked using blogging as a means of reflection, and I also enjoyed connecting with other educators nationwide. I didn't continue with blogging following my coursework.
 - I learned how to develop a webquest, and I created one to align with our geography curriculum.
 - My classmates and I developed a Wiki as resource to help others with technology.

- Teaching experiences
 - I started my first year teaching as a second grade teacher. My students used the internet for activities/websites I reviewed in advance. My next year, as a third grade teacher, I was able to plan more lessons for my students online, and I always taught about safe internet practices for my students.
 - I terminated my Facebook account during my second or third year of teaching. I felt that the need for professionalism outweighed the need for social networking.
 - I served on the personnel handbook committee in which we reviewed staff policies, including the computer acceptable use for staff.
 - I often attended the annual Edtech conference for new innovative ideas for technology integration in the classroom.
- Graduate experiences
 - I use tools such as Google Docs, wikis, and Skype to collaborate with my peers in graduate school.
- Conference presentation
 - I presented at a conference with a co-worker of mine about how to use Weebly to create a teacher-produced webpage. Our session was primarily geared for classroom teachers who wanted to provide a portal for students and parents to stay connected.
- Admin experience
 - I have created my own Weebly as an administrative page for my principal and me to stay connected with our school community.
- Mendeley
 - I was introduced to Mendeley as a tool for collaborating with my peers in a doctoral program while using the same resources.

Steve's Media Literacy History Timeline

1967-1997

My media literacy for the first thirty years of my life would have been connected to television, radio and print. I grew up in a time before there was a blurring of the lines between news and entertainment (The Daily Show, The Onion) so the question of reliability was never really considered. The news was the truth. As I got older I got my first tastes of media manipulation. I watched Weekend Update on Saturday Night Live, read National Lampoon and learned of Orson Welles and the War of the Worlds event. I also was a student of World War II and the Cold War and had come to learn about propaganda. I guess that I grew to realize that the message was controlled by the creator and that the media itself could actually imbue the message with an unearned level of respectability. Like any good 20 year old, I became a cynic. I had my first experiences with the Internet in my 20's and immediately recognized the power of the medium. The

Internet offered connection and anonymity, intimacy and a public bullhorn. I did not use the Internet for news, school or communication until I became a teacher.

1997-2008

My years as a high school teacher were during the explosion of the Internet. In a period of years, the print resources in the library had become obsolete, replaced by databases and web based resources. As an English teacher, I became very familiar with my students' use and misuse of the medium. Plagiarism became as simple as a copy and paste. Misinformation became as well advertised as respected and reliable sources. It was during this time that I became a student of the Internet. I helped my students navigate the ethical grey areas and unreliable source pitfalls. This was a time when we were making up the rules as we went along. The Internet eventually developed a hierarchy of reliability. Universities developed useful sites while danger areas were exposed and publicized.

2009-2013

For the last 5 years I have worked in technology and school administration. These have been the years of the social media boom. Everything seems to feed this medium. Television, radio and print all pander to find a place in everyone's personalized media sphere. As an administrator I have seen some positives come out of social media. Children and parents feel that they have a voice. Social activism has become accessible. Also, communities can share and communicate very effectively. Morals can be improved through a good social media plan. The dark side of social media has been bullying, sexting and academic misconduct. Children today use their phones as extensions of their personalities. Thus, character flaws are amplified. I have learned that there is a complex web of electronic communication going on as a subtext to our children's day. I work now to help children navigate this web. We are always on the alert for danger but unfortunately we usually discover too late. We need to continue to educate young people about how to be responsible members of this new world.