CONFERENCE OVERVIEW AT A GLANCE
* Subject to change or modification. Descriptions follow overview.

MONDAY, July 14
7:00 p.m. Dinner Groups* (optional, each person pays own bill.)
Watch website for details as we finalize the groups and locations.
*Pre-registration required.

TUESDAY, July 15

7:30-Registration, Coffee & Informal Networking

9:00-Opening Session
  ePals: Welcome, Overview & Vision
  Tim DiScipio and Nina Zolt, ePals co-founders

Opening Keynote
  Global Collaboration & Learning: The View from Africa
  Barnabus Sang, Ministry of Education, Kenya
  Mark Mantuga, Microsoft East Africa

Breakout 1
  Using ePals’ Global Community & Collaborative Tools for Project-Based Learning
  Dr. Kari Stubbs, ePals, Inc.
  -or-
  America’s 21st Century School: Linking Educational Reform with the Effective Use of Technology
  Dr. John Phillipo, Center for Educational Leadership and Technology (CELT)

Breakout 2
  A Dozen ePals Projects for the Global Classroom Connection
  Dr. Howie DiBlasi, Digital Journey
  -or-
  Developing Digital Literacy: Using ePals’ In2Books Program and Online Reading and Writing Activities to Promote Critical Thinking Skills
  Dr. Laurie A. Henry, University of Kentucky
  Nina Zolt, co-founder and co-chair ePals

Lunch with Roundtable Discussion Groups

Breakout 3
  Blogging for Foreign Language Acquisition
  Carol Bar, Blue Valley, KS High School
  -or-
  Applications and Challenges of Educational Technology in Kenyan Schools
  Dan Nijiri, Kenya ICT Trust Fund
  Professor Jack Crowell, Delta College, Detroit, Michigan
Breakout 4
Case Study: San Diego-China Classroom Collaboration with ePals SchoolMail, SchoolBlog and More
Candace Pauchnick, Patrick Henry HS, San Diego, CA
-or-
Strategies for Integrating ePals into Your School or District
Adina Popa, Steuart Weller Elementary School, Ashburn, Virginia

Breakout 5
Integrating National Geographic’s Content into Your Curriculum and Use of ePals
Ross Goldberg, National Geographic Digital Media
Michael Casey, Gallon Jug Community School, Belize
-or-
The Maine Learning Technology Initiative
Bette Manchester, Maine International Center for Digital Learning

Closing Keynote
CultureQuest: An In-Depth Look at Project-based Learning with ePals
Dr. Sheila Gersh, City College of New York

Conference Wrap Up
ePals Conference Wrap Up & Technology Update
Dr. Rita Oates & Jim Davidson, ePals, Inc.

4:00-Conference Adjourns

FULL PROGRAM AND SESSION DESCRIPTIONS
*Subject to change or modification

MONDAY, July 14
7:00 p.m. Dinner Groups* (optional, each person pays own bill.)
Watch website for details as we finalize the groups and locations.
*Pre-registration required.

TUESDAY, July 15
*Schedule subject to modification. Full session descriptions appear below.

Opening Session
ePals: Welcome, Overview & Vision
Tim DiScipio and Nina Zolt, ePals co-founders
Tim DiScipio and Nina Zolt, ePals co-founders share the ePals story and vision to create the first global K-12 collaborative social network for meaningful learning, focused specifically on rich online collaborative learning experiences that foster reading, writing and critical thinking skills across the curriculum. This will provide key insights into building 21st century skills through the use of authentic communication between students and other students, as well as students and caring adult mentors. What is the vision for global collaboration and partnerships with National Geographic, the Intel classmate PC and others? Hear about some of ePals’ most interesting applications and uses. Get the “big picture” view of how ePals transforms learning and builds 21st century skills.
Opening Keynote

Keynote: Global Collaboration & Learning: The View from Africa
Barnabas Sang, Ministry of Education, Kenya
Mark Mantuga, Microsoft East Africa

Barnabas Sang is the Head of IT in the Ministry of Education for Kenya. He is also the adviser to the Permanent Secretary on ICT and serves on the National Implementation Team (NIT) on computerization of schools in Kenya. Mr. Sang will discuss the use of school technology in Kenya. Along with Mark Mantuga, Microsoft Academic Program Manager for East Africa, the presenters will describe the changing role of educational technology in Africa and the importance of classroom collaboration around the world.

Breakout 1

Using ePals’ Global Community and Collaborative Tools for Project-Based Learning
Dr. Kari Stubbs, ePals, Inc.

Currently Director of Professional Development at ePals, Dr. Stubbs will provide an overview of ePals’ global community and school-safe communication tools, and what you need to know to guarantee a successful ePals implementation. This session explores the powerful uses of free ePals tools to support student learning through safe and secure SchoolMail and SchoolBlog. Learn how to use the built-in language translator in SchoolMail and its role in cross-cultural learning and improving home-school communication. See how easily ClassroomMatch allows you to find another class with which to partner. Get a glimpse at some of the free collaborative projects available to interact with students across the globe. Learn how to tie ePals use into the new NETS*T and NETS*S standards. Discover the educational benefits of participating in the world’s largest online learning community within a safe and protected “walled garden” of other students and educators in more than 200 countries and territories. Dr. Kari Stubbs offers her experiences as a classroom teacher and former leader of the Title IID initiative in Kansas. Leave this session ready to get started with ePals in your classroom, school or district.

America’s 21st Century School: Linking Educational Reform with the Effective Use of Technology
Dr. John Phillipo, Center for Educational Leadership and Technology (CELT)

Dr. John Phillipo, one of the leading visionaries in education technology planning, implementation, and school reform, offers an insightful overview of how a comprehensive information technology system can and should be used to support and initiate contemporary education reform. Several scenarios will be used to explore strategies for revitalizing the curriculum, transforming the management of schools, and incorporating core technology competencies into the classroom to meet the social, economic, and educational needs of all students for the 21st century. The presentation will include a discussion about which districts are most successful in rolling out communications tools like SchoolMail and SchoolBlog for student use in achieving the NETS standards and building 21st century skills, and what "critical success factors" are inherent in successfully implementing web 2.0 in K12 schools. The Chairman/CEO of CELT will enable you to come away with a better understanding of the tools and technologies that are likely to have the biggest educational impact in the years to come.

Breakout 2

A Dozen ePals Projects for the Global Classroom Connection
Dr. Howie DiBlasi, Digital Journey

How do we leverage the learning preferences of Digital Natives? What are the implications for 21st century teaching, learning and assessment in the new global, digital landscape? This session uses a dozen ePals projects to demonstrate how teaching, learning and assessment strategies work with the digital generation. Projects include My Hero, My Town, My Family, This I Believe and more. Dr. DiBlasi, often referred to as "The Emerging Technology Evangelist," will show how ePals projects meet the new NETS standards and impact state testing while providing eye-opening experiences connecting very different classrooms. Dr. DiBlasi was CIO of Durango (CO) schools until he retired in 2007.

Developing Digital Literacy: Using In2Books and Online Reading and Writing Activities to Promote Critical Thinking Skills
Dr. Laurie A. Henry, University of Kentucky
Nina Zolt, co-founder and Chief Learning Officer, ePals & In2Books

Students are comfortable with -- and enthusiastic about -- technology. Authentic collaborative online learning experiences capitalize on this interest and help build engaged learners with robust 21st century and digital literacy skills. In this session, Dr. Laurie Henry shares her extensive expertise in digital literacy and provides practical advice about how to help students develop these essential skills. Nina Zolt will demonstrate In2Books and ePals Projects and share how these efficient and engaging collaborative experiences build literacy skills and digital literacy across the curriculum. Come to this session to learn how to modify your own lessons into innovative online learning experiences and how to use ePals’ extensive, easy-to-use, standards-aligned resources. Session content will include ideas for cross-curricular online learning opportunities including math, social studies, science, and technology for elementary, middle and secondary level educators.

Lunch with Roundtable Discussion Groups

Breakout 3

Blogging for Foreign Language Acquisition
Carol Bar, Blue Valley, KS High School

Regardless of their grade, students are often overwhelmed by writing assignments. As a result, you can imagine how pleased a teacher would be to hear the following comments from her students—“Writing is better this year than it was last year” or “I like communicating with my classmates online. I like reading their responses because we all have different opinions. I think the blog is very easy to use and better than writing in our journals…” Carol Bar uses SchoolBlog to make French come alive for her students and to help them overcome their fear of writing. This session will provide a basic overview of how to incorporate blogging into the classroom to promote creative and thoughtful student writing. Although examples are based on a French class pilot project in the Blue Valley School District, this exciting technology tool can be easily adapted to any classroom.

-or-

Applications and Challenges of Educational Technology in Kenyan Schools
Dan Njiriri, Kenya ICT Trust Fund

Professor Jack Crowell, Delta College, Detroit, Michigan

Dan Njiriri will discuss the implementation of educational technology in Kenyan schools, cross-cultural communication and dealing with e-waste. He will also highlight the Kenya Rural Schools Computer Project, including a primary school case study on using ePals to connect with foreign classrooms. He is joined by Jack Crowell, Professor of Math and Computer Science at Delta College in Michigan, who will be highlighting his work as Director of the Kenya Rural School Computer and Book Program. In the past 15 years the Program has provided nearly 6,000 computers and thousands of books to more than 500 schools throughout Kenya.

Breakout 4

Case Study: San Diego-China Classroom Collaboration with ePals SchoolMail, SchoolBlog and More
Candace Pauchnick, Patrick Henry HS, San Diego, CA

For the past four years, Candace Pauchnick has used ePals to partner with Yaodong Chen’s students in China. Using ePal’s global community, email and blogs, Pauchnick has enabled her human sociology students to truly understand China and Chen’s community. The experience has not only enhanced the curriculum, but also made it very real for the students as they are learning about people with whom they have become friends through their ePals connections. This session will cover how and why she began the ePals project, how this meets state cultural standards and National Educational Technology Standards, what she and her students have learned, as well as her future goals for the program.

-or-

Strategies for Integrating ePals into Your School or District
Adina Popa, Steuart Weller Elementary School, Ashburn, Virginia

Ms. Popa, a tech resource teacher in an elementary school in a suburb of Washington, DC, has been an ePals user for seven years. Every teacher in her school has been using ePals in some way. How did she make that happen?
What did it take to "sell" a principal, a media specialist, and other teachers on using ePals for 21st century skills? The challenge is 75% people issues, 20% technical issues and 5% "other issues." What did she do first? How did usage change over the initial months and then years? How did use of ePals extend into other applications, such as videoconferencing with students in other local classrooms and around the globe? This insightful case study reveals both her implementation and marketing plans as well as the challenges and opportunities she faced along the way.

**Breakout 5**

**Integrating National Geographic’s Content into Your Curriculum and Use of ePals**

**Ross Goldberg, National Geographic Digital Media**

**Michael Casey, Gallon Jug Community School, Belize**

Ross Goldberg details ePal’s relationship with National Geographic and shows how this content can be integrated into your curriculum and use of ePals. Michael Casey is an ePals featured teacher and member of the ePals Global Advisory Committee. A principal in Gallon Jug Community School in Belize, Casey began using ePals four years ago as a member of the ePals Global Coalition. As a Coalition member, he uses ePals with his students to create and share newscasts with students from around the world. He also uses ePals as a part of the Mahogany Project, a reforestation effort in Belize. Casey will highlight his students’ ePals projects, including some of the new ePals National Geographic projects that have enabled them to gain a larger awareness of global issues.

-or-

**The Maine Learning Technology Initiative**

**Bette Manchester, Maine International Center for Digital Learning**

Since 2001, The Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) is the largest and most successful ubiquitous one-to-one digital learning project in the world. The Maine International Center for Digital learning (MICDL) was created to build on the work of the MLTI by expanding the research, dissemination, technical assistance and international collaboration. The local mission will be to continue to help educators in Maine to develop the technical and adaptive knowledge they need to incorporate digital learning into all aspects of educational practice. The vision of MLTI is to engage Maine’s students as active participants in the global community. Having the human and technical infrastructure in place enables the vision to be realized. In this session, Bette Manchester shares five foundation essentials of infrastructure that can ensure global learning and collaboration.

**Closing Keynote**

**Closing Keynote: CultureQuest: An In-Depth Look at Project-based Learning with ePals**

**Dr. Sheila Gersh, City College of New York**

CultureQuest (www.culturequest.us) engages students and teachers in inquiry-based classroom projects that explore other peoples and cultures. Projects are based on students’ questions and interests and involve the focused, intensive study of one or more aspects of the art, music, literature, religion, values, daily life, customs and traditions of other cultures. Students supplement traditional resources with extensive use of the Internet, both for information and especially to use ePals to communicate with knowledgeable adults and peers in the country they are studying. Classes create a website about their investigations. This activity of the City Colleges of New York has been recognized as a "best practice in integrating technology across the curriculum" by PT3NOW.

**Conference Wrap Up**

**ePals Conference Wrap Up & Technology Update**

**Dr. Rita Oates and Jim Davidson, ePals, Inc.**

Dr. Rita Oates, ePals' Vice President of Education Markets, wraps up the day so you can return to your school or district ready to take full advantage of all that ePals has to offer. You’ll also have a chance to get a sneak peak at the next generation of ePals tools, including the ePals Open Platform and ask questions of Jim Davidson, ePals’ Senior Vice President of Community Development.

**4:00-Conference Adjourns**

Register now at [www.epals.com/conference](http://www.epals.com/conference)!