

Creativity in 21st Century Workforce Preparation

Creativity and innovation are the keys to success for students entering the workforce of the future according to business and technology leaders who addressed Texas Legislators at a special briefing January 26, 2009 in the Senate Chamber co-chaired by Senator Florence Shapiro (R-Plano), Senate Education Committee Chair, and Representative Rob Eissler (R-The Woodlands), House Public Education Committee Chair.

“Schools need to promote creative, inventive thinking by integrating the arts with other subjects,” Sen. Shapiro said. “It’s not about art or science; it’s about melding the two and promoting both of them together.”

Dan Pink, author of the *New York Times* and *BusinessWeek* bestseller, *A Whole New Mind—Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future* shared his message on why “left-brain” dominance is gone and why the future belongs to a different kind of person with a different kind of mind—creative and emphatic “right-brain” thinkers.

Pink was joined by Dr. Viktors Berstis, IBM master inventor; Raymond Hartfield, Director K–12 Education, AT&T; and Jack Bacon, NASA systems engineer and former project manager of the International Space Station.



It's not art or science; it's art and science combined. We should promote both of them together, not either or. What this is about is melding the two, not one in place of the other.

—Sen. Florence Shapiro

We look for artists because those are the people who are going to fill 21st century jobs. They have to know the science to comprehend but they have to go beyond the science to serve the customer.

—Raymond Hartfield, AT&T

We have the strongest arts education programs in the country. And people look to Texas as a leader. We want to make sure we are not moving in the wrong direction when other countries are getting it and are moving to enhance right brain creativity and thinking.

—Robert Floyd, TMEA Executive Director

We need to make sure we are preparing our kids for their future and not our past . . . What I see in businesses is a premium on novelty, nuance and customization. That's what business is about today. And I fear that our schools are going exactly in the opposite direction. They are increasingly about routines, right answers, and standardization at precisely the moment that the economy is no longer about those things.

—Dan Pink



Dan Pink

The last few decades have belonged to a certain kind of person with a certain kind of mind—computer programmers who could crank code, lawyers who could craft contracts, MBAs who could crunch numbers. But the keys to the kingdom are changing hands. The degree of the future is the MFA, and this future belongs to a very different kind of person with a different kind of mind. These people will now reap society's richest rewards and share its greatest joys.

—from *A Whole New Mind* by Dan Pink