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**21st Century Tools for Meaningful Teaching and Learning -
Using Authentic Resources**
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The purpose of this paper is to identify essential government resources for reflective educators. The paper will also provide criteria to assist in identifying authentic education resources. Besides federal resources, this paper will examine California government websites as an example of how to identify relevant and authentic resources for educators.

Teachers and administrators today are deluged with information. The Internet has caused sweeping changes in teaching and learning. Resources for educators are mushrooming on the Internet. However, authentic and relevant resources for teacher researchers are difficult to locate and a time consuming effort. Some of the very best resources can be found at state and federal government web sites. The "Learning Page" of the American Memory Project is a premiere model for the nation. A state level example is the California Department of Education program, California Learning Resources Network (CLRN).

Federal and state governments have made education a top priority. Therefore, federal and state governments are primary sources for relevant and authentic education information. Government legislation and policy often results in the production and distribution of education information in such topics as demographics and cultural diversity, standards and testing, grants and fundraising, learning styles, abilities and disabilities, and curriculum and instruction. Congressional and state legislative interest in educational issues leads to reports, hearings and documents that are some of the most authentic resources for educators' use.

While much information can be located online through official government Departments of Education, other government departments, agencies, bureaus or committees offer a wide spectrum of information. In the federal government, nearly every department and agency has an education related website. State websites, like the federal government also offer education related information in many of their departments and agencies.

In this technology-rich age, educators are expected to be at the forefront of innovation in the classroom. As teacher-researchers and reflective practitioners, they must be culturally sensitive and able to implement current standards and customize the curriculum for individual needs. The overwhelming amount of information on the Internet and the challenges of the profession, points to the imperative need for accessing authentic resources. Educators using authentic government resources will enhance

their professional skills and capabilities making them far more valuable and effective educators.

This paper will serve as the foundation for a future education research project. This project will be a collaboration of local teachers, administrators and librarians to survey the usefulness and effectiveness of state and federal Internet resources.