The purpose of this interactive session is for participants to develop a broad understanding of the current role of games in learning and curriculum and identify potential entry points for integrating games into their classrooms. During the past decade games and game-based learning has emerged as a promising area of innovation that can make academic content and professional practices more engaging, relevant, rigorous, and effective for students. Recently the National Academy of Sciences and the Federation of American Scientists have issued statements identifying the potential benefits of integrating digital games and simulations in K-12 education. In light of this interest and development, there are many relevant questions researchers and educators are attempting to answer. In this presentation we will focus on the important questions that relate directly to k-12 education and identify how games can be integrated into curriculum and learning in schools.

In this session we will:

1. Discuss the role of games and gameplay in learning as Bartle (2011) defines it: "Play is what happens when you freely and knowingly bound your behavior according to a set of rules in the hope of gaining some benefit."

2. Provide an overview of games and learning in education with a specific focus on the connection between theories of motivation and learning and the basic entry level games that can be easily integrated into a classroom.

3. Outline the similarities and differences between learning virtual environments and face-to-face environments with a focus on the roles learners take on in gameplay as Gee (2010) defines it: "Learning involves taking on and playing with identities in such a way that the learner has real choices (in developing the virtual identity) and ample opportunity to meditate on the relationship between new identities and old ones. There is tripartite play of identities as learners relate, and reflect on, their multiple real-world identities, a virtual identity, and a projective identity."

4. Demonstrate and model examples of game types that provide possible entry points for using games in educational settings with a focus on current top games for learning tied to
curriculum. These include:
Lure of the Labyrinth (pre-algebra) - http://labyrinth.thinkport.org/www/
ReDistricting Game (Government) - http://www.redistrictinggame.org/
iCivics games (Government, 10+ different games) - http://www.icivics.org/
Quandary (Social skills, perspective-taking) - http://www.quandarygame.org/
Caduceus (Science/epidemiology) - http://kids.generationcures.org/play
On the Ground Reporter (Darfur crisis) -
CSI: The Experience (Science/forensics) - http://forensics.rice.edu/
Oncology (Science/cancer) - http://erca.chtc.wisc.edu/Oncology/game.html
Dragon Breeder (Science/genetics) - http://www.spongelab.com/game_pages/DB.cfm