Dear Members of the TIE Class of 2014:

Hello, and welcome once again to the Harvard Graduate School of Education … to the program in Technology, Innovation, and Education … and to TIE’s Foundations curriculum.

OK, I know you’ve already received several “welcome”s from HGSE – and, confidentially, you’re going to receive countless more during Orientation in August.

But this one is different … because TIE’s welcome provides a jump start on your learning opportunity at Harvard!

Your predecessors, TIE students over the past several years, have asked for a little help in getting up to speed at HGSE: help in identifying some of the fundamental background for the graduate study of education, and help in getting to know and learn from fellow students in the TIE program.

So TIE faculty members collaborated to design this Foundations summer experience. It’s not a full course, it’s an appetizer – and we hope you will find it a useful and stimulating prologue to your studies at Harvard.

An overview of the Foundations curriculum
This experience is intended to introduce you to a few key ideas in learning theory, under three broad headings: the nature of learning, mind and society, and learning and technology.

Each of these three themes unfolds in a similar way: We ask you to view an introduction, and then read some excerpts from key sources. The video introductions, presented by TIE faculty members, are not lectures or comprehensive guides. They are brief prefaces – each less than ten minutes long – providing personal perspectives on the significance of these fundamental ideas in our practice of teaching and scholarship.

The introductory perspectives, and the readings themselves, are all posted on TIE’s internal Web site – the same site you will be visiting throughout the coming
academic year for news and information on program activities and requirements. The Harvard University ID and PIN you recently received from the Registration Office are all you need to access this site, which is for your Class only: http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k6949

After entering your ID and PIN, you will reach the site. Then look for the “Foundations 2013” tab in the left-column navigation list. Click there to read an overview and get access to the Foundations readings and videos.

Later in the summer, this internal TIE site will also host some discussions. As the first online activity – starting in about two weeks – we will invite you to introduce yourself, and to discover the amazing resource that your fellow students represent.

As we said, the Foundations curriculum is not a course, so you won’t receive a grade or course credit. However, we do ask you to complete the readings and participate in the online exchange this summer, and we know engaging in Foundations will help you make the most of the TIE opportunity.

We eagerly look forward to seeing you in Cambridge in late August. Meanwhile, we hope these warm-up exercises will help you prepare for an exciting and fulfilling intellectual and social experience here at HGSE.

Best regards,

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