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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Leading in a Time of Change

Leading in a time of change means several things to me. It means dealing with current pressing issues such as preventing early literacy failures, Aboriginal education, population shifts, meeting diverse student needs, reaching provincial standards, and promoting teacher growth — all immediate and important issues, which demand attention and require creative responses.

But...

Leading means more than responding to today's pressing needs. Leadership must also include looking forward to where we want to be in five to ten years in the future, then deciding on and planning the steps to achieve these goals. Leadership, which is future oriented encompasses the concepts of empowerment of teachers as well as continuous learning.

Principals must support teachers' desire to be empowered so they can become accustomed to making decisions and develop confidence in their own expertise. Teachers must take risks, make some mistakes and learn from these experiences. The principal's role is that of a scientific explorer - to encourage teachers to test their ideas while always monitoring student progress.

Today's principals have to establish school cultures that cultivate teacher leaders and continuous learning for all members of the school community including staff, students, parents and the community.

In the book Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement, Linda Lambert outlines the steps to achieve lasting school improvement or continuous learning. Because school improvement initiatives tend to die, reverse, or suffer neglect when administrators leave, Lambert maintains that leadership must include the capacity for sustained improvement. She outlines 15 essential principal behaviors and steps for building leadership capacity. She maintains that teachers as

leaders are the heart of high leadership capacity within a school and that developing the learning and leadership of students is not far behind. Additional ideas from this book can be found in the Book Review section of this journal.

In this issue of *Reflections*, the Editorial Board has gathered articles, which not only address current issues but also includes suggestions for lasting school improvement. The article by Dr. Beverly Zakaluk and Dr. Stan Straw, *Full Day Kindergartens: One Approach to Increasing the Effectiveness of Beginning Reading Instruction for At-Risk Students*, reports on a study which addresses the benefits of reading and writing instruction in full-day kindergarten programs. "...our data suggests that, not only do students profit on average, but the incidence of low-achievement and 'at-risk' behavior is also reduced."

Interdisciplinary approaches to teaching are common in elementary and junior high but not in high schools. Maurice Saltel presents some problems and solutions associated with this approach. In the article, *Interdisciplinary Approaches for High Schools: Problems and Solutions*, he claims that "the starting point is the mapping of the content, skills, and assessment procedures used by teaching staff."

The article by Dr. Shelley Hasinoff, *In Search of the Exemplary Middle School*, outlines the components of the exemplary Middle School and maintains that in order to help teacher candidates integrate these experiences with their courses more effectively, faculties of education and schools need information about the degree to which middle school reforms are being implemented.

In the article *A Chronology of a Journey*, Julie Millar describes school planning in a rural high school with a dual campus. She indicates that the journey has been an extensive systematic inquiry including data collection, action planning and reflection for the purpose of enhancing the teaching/learning environment.

In the article *Emotional Leadership*, Jim Dalton explains how he came to understand the five components of emotional intelligence (EI) and, that these components are critical to becoming a successful leader.

Brad Burns wrote an article entitled *Learning Teams:*

One School experiments with Enhancing Professional Community. He sums up by saying "Some might say that we have just created professional book clubs. I would say they are right. And after years of teachers going off in isolation for a PD workshop that will have little effect on their classrooms, we need "professional book clubs. If we are professionals then we need to be reflecting on professional research and practice and processing the information with our colleagues."

The final paper is the executive summary and recommendations from the report, *Aboriginal Education in Winnipeg Inner City High Schools* by Jim Silver, Kathy Mallett with Janice Greene and Freeman Simard. The report draws attention to the pressing needs of the growing Aboriginal population attending Winnipeg schools. The point of the report can be summed up with these words: "What Aboriginal people have said to us about the educational system is not that Aboriginal people should be forced to change in order to fit into and 'succeed' in school, but rather that the educational system needs to change."

While these articles represent the diversity and complexity of education in Manitoba, they focus on ways, which educational leaders might embrace to improve student learning. Enjoy your read!

References

Checkley, Kathy. (2000). *The Contemporary Principal*. Education Update, Vol. 42, No. 3. ASCD. Alexandria, VA. USA.