

MINNESOTA REPORT

"Leadership for Learning"

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Thoughts on "Walk-Abouts" and Diverse Learners

This month I had the pleasure of doing presentations at the Los Angeles Gifted and Talented Conference. (Can you imagine a school district so large that it holds its own Saturday GT conference with teacher attendance of 2,500?!) One of the major conversations of the teachers attending the conference was classroom "walk-about."

Administrators in Los Angeles walk about their school buildings dropping in on classrooms unannounced to see what is going on with teaching and learning. In particular, teachers claim, they are looking for evidence of the academic standards "in action." I thought, hmmm—good chance for some collegial conversations about teaching and learning and a great coaching opportunity for administrators!! To my disappointment, many teachers reported that the data was collected but not specifically shared or discussed with those observed.

My conversations with California teachers resulted in thinking about what administrators would look for as they conducted their "walk-

abouts." I would hope that the "look-fors" beyond the implementation of standards would include other characteristics of effective practice such as preassessment strategies, active learning, providing variety in both teaching and learning, giving students choice in ways to learn and/or ways to represent their learning, increasing rigor,

want any "walk-about" in your classroom, school or district to result in recognition of the science, the art, and the passion of teaching.

To such an end, Minnesota ASCD is sponsoring "Closing the Achievement Gap: Teaching Strategies to Meet the Needs of Diverse Learners" on Friday, Feb. 6.

What would be your "look-fors"? What would you see in a "walk-about" in your classroom, school, or district?

grouping for instruction, and recognizing and ACTING ON the differences among the students in classrooms by providing better matches between their learning needs and their tasks. What would be your "look-fors"? What would you see in a "walk-about" in your classroom, school, or district?

Minnesota ASCD speaks for teachers, principals, superintendents, curriculum leaders, and those who work in support of student learning success. We stand for those effective practices in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and supervision that are more significant than any trendy "-ism". We would

Join us in examining practical and proven strategies to help all students succeed in times when schools are experiencing changing population demographics and increased public accountability. Vera Blake, a former principal and Virginia Principal of the Year, will lead our conference. In addition to Dr. Blake, local education organizations and agencies will share their successful strategies and resources in a round table setting at midday. [Register online at our web site, or use the form on page 4 -Ed]

Minnesota ASCD is also pleased to announce that we have received an influence
-continued on page 4-

Developing leadership among educational decision makers to improve curriculum and instruction for Minnesota students.

HIGHLIGHTS ...
Nomination form
page 2

Editor's comments
pages 2-3

Winter conference with Dr. Vera J. Blake
page 4

Curriculum Expos
page 5

Understanding the Brain: Enhanced Learning for ALL
pages 6-7

The River of Reform
pages 8-9

New members and membership form
pages 10-11

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"Leadership for Learning"

From the Editor's Desk

Nominations, please (plus annual meeting update and more)

Minnesota ASCD held its annual business meeting for the membership on December 5 and, among other things, the Board created a nominations committee and called for nominations from the floor. Consider this an extended call for nominations for the Minnesota ASCD offices of President-Elect and Secretary. You may nominate anyone who is a dues-paid member of Minnesota ASCD

(including yourself, if you wish); there is no other stipulation in the bylaws. The office of Secretary is a two-year position. The President's office is for three years, the first as president-elect, the second as president, and the last as immediate past president. Please nominate: there is a format below that you can use.

The annual meeting also reviewed the audit of the

budget. Not including future costs for the upcoming February conference and other liabilities, the assets for the organization were \$81,937.53 as of October 31. (Expenses from the Board of Directors' fiscal budget are set at \$63,300.)

In This Issue...

In addition to various forms and general information, you will find four articles within this issue: one from Richard Cash; another from Ken Simon; one from our president, Diane Heacox, who describes her reflections on "walk-about"; and one from John Eller, our Executive Director, who talks about the upcoming Curriculum Expos (see page 5 for details).

Dr. Cash's article focuses on the brain's three levels and how it functions and learns, then moves to implications for instruction. He explains four powerful operational teaching concepts derived from those three levels: the classroom and school environment; input that is stimulating and varied; building active and meaningful learning experiences; and providing accurate, meaningful feedback. Finally, he lists concepts for instructional activities and provides us with a list of resources from which we can learn even more.

Ken Simon is reflective of his childhood experiences as a Wisconsin canoeist and the relationship between that and

-continued on next page-

**Nominations for Minnesota ASCD Officers
Positions open: President-Elect and Secretary**

You may nominate by e-mail, regular mail, fax or phone. Just be sure to include the following information:

Your name _____

Your phone number _____

Please provide the following information for each nomination:

Name of person being nominated _____

Job title (if known) _____

Office for which the person is being nominated:

- President Elect Secretary

How can we contact the person in order to know that the nomination is accepted (please provide at least one)?

Address _____

Phone(s) _____

e-mail _____

Send your nominations to Lori Sandvig
Minnesota ASCD Executive Secretary
Address: 5033 West 56th Street, Edina, MN 55436
Phone & Fax: 952-920-9123
e-mail: lori@isarep.com

MINNESOTA REPORT

Editor: Stan Hooper
8080 Hidden Bay Trail North, Lake Elmo, MN 55042-9529
Phone: 651-773-9843
Designed and produced by Gloria Gritz

today's emphasis on school reform, wondering how it is that the process has gone beyond the immediate needs of community and has become a "fits-all" endeavor.

Dr. Heacox muses from her discussions with teachers who described their experiences with administrative "walkabouts." Some time ago, there was a strong push for "MBWA" or Management by Walking Around. Today, its new nomenclature is "walkabouts." Only when the activity dignifies and acknowledges teachers' responsibilities to children, Heacox suggests, do "walkabouts" carry meaningful information back to the classroom and elsewhere.

What We're Like ... Do You Agree?

Dr. Heacox reflects, in her article, some of the issues the Board of Directors has been having on what Minnesota ASCD is like or would strive to be like in becoming an even stronger influence in the world of Minnesota education. The Board is fleshing out many of the topics we've been discussing to better define what Minnesota ASCD represents.

We are wondering if members are in agreement with the Board: this is a chance to comment, either to me or to Diane Heacox, through our Executive Secretary, Lori Sandberg. (Her snail-mail and e-mail addresses are in the box on this page.) How would you suggest these precepts be fleshed out? Here's a partial list of the categories we're discussing, waiting for your own reflections and comments:

Who do we represent?

We speak for these: teachers, principals, curriculum leaders and those who support the teachers' work benefiting students.

What is our message?

Voice: We stand for curriculum, instruction and supervision that is bigger than standards and the current "-isms." Education is accountable, but accountability is not always measured through testing. Standards serve a purpose, and we recognize that.

Support: Celebrate the profession of teaching; see its passion. Be a proactive educational organization – think to the future. Do not activate for a specific set of standards. Provide support for teacher preparation and professional growth and development. Promote encouragement rather than discouragement of educational professionals.

That's it for now: space limits what we can cover, but that allows us to get some feedback and, if it's provocative, we'll send the rest of the statements to you for further critique and embellishment. Thanks, in advance, for your stated consideration of our ponderings.

Editorial Comment

This last is your editor in his musing mode. The comments are strictly personal and do not reflect anything that is representative of Minnesota ASCD or International ASCD in any way.

In shorthand parlance, "NCLB" is being described as



Enjoying a chance to socialize with colleagues before the annual meeting in Burnsville are (left-to-right) Roanne Elliott, Deb Pitton (immediate past-president), Mark Youngstrom, Pam Paulson (president elect), Rose Chu (secretary), and Ken Simon.

"Nickleby." We are apparently supposed to immediately recognize "Nickleby" as a reference to the federal legislation, although I admit that I did not at my first hearing. I do not know where or when the translation began, nor by whom. This is a euphemism that perplexes me. It needs first be acknowledged that this editor has a preference for the euphony of EN-SEE-ELL-BEE over "Nickleby," and second that one can throw a first name into this concept: "Nicholas." I don't know whether author C. Dickens would make comment were he alive, but it could be said that at least

Nicholas Nickleby was eventually a successful man. However, as I recall the Dickens novel, success wasn't necessarily attributable to the odious schoolmaster. So, I muse and am amused that "Nickleby" is perhaps out of synch with what NCLB purports to accomplish in its reform of education, and I wonder whether there is intent in the euphemism or if it was entirely inadvertent.

Stan Hooper, Editor





Minnesota Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development

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President's Corner,
continued from page 1
grant from ASCD. The purpose of the grant is to support the development and implementation of a process to better inform parents and communities about relevant teaching and learning issues in our state, including the Minnesota Academic Standards and NCLB requirements. In addition, the grant will allow us to explore ways we might develop regional partnerships to support the success of particular educational initiatives. We will be working on designing activities around these purposes to respond to the concerns and needs of you, our members.

It is Minnesota ASCD's goal to provide information, support for professional growth, and opportunities for collegial conversations about teaching and learning to assure that only the most effective educational practices are observed in your "walkabouts."

—Diane Heacox



Diane Heacox, Ed.D., 2003-2004 president of Minnesota ASCD, is an Associate Professor of Education at the College of St. Catherine.

Closing the Achievement Gap: Teaching Strategies to Meet the Needs of Diverse Learners

Presented by Dr. Vera J. Blake, ASCD International Consultant

February 6, 2004
Sheraton Minneapolis West Hotel

This conference is designed to complement school districts' efforts to ensure that all students learn. Dr. Blake shares practical and proven strategies to help all students succeed in these times of changing demographics and increased accountability. Her presentation is linked to the Differentiated Instruction strategies presented last winter by Carol Ann Tomlinson. You will leave

with practical ideas and strategies that will help increase student learning and achievement.

In addition to the strategies presented by Dr. Blake, participants will be able to see examples of grass-root initiatives and resources that other districts are using to help them close the achievement gap and meet the requirements of NCLB.



Dr. Vera J. Blake is a retired principal from Fairfax County, Virginia, where she served 12 years as principal of Holmes Middle School. She is an experienced presenter who works with ASCD as a consultant. Dr. Blake is a contributing author to *Transforming Ourselves, Transforming Schools*. She was selected as Fairfax County principal of the year in 1999 and Virginia principal of the year in 2000. She has also served as a teacher and college professor.

Schedule

7:45-8:15	Registration
8:30-11:30	Vera Blake Presentation
11:30-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:30	Round Table Sharing/ Resource Material Sharing
1:30-1:45	Break
1:45-3:00	Vera Blake Presentation

Discounted rooms are available at the Sheraton Minneapolis West for this conference. Call the hotel at 952-593-0000.



“Teaching Strategies to Meet the Needs of Diverse Learners” with Dr. Vera J. Blake

For registrations received after Sept. 30

- \$160 member of Minnesota ASCD
- \$170 nonmember

Please print. Use a separate form for each enrollee.

Name _____

Mailing address _____

School District _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Make checks payable to Minnesota ASCD and return with this form to:

**Lori Sandvig, Executive Secretary, Minnesota ASCD
5033 West 56th Street, Edina, MN 55436**

Cancellations: Refunds are not given but substitutions are allowed as long as the new name is provided by noon the day prior to the conference.

Bring your team to one of our Curriculum Expos

By John Eller, Minnesota ASCD Executive Director

Curriculum Expos

On January 27 and 28, we will offer Curriculum Expos highlighting language arts, science and social studies. At Minnesota ASCD we work hard to give you the kinds of services that can help save you time and money, and one of these services is the Curriculum Expos. We work with educational publishers to organize centralized displays of the most current curricular materials available. These Expos allow our members and their school districts the opportunity to see what is on the market by going to one location rather than calling up individual publishers and asking them to visit their district to highlight their materials. We have been organizing these Curriculum Expos in Minnesota for three years. Those who attended the Expos in the past have found them to be extremely efficient for examining publishers' materials in a relaxed and systematic manner.

In 2003, we added formal staff development presentations to our Curriculum Expos. Topics presented matched the curricular focus of the Expo, and special presentation rooms were designated to allow participants a quiet and professional atmosphere to engage in their learning. The sessions that were offered were very popular and informative. Session attendees commented that they were able to take away practical classroom strategies that would positively impact their students' learning once implemented.

This year's Expos will be offered in the following locations:
January 27, 2004 – St. Cloud Civic Center
January 28, 2004 – Rochester Mayo Civic Center

Staff development sessions will be offered again this year, featuring practical sessions in the areas of language arts, science, and social studies. The presentations are still being finalized. The schedule will be made available to participants at the Expos. The Expos will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on both dates. For those of you interested in attending, a registration form is available below, or you can register electronically on the Minnesota ASCD website at <http://www.mnascd.org>.

We hope you will take advantage of the opportunity to save your school or district staff time by attending one of our Curriculum Expos. It is another example of how we are working to provide you with valuable member services.

John Eller
 Executive Director, Minnesota ASCD

Publishers scheduled to date:

- AGS Publishing (*both dates*)
- Harcourt School Publishers (*both dates*)
- Holt, Rinehart & Winston (*both dates*)
- Houghton Mifflin Company (*both dates*)
- Kubitz Educational Services (*both dates*)
- Macmillan/McGraw Hill (*both dates*)
- McDougal Littell Publishing Co. (*both dates*)
- Nystrom, Division of Herff Jones (*Jan. 27 only*)
- Pacific Learning (*both dates*)
- Perfection Learning (*both dates*)
- Pearson/Prentice Hall (*both dates*)
- Saxon Publishers (*Jan. 28 only*)
- Scott Foresman (*both dates*)
- Star Tribune Newspaper In Education (*Jan. 27 only*)



Curriculum Expo Registration Form

- Free – Minnesota ASCD member (1 free enrollment per member)
- \$5 per team member (non-Minnesota ASCD member)
- \$30 per team (up to 10 non-Minnesota ASCD members)

Return to: Lori Sandvig
 Minnesota ASCD Executive Secretary
 5033 West 56th Street
 Edina, MN 55436

Check the Expo you'll be attending:

- January 27, St. Cloud Convention Center January 28, Rochester Mayo Civic Center

School District number and name _____

Names of individuals attending: _____

Contact information (*needed in case of emergency or severe weather conditions*):

Name _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____

Understanding the Brain:

Enhanced Learning for ALL!

by Richard M. Cash, Ed.D.

Richard M. Cash, Ed.D. is the District Administrator of Gifted and Talented Programs and Services for the Bloomington Public Schools, ISD 271. He has presented locally and nationally on issues in gifted education and talent development, differentiated instruction, and brain-compatible classrooms. The brain is innately programmed how to learn, but experience and environment can greatly impact the quality of what the brain learns. Children who experience enriching and meaningful activities, and are nurtured in environments that are caring and safe, will learn naturally and will be motivated to learn more. Dr. Cash may be contacted at 952-681-6438 or rcash@bloomington.k12.mn.us

Margaret Mead, the cultural anthropologist, stated in the 1940s, “We are now at a point where we must educate our children in what no one knew yesterday, and prepare our schools for what no one knows yet.” These are powerful words, even today. Schools tend not to be centered on learning for the future, but on learning for today. Massive amounts of testing (usually rote-based information), and sub-standard standards (usually fact based) often do not lead children to think critically or at deeper levels. Knowing how the brain processes information and “thinks” can assist educators in raising the rote-learning process to critical and creative thinking for “what no one knows yet.”

A caution

I am neither a brain scientist nor a scholar in the field of brain development. However, I am a successful educator of children and adults with over 15 years experience working with the brain. Caution: Just because one works with a brain does not mean one knows about its development or functional processes. That is why I’ve committed many hours of study and practice in gaining a better understanding of the basics of brain development and structure. Having this understanding has given me a greater awareness of effective teaching strategies for

meeting the needs of the learning brain.

Many authors in the field of brain learning and brain development suggest that emotion drives attention, which drives learning (see Erlauer, Given, Jensen, Sprenger, & Wolfe). Without the correct emotional attachment to the information entering the brain, a person applies very little attention to this information to be processed at the higher levels.

Three levels of the brain

Simplistically, the brain can be divided into three “levels.” The lowest level, and the level through which all information must pass, is the brain stem or Reptilian Brain. It is called the Reptilian Brain because this portion of the brain is most responsible for fundamental and evolutionarily primitive processing functions. The brain stem is specifically responsible for controlling the body’s involuntary systems, such as breathing, heart rate, and blood pressure.

This is also where the “fight or flight” response is located. Information coming into the brain deemed as most life threatening will be dealt with on the lowest, most basic level. If information is not considered life threatening, it is passed along to the emotional center of the brain.

The next level can be considered the emotional center of the brain. This is a highly complex area of compartments, each coordinating various functions such as information collection and distribution (the thalamus) or “relay station” to other areas of the brain. The hippocampus (meaning seahorse) is the switchboard between short- and long-term memory; it is not completely developed until age two or three. Another highly important component of the emotional level of the brain is the amygdala. The amygdala is the “emotional gate” to the higher-levels of the brain. Information passing through the amygdala is provided emotional capacity or attention.

The final and only conscious level of the brain is the neocortex. The neocortex or cognitive processor is responsible for all higher order thinking. Self-regulation, critical thinking, and awareness of thoughts and actions are all associated with the neocortex. In other words, information is synthesized from inner and outer sensory worlds.

Two types of cells

Two types of cells make up the brain: Glial cells and neurons. Glial cells make up over 90% of the brain’s cells. These cells provide nutrients



to the neurons mainly in the form of water. These cells do reproduce. Neurons, on the other hand, do not reproduce. You are born with a full complement of neurons – approximately 100 billion! These cells are unique in that they have a shape unlike any other cell and can communicate with one another. Neurons are the basic functional unit of the nervous system. If neurons are not used, they will be culled out of the brain's system. Damage to these cells or lack of use of these cells can limit access to information processing or storing.

Four principles of brain-based learning:

1. Safe and non-threatening environment

Information entering the brain must pass through the lowest level of the brain to be processed at higher levels. If the information is clouded or stopped by external or internal stressors, it will be greatly inhibited from higher-level processing. Students who come to school with less-than-perfect home lives, lack of proper nutrition, suffering from fear caused by bullying or other torments, find it relatively impossible to focus significant amounts of brain power toward learning.

Ensuring that the school environment is safe and welcoming can alleviate some of the pressures students encounter in the learning process. Classrooms that are community oriented and respectful of individual differences make for a better learning environment. Teachers who genuinely care for each and every student, no matter what “baggage” the student may carry, will see greater student achievement.

2. Stimulating and varied input

Many people use the analogy of relating the brain to a sponge. Actually, the brain is more similar to a sieve. The brain is constantly filtering out unnecessary or non-life-threatening information. Think of the sounds of a fan on the overhead projector; after a while, you no longer “hear” it. Instruction can have the same effect on the brain. When information is presented repeatedly in the same way, the brain eventually tunes it out.

To ensure information is processed and stored, find unique and interesting ways to deliver instruction. Videos, interactive lectures, guest speakers, and hands-on experiences are all effective ways to deliver information. Too much of any form can become routine. Keep instruction fresh and alive.

3. Active and meaningful learning

The brain is a highly complex set of interrelated networks. Information is processed and stored in multiple “compartments” through various pathways. The more actively a person engages in a learning activity, the more complex paths the information takes to storage. Repeated use of neurons ensures easier and eventually automatic connections to long-term memory. This automaticity or efficiency of neural functioning is an important aspect of intelligence. The speed of thinking and efficient use of “brain power” allow the brain to process information at higher levels with greater complexity.

Students who are provided active learning will more likely use multiple modes of manipulating information. Combining several of the five senses while teaching allows students to more deeply embed the information. Making the information meaningful to the students’ lives affords them different ways of storing and retrieving information.

4. Accurate feedback

The brain is designed to operate on feedback. Learning is simply the relatively permanent change in a behavior due to experience. Storage of information in the brain can happen instantly or over a longer period of time. If information is inaccurately processed with improper connections, retrieval and usage may be difficult. Making sure students understand and are able to relate the new information to other information will greatly increase the likelihood of long-term retention.

Feedback to students can be specific or non-specific. Editing of student writing or corrections made on a test would be considered specific feedback. Non-specific or general feedback would involve group interactions, or non-verbal exchanges. Feedback is usually most helpful when it is immediate, though some stressed or threatened children may prefer delayed feedback.

Applications for teachers

- Establish themes across curricular units for more meaningful learning. The brain does not learn in compartments – it learns holistically.



- Connect complex and challenging information to real-life experiences for greater understanding.
- Provide students the opportunities to choose what and how they learn. We all pay attention to those things for which we have an interest.
- Use stories, myths, and metaphors when you teach. The brain loves episodic learning – we are more likely to remember those stories that are rich with detail and emotion.
- Provide multi-sensory representations in learning and instructional activities. Learning styles are simply multiple ways the brain prefers to gather information. Giving students multiple options for learning greatly increases long-term storage.
- Consider the physical surroundings. Some people feel safer in quiet spaces; some feel more at ease
- continued on page 9 -

The River of Reform

by Ken Simon

Ken Simon is a TOSA (Teacher on Special Assignment) in the Minneapolis public schools. He tells us that his real title is too complicated to verbalize without confusing us, and it's going to change in a few weeks as it is. We know that he has taught something in the social studies (he didn't want to be specific) and that he has worked primarily at the secondary level. "I think about standards all the time," he said to us. With what is going on in the nation and in Minnesota and his present responsibilities, it is not hard to understand why. The following article represents one of his lines of thought regarding standards. We hope you enjoy it as we did: its focus goes beyond the issue of accountability and into the realm of who in our democracy has lost out on influencing what children should learn.

As a child, I spent a lot of summer days canoeing the rivers of northwest Wisconsin. Years later, as a young secondary social studies teacher, I looked to the lessons I learned on the river to guide my own teaching and understanding about how we learn. On the river, not only did we learn the basic skills needed to navigate a canoe (paddle strokes to move and steer the canoe, "reading" rapids, and basic care of equipment), we also learned about the complex biotic relationships between plants, animals and the water. It was not required of me to learn and master the "J" stroke before I learned and understood the effects that a beaver can have on the flow of a river. Had that been the case, I might never have learned about the beavers and subsequently the important role they play in the health of a river. In fact, I might have left rivers behind believing that all that was important was their human navigation.

Today, when I think about education reform, my mind goes back to the river. Over the last ten years, the route to reforming our schools has been dominated by standards and accountability.

In the early years of the standards movement, much of the discussion focused on how to ensure that all students had access to a rigorous and challenging curriculum. In other words, students would not only learn the basic skills of navigational survival on the river, but also the complex facts and relationships embedded in the river's ecology and that of its surrounding landscape. We were preparing students to be able to understand the river, as do hydrologists, engineers, historians and writers.

Research has shown that students of color and students in high-poverty schools have far less access to this type of rich curriculum and to the high expectations for success that must accompany any challenging curriculum. The idea was that standards of achievement would raise the bar for all students, and appropriate accountability measures would compel teachers to have high expectations for all their students. In Minnesota, we have taken two very different routes on the river of reform. The old Profile of Learning was a standards-based system which captured only the broad contours of the river and surrounding valley. The new, emerging state standards are overwhelming in number and based on specific bits of content that fail to provide any vision of the immediate conditions versus the many factors which influence the quality of the watershed. For many Minnesotans, the journey down the river represented by the new standards is just as troubling as the route taken under the old Profiles. The new standards are based on several assumptions about our journey down the river:

- That instead of standards reflecting the reality of the river and the surrounding world, these standards act as levees, attempting to straighten the river's course. By trying to control the river through a levee system, the state creates less of a system of standards and more of a standardized, "one size fits all" system.
- That our decisions as to what is important to learn (and thereby teach) are to be based on the testability of a specific skill or pieces of knowledge and that any test must be translated into quantifiable results. Understanding why trout rise in some pools and not in others, or how an



eroding riverbank affects the flow of the river over time may not be testable in a traditional sense, but are they any less important for students to know in understanding the river?

- That all children in Minnesota will be able to demonstrate what they have learned in the exact same way (a state test) and on the exact same day!

In Minnesota, as in many parts of the country, sharp disagreements have developed about the future course of school reform. The argument generally focuses on questions such as, “What are the best kinds of standards,” and, “To what degree should schools be held accountable for student scores on tests”? But we are missing the point. The collective anxiety we all seem to be feeling about the state of school reform may have less to do with the specifics of standards or our accountability system and more to do with the loss of efficacy citizens are feeling at the local level.

New evidence is emerging that a great deal of the anxiety coming from Americans has more to do with who writes standards and who controls them. According to a new Phi Delta Kappa Gallup poll on the public’s attitudes toward public schools, 61% of all Americans believe that local school boards should determine what is taught in schools and only 21% believe that it should be dictated by the state. A mere 15% believe that the federal government should determine what is taught in schools. Yet policy makers have a difficult time imagining a standards and accountability system that isn’t heavily controlled by federal and state authorities. In fact, the evolution of public policy around education reform has been the steady erosion of local control in favor of a highly centralized and regulated system. Perhaps the greatest challenge to the American citizenry in the 21st Century is to help policy makers understand that our education system must reflect our desire for a stronger democratic system that both empowers and brings together local citizens and teachers who serve their communities.

Navigating the river by way of the task force, where the towboat captain, the railroad engineer, the poet, the canoeist, the painter, the forester, the ship’s first mate and the doctor have declared standards that are best for all, and are classroom tested, is accountability in the river of reform. Will it work on the Brule without input from those who have canoed that river?

NCLB Resource Available

ASCD reported that in August it joined other leading education organizations in the “Learning First Alliance” and published the *Practical Guide to Talking with Your Community About No Child Left Behind and Schools in Need of Improvement*. The guide is designed to help districts, schools, parents and teacher leaders in understanding, explaining and discussing the requirements and implications of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). For more information, go to the following ASCD website: <http://www.ascd.org/cmsindex.cfm?TheViewID=2052>.

ASCD’s ResearchBrief Links Research to Practice

ResearchBrief is a web-based publication designed to offer field-based practitioners and policymakers focused summaries of original, interdisciplinary, high-quality research. Every two weeks, *ResearchBrief* presents an overview of a recent study and its implications for educators and policymakers. Each issue looks at the broader context of related research and includes links to research resources. The publication also provides research evaluation tools to help educators separate quality from biased work. Get it at <http://www.ascd.org/direct/researchbrief.html>.

Understanding the brain (continued from page 7)



when sitting by a window. Providing students a safe, welcoming and environmentally friendly atmosphere permits the brain to think at higher levels.

- Develop a classroom/school community. We are social animals; we need other people to learn from and with. When students are accepted for their individual differences,

they feel more willing to take risks. Also, as a true community where everyone is cared for, learning becomes everyone’s responsibility.

- Have students write reflectively everyday to reiterate and consolidate learning.
- Know your students. Understand their learning styles, ability levels, life/family background, interests, and likes/dislikes. The more you know about your students, the better prepared you can be in making learning meaningful.

Resources

The following resources have useful information and strategies for developing brain-compatible classrooms.

How the Brain Learns, *Educational Leadership*, November, 1998, Volume 56, No. 3

Given, B.K. (2002). *Teaching to the brain’s natural learning systems*. ASCD. ISBN #0-87120-569-6

Erlauer, L. (2003). *The brain-compatible classroom: Using what we know about learning to improve teaching*. ASCD. ISBN#0-87120-748-6

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Anderson-Rossin, S. Melissa
Minneapolis

Auger, Judy Ann, Rochester

Benson, Tom
South St. Paul Schools

Bents, Dr. Mary L.
University of Minnesota

Bialke, Dorothy
Our Lady of the Lake School
Mound

Blodgett, Greg
Princeton Middle School

Born, Silas
Bethany Lutheran College

Briguet, Kathleen M.
Forest Lake Area Schools

Bunn, David, Cottage Grove

Carritt-Latterner, Caroline
ISD 721 New Prague

Chin, Zhining
Hopkins SD 270

Cooper, Linda M., St. Cloud

Dahlquist, Kari, Minneapolis

Davis, Lynne M., Andover

Dittberner, Tim
New Prague Middle School

Donaldson, Julie
Bloomington ISD 271

Elsmore, Nancy
Otsego Elementary School
Elk River

Erickson, Carol
Skyview Elementary School
St. Paul

Espe, Julia
Lakeville High School

Foss, Janet M.
South Washington Co.
ISD 833, Cottage Grove

Fredericksen, Mark
Waconia High School

Welcome New Members

New Minnesota ASCD Members

Haefner, Philip
St. Paul Lutheran School
St. James

Hatlestad, Erin
Sacred Heart School
Sauk Rapids

Hays, Cynthia,
Hopkins ISD 270

Iserman, Joan, Champlin

Johnson, Sara
Chisago Lakes High School
Lindstrom

Kayona, Dr. Frances
St. Cloud State University

Kettering, Barbara,
Minneapolis

Ladwig, Julie
Austin SD 492, Austin

Larkin, Susan M.
Friendly Hills Middle School
Mendota Heights

Lipp, Bernie
Dilworth-Glyndon-Felt
SD 2164, Dilworth

Maxfield, Dr. Lori, St. Paul

Mischke, Mark, Stillwater

Nielsen, Sue, Rochester

Novak, Peggy, Walker ISD 113

Ondov, Deborah
Hopkins SD 270

Parker, John
Bloomington ISD 271

Pease, Virginia
Hopkins SD 270

Pitney, Vickie
Bell Center, Coon Rapids

Potter, Beth, Minnetonka

Potts, Jill, St. Peter

Quinn, Ray, Minneapolis

Ronnei, Theresa, Minneapolis

Sauer, Tim, Cologne

Schieffert, Paul
Mary of Lourdes Elementary
Little Falls

Schmitz, Mona
Cretin Derham High School
St. Paul

Schwartz, Bonnie
Minnesota DOE
Roseville

Skogen, Laura
Zumbrota-Mazeppa Schools
Rochester

Staska, Scott
Rocori Area Schools
Cold Spring

Stelson, Caren B.
Edina

Sullivan, Sandy
Rochester ISD 535

Swanson, Larry
Norman Co. East ISD 2215
Twin Valley

Truebenbach, Tim
Melrose Area Public Schools

Tupper, Colleen
Moorhead Jr. High School

Turner, Evelyn E.
Lincoln Mann Elem. School
Rochester

Zender, Greg C.
Wagner Elementary School
Litchfield

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Minnesota Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development

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FAX: (*circle one*) Work Home

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Position (check one):

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Professor, Dean or other University | <input type="checkbox"/> Full-Time Student |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> District-Level Administrator or Specialist | <input type="checkbox"/> Director of Curriculum or Instruction |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

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|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Committee |
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New Member Renewal

Are you currently a member of our parent organization, International ASCD?

yes no

Annual Membership Dues:

\$35.00 Active \$5.00 student/retired

If you chose student or retired, please enter the name of your school or former employer: _____

Optional – Enter your ethnic origin: _____

Please mail complete application with a check payable to Minnesota ASCD to:
Lori Sandvig
5033 West 56th Street
Edina, MN 55436

Membership form for you and your colleagues

Pass the form on this page to your friends, or make copies and distribute them among colleagues who can benefit from membership in Minnesota ASCD. The \$35 for dues provides basic funding for organizing several conferences and preparing follow-up materials, publishing newsletters, organizing Curriculum Expos, and other services for Minnesota educators.

One key feature of a membership in Minnesota ASCD is the unique opportunity it provides to educators in all career tracks to network with each other, share important ideas and information, and gain insights into the latest developments in educational initiatives designed for curriculum and instruction.

Thanks for your own membership, and many thanks for encouraging others to join, too!

Annual Conference in New Orleans: Receptions and an International Perspectives Session

Many of you are going to attend the ASCD Annual Conference in March. If you haven't already made your reservations, you can get online at <http://www.ascd.org> and click on the menu for the annual conference. ASCD also sends out many flyers about the conference, so if you are a member of the international organization, you probably have already received several of them.

One of the special sessions at the conference has an international flavor to it and concentrates on international viewpoints of effective instructional practices. The International Perspectives session is titled "Exploring Pedagogy and Knowledge" and will be held from 3-5 p.m. on Sunday, March 21. The

session will address whether educators are committed to developing and fostering practices respecting diversity in civil cultures and democracies, exploring what we know about teaching and learning from an international perspective, and how our international constituents might expand educators' viewpoints. Participants will be able to dialogue with ASCD international constituents and others whose pedagogy and knowledge reflect an international and global context. Those interested should contact Gail Clark Dickson at gdickson@ascd.org for more information.

The ASCD Annual Conference will host some evening receptions held by ASCD Affiliate regions. You

are invited, particularly to the Central Region, which is ours. March 20 from 8-10 p.m. the Northwest, Southwest, Central and International Affiliates Reception will be held. All attendees are invited to join the ASCD affiliate leaders and enjoy the food, fun and friendship. Meet new friends or reacquaint yourself with former friends, or both.

The Northeast and Southeast affiliate leaders will be hosting a dance for their affiliates and for all those who are attending the conference on March 21 from 8 p.m. to midnight. The music of Burgundy will be featured, providing a wide variety of rhythmic sounds from all generations (from the 1940s to contemporary hits), tempos and styles. Or, just listen and nibble on

complimentary snacks, network with friends and have a good time.

ASCD Networks

In the past, we've listed various ASCD networks throughout this newsletter. Space has always limited us to only a few. To see all of them, log on to www.ascd.org. Usually the networks have a small fee to cover costs of operations (printing, etc.); some have no fees. Some have disbanded during the year: Basic School, Designing District Evaluation Instruments for Math and Science Process Skills, Differentiated Instruction, Early Childhood Reading, Holocaust and Genocide Education and Online Learning. Plenty of others are still operating, however, so we encourage you to look into them.



Lori Sandvig, Executive Secretary
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