



Professional Practice



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Eastern Ontario Regional
of OASCD
Professional Learning
Opportunity

Professional Practice of Teachers as Life-long Learners: *The Quest for Success of The Whole Child* by William Kelly

Our professional practice includes such elements as instructional delivery, assessment and evaluation, classroom management, culture for learning, teacher roles of leadership, school community partnerships, and teacher-parent communication. It has attracted microscopic attention within educational research literature and beyond. The concept of 'Professional Practice' has been sub-categorized to focus the lens inward on the individual teacher's 'professional learning' as a key component in improved student success. (Danielson, 2007; Lieberman, 2007; Lieberman and Milner, 2003). As teachers, we are called to reflect on such issues as promoting and being life-long learners and in varying our day-to-day teaching to increase student success.

Much is being demanded of teachers and principals today. They are asked to use a results-oriented approach to produce graduates who can take their place in society and exceed the highest demands made of them. For today's graduates, superior performance is the starting point rather than the pinnacle of final achievement.

ASCD (2007) has responded to the evidence-based, results-oriented call in their commissioned report on The Whole Child. The report does not, "... argue for a diminished focus on academics ...", but rather places the, "... call for increased attention on the conditions that evidence makes clear are essential to learning". (p. 8) Three of the report's major tenets that impact teachers' professional practice include: delivering (1) a "challenging and engaging curriculum" within which (2) "each student is actively engaged in learning and (3) "...is connected to the school and broader community". (p. 9)

Throughout Ontario, teachers have implemented the new curriculum. They embrace and continue to find innovative approaches to instructional delivery and assessment practices. In this issue, our authors stimulate our thinking on professional practice. Let us explore, dialogue, and share with each other our professional learning during this school year to enhance professional practice in an effort towards strengthening our school and professional learning communities.

The Trillium

Themes for 2007-2008

Winter - Cultures of Learning
Spring - Educating for All
Summer - Practice into Action

Ontario ASCD, a diverse learning community that promotes excellence in education, is dedicated to supporting the growth and success of each learner.

Starting a Conversation to Address the Whole Child

by Marcella Emberger

ASCD has proposed a "New Compact" - a challenge to all of us to look at a broader vision and mission of education - a vision that promotes the development of children "who are healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged." ¹ A short video, "The Whole Child: A New Compact," available at the Whole Child web site, asks us to consider how we might move forward, and charges us to "Ask questions! Be heard! Learn more!".

My initial response to the video was to consider both the enormity and the difficulty of its charge. How do we get started? What discussions do we need to have as educators that would help us consider this challenge?

It then occurred to me that a good place to begin might be for each of us to view this ASCD video. [It's a quick but powerful five minutes!] and use it as a launching pad for some undoubtedly lively group discussions about how we view ourselves and our schools in relation to the concepts of the whole child.

I used the 'Six Facets of Understanding' from the text *Understanding by Design* by Wiggins and McTighe to generate a list of questions to start these discussions. The facets provoke both a breadth and depth of thinking about the topic, and although all of the questions may not apply to every person, faculty member, or professional learning community, appropriate ones may be selected as a starting place for our thinking

This is my list. You most likely will have your own.

Explanation

- How does each of us define the whole child? Do other staff members agree? If there are differences, how do these differences impact our work together?
- What are common misconceptions about the whole child?

Application

- How do we apply our understanding of the whole child in our daily practices? Our instruction? Our assessments?
- Where are the "gaps" in application?
- How do the concepts of healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged human beings apply in the larger world?

Interpretation

- How do the stories of our past and present experiences impact our vision of the whole

child?

- How could we use our stories to overcome the obstacles to creating a school that addresses the needs of the whole child?

Perspective

- How does the concept of the whole child look from the point of view of our community? Parents?
- What are the limits of creating a school for the whole child? {Are there limits?}

Empathy

- What would it be like to walk in a student's shoes in a school that believes in a whole child approach?
- How would moving our schools toward our vision of the whole child impact each of our students?
- What was the ASCD video trying to make us feel/see?

Self-Knowledge

- What do each of us need to understand more deeply about the whole child and about each others' views of the whole child in order to move forward?
- What would our classrooms look like and sound like when there is a focus on the whole child?
- What are my "blind spots" about the concept of the whole child?

Of course, these discussions are just the beginning. The challenge of making changes are great but the need for change is greater. Diane Ravitch said it well, "Education must aim for far more than mastery of the basics, far more than the possession of tools for economic competitiveness. Certainly it should aim for enough (content) for an examined life, enough for civic virtue, and enough for those mental habits that incline one to read, to listen, to discuss, to feel just a bit uncertain about one's own opinions, and to love learning. (*Education Week*, Jan. 30, 2007)

1. www.wholechildeducation.org

Marcella (Marcy) Emberger resides in New Brunswick, Canada. She is the former Director of the Maryland Assessment Consortium, a non-profit organization created to support school improvement. She is a private consultant, a member of the ASCD faculty and has published numerous articles on teaching and learning. Her most recent publication is "Helping Teachers Improve Classroom Assessments," *Principal Leadership*, May 2007. She can be reached at marcyemberger@earthlink.net or through her web site: www.marcyemberger.com

Book Review of *Schooling by Design: Mission, Action and Achievement*

by Dr. Peter Orange

The text's introduction has an apt quotation from the French novelist and Nobel prize winner for literature, Anatole France. "To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream: not only plan, but also believe." (p.1 *Schooling by Design* 2007). It sets the tone not only for this text but also for most of the philosophy of *Understanding by Design* (UbD). Wiggins and McTighe are educators of the first order in recognizing and articulating why positive and reform is needed and how one goes about preparing for it. Its laudable goal is to ensure understanding for all students in order to produce transfer of that knowledge into everyday life.

Schooling by Design builds on the work of UbD by showing administrators how to 'dream' about and 'realise' a reformed school. It is a highly efficient text in that it simplifies the process by showing us how to create the 'vision' (what kind of learning environment do we want it to be) and then how to plan for achieving it (how do we get there from here).

Part One of the text (Ch 1 – 7) focuses on such issues as:

- Establishing the mission of the school.
- How do we define the curriculum?
- How do we reflect the mission in the curriculum?
- How can teaching be 'depersonalized'?
- How do we define the teacher's job while teaching?
- How do we define the teacher's job when not teaching?
- What is the job of an effective academic leader?

Part Two of the text (Ch. 8 – 12) focuses on such issues as:

- How should UbD apply to school reform?
- What are the desired results of school

reform?

- What evidence should be collected when doing research on results?
- What actions should follow as a result of the research?
- What Habits of Mind should teachers be striving to teach?

Wiggins and McTighe strike the right note when they refer to the connections to *the Habits of Mind* text by Costa and Kallick (ASCD 2000), E. D. Hirsch's text *Cultural Literacy* (Vintage Books, N.Y. 1998) and Robert Marzano's *What Works in Schools* (ASCD 2003), and *Classroom Instruction that Works* (ASCD 2001). These writers give concrete examples or models of how to slowly help students learn. These theorists also carefully and simply describe what these students should know as a result. These writers and texts set the right tone for educators. They 'speak their language' (learning empathy). They describe how clear, achievable goals can be met over a concerted period of time using concrete examples and models of how to achieve positive results. Clarity, simplicity, efficacy is a teacher's mantra. All of the 'supporting' writers in the Wiggins/McTighe text help to reinforce the common goal that developing understanding and transferring abilities and habits of mind to 'real' life signifies a mature and effective adult.

Schooling by Design: Mission, Action and Achievement
by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe

A fuller version of this review will appear in the 2008 issue of the OASCD publication *Changing Perspectives*.

"To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream: not only plan, but also believe."

If you wish to comment or write an article or notice, based on one of the themes, for consideration in an upcoming *Trillium*, contact Dr. Peter Orange at:

Peter.Orange@ascd.ca

Book Review: Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework 2nd ed.

by: William Kelly, M.Ed.

Schools are being increasingly challenged by all stakeholders in both public and private domains. They are being asked to explore innovative techniques and strategies of instructional delivery as exemplary sites of professional practice. A pedagogical theorist might ask the question, "By which and by whose theoretical definition does the teacher frame a view of exemplary *professional practice*?". *Danielson's (2006) Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* 2nd ed. sets the parameters for both the discourse and a theoretically-based framework for instructional practice that uses effective assessment and evaluation. It is an American education system-based publication that arose from their Praxis III: Classroom Performance Assessments criteria developed by the Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey.

The framework identifies those aspects of a teacher's responsibilities in what Danielson terms the four domains of teaching responsibility and the inherent 22 components of teaching. Each domain of the framework is explained. The main identifiers are encapsulated as rubric criteria within one of four key domain rubrics. School professionals can utilize these rubrics to gauge teaching and instructional effectiveness and accountability. *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, includes a section for educational specialists such as psychologists, counselors, and nurses. Equity and diversity issues have been interwoven in the framework domain rubrics.

The four domains that frame and explain the components of teaching are: (1) Planning and Preparation, (2) The Classroom Environment, (3) Instruction and (4) Professional Responsibilities. Teachers play an important diagnostic role in determining ways in which their students learn best. This book describes an innovative professional framework for the beginning teacher as well as the seasoned practitioner to self-reflect on their current teaching practice and to engage in the development of some new, fresh approaches to instructional delivery.

Danielson, Charlotte. (2007). *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, 2nd ed. Alexandria, VA. : ASCD Publication.

ISBN978-1-4166-0517-1, ASCD Product No.

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For further information, contact:

David Bird, Treasurer

Ontario ASCD,
10 Seymour Avenue,
St. Catharines ON
L2P 1A4.

David.Bird@ascd.ca

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Dr. Peter Orange, editor-in-chief
William Kelly, editor
Deanna Perry, editor and layout design

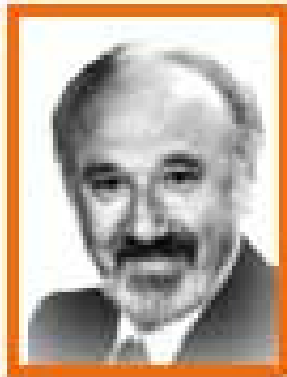
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Eastern Ontario Regional proudly presents...

An Evening with Stan Shapiro **"Classrooms That Work – Managing Any Classroom"**

Author of
*"Classrooms That Work -
 A Teacher's Guide to Discipline
 Without Stress"*



Books available for purchase

Encourage your students to participate in creating a positive classroom environment. Maintain classroom order without creating fear or animosity or using rewards or punishment. Get students to take responsibility for their behaviour and deal effectively with common classroom disturbance. Learn the four essential skills for effective discipline.

A must for dealing with and preventing these common classroom problems:

- teasing and bullying
- disrespect towards authority
- classroom disruptions
- lack of effort
- anger, anxiety and withdrawal
- fighting

Thursday, October 11th, 2007

4:00 p.m. Registration and Publisher's Display

4:30 - 8:00 p.m. Keynote Speaker and Dinner

Immaculata High School Library

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Door Prizes!

Door Prizes!

\$25 ASCD Members and Students; \$30 Non-ASCD Members

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For registration and payment information contact Susan Thibault at susan.thibault@ottawacatholicschools.ca.

President's Message

by Sharon Wright-Evans

Welcome to the fall issue of the Trillium! Ontario ASCD is a diverse learning community that promotes excellence in education and is dedicated to supporting the growth and success of each learner. In this issue the focus is professional practice.

In the lead article, Professional Practice of Teachers as Life-long Learners: The Quest for success of the Whole Child, Kelly refers to the 2007 ASCD commissioned report on the Whole Child. This report calls for the following:

- Each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle
- Each student learns in an intellectually challenging environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults
- Each student is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and to the broader community
- Each student has access to personalized learning and is supported by qualified, caring adults
- Each student is challenged by a well-balanced curriculum and is prepared for success in college or further study and for employment in a global environment

For more information about the ASCD Whole Child Compact go to www.wholechildeducation.org.

In Ontario, we have been focusing on these same points: professional learning communities, safe schools, healthy nutrition, differentiated instruction, curriculum and assessment both for and of learning. All of these have been the topics at professional learning events in district school boards, independent schools and Ministry of Education gatherings. Professional learning that focuses on the above also takes place in the corridors and staffrooms of our schools, during staff meetings and informal conversations at lunch or after hours.

Suggested Reading

The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework for Effective Instruction by Robert Marzano

ASCD Product Number 107001S25

How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms by Carol Ann Tomlinson

ASCD Product Number 101043

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firstname.lastname@ascd.ca.

In the Winter issue of

The Trillium

Read about our Fall learning events

Ontario ASCD's Speaker's Series
Event with Jay McTighe

and

Eastern Ontario Regional of Ontario
ASCD's Fall Event
with Stan Shapiro

Web Sites

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