

# NNER NEWS

## RIDING A BIKE IN A DEMOCRACY

January 8, 2003

By Vernon M. Henshaw [Superintendent, Alpine (Utah) School District]



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I learned one of life's most valuable lessons when I was very young, only four or five years old. It had to do with riding a bike. I had watched others ride two-wheelers. "Nothing to it," I supposed; "you just get on and start pushing the pedals."

So, in my innocence I took my sister's two-wheeler to the top of our driveway and poised there, ready to start down the incline towards the road. It was a girl's bike so I could straddle it before starting. I gave myself a push as I lifted myself onto the seat and started down the hill. All went well for the first few feet, and then the front tire began to wobble, the bike started to turn, and it kept going faster and faster. I was going towards the road, with cars coming from both directions. I panicked. I think I even closed my eyes. And then I hit the mailbox.

As I sat there whimpering, pulling the embedded gravel from my palms and wondering if my mother would be mad when she saw my ripped jeans, I had a revelation: two-wheel bike riding requires preparation. It is a skill that has to be learned, not an in-born ability that appears naturally when you turn four.

Strangely enough, many of us have the same naïve attitude about living in a democracy. We believe that it is the natural state of the human species, one that occurs spontaneously, without preparation or training. We take our system of government and freedom for granted. Just like the air we breathe, we assume it will always be there, pure and wholesome, regardless of how much we invest in it.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

**It's like riding a bike.**



Democracy is a high maintenance activity. It requires investment, sacrifice, resources, and planning. And most importantly, it requires an educational system that prepares its students to become democratic citizens.

Our young must be prepared to become caretakers of our democracy. Just as we

prepare students in our auto mechanics classes to care for vehicles, our entire system must prepare students to maintain and perpetuate our democracy.

This will require the intentional, discerning effort of all of us: educators, administrators, parents, and students. That's why our local board of education has adopted four guiding principles as visions for the Alpine School District—they're called Moral Dimensions. The first of these is "Enculturating the Young in a Social and Political Democracy." Simply put, our first educational objective here in the Alpine School District is to prepare our students for the responsibility of maintaining our democratic way of life.

Again, this preparation does not happen by chance. Nor is it simply a matter of giving our pupils a few lessons in civics or teaching them about the Constitution. It requires the development of a democratic character: fostering the growth of traits such as responsible conduct, critical reflection, reasoned argument, fairness, civic participation, compassion, and integrity.

*Continued on page 2*

# NNER Research Abstracts Sought

What do we know about the quality of teachers graduating from traditional and non-traditional teacher education programs? To what extent are matters critical to the preparation of citizens for a democratic society being measured by tests being applied in various states? What is the scientific evidence regarding the best way to learn history, or for that matter, to

learn to be a scientist? These are just a few of the questions begging to be answered. We need to know how the researchers in our schools and in higher education are answering such critical questions.

Researchers from NNER settings are invited to share abstracts of studies completed within the past 24 months. We are seeking abstracts from faculty

in the arts and sciences, schools, departments and colleges of education as well as from graduate students; and school teachers and administrators.

The first round of NNER Research Abstracts was posted on the Web in May 2002. Now more abstracts are needed. Send them to Dick Clark at [rwcuw@msn.com](mailto:rwcuw@msn.com).

## NNER AACTE SCHEDULE

NEW ORLEANS, JANUARY 2003

### January 24, 2003

1:30 p.m.— 2:30 p.m. Executive Committee Meeting: Hilton (Cambridge Room) Executive Director Interviews

2:45 p.m.— 4:30 p.m. Governing Council Meeting: Hilton (Cambridge Room) Meeting including Executive Director Interviews, Action on Membership

### January 25, 2003

1:00 p.m. —3:30 p.m. Governing Council Meeting: Doubletree (Crescent B) Meeting including action on Executive Director

5:00 p.m.—6:00 p.m. Open Meeting: Hilton (Versailles Ballroom)

6:00 p.m.— 8:00 p.m. Reception: Hilton (Versailles Ballroom) [Nuts and cash bar only]

## *Bike and democracy* continued from page 1

Thus, the task of readying the young for democratic life is the business of all educators. Along with our social studies and history teachers, others must incorporate this objective into their curricula. Math teachers must help students gain a respect for inductive proof and certainty in argumentation. Our coaches and PE staff must include a sense of fair play in their strategies. The music teachers could help students gain a sense of responsibility to the group and play

in harmony with other citizens. Our English teachers should teach the responsibilities of expression and choice. Of course, our administrators ought to help students understand that a democratic society cannot survive without respect for law and order. Every teacher should have this major broad objective in mind as he/she prepares the curriculum.

Parents, too, ought to incorporate these objectives into their family's environment. After all, char-

acter, the bedrock of a democracy, is largely a product of the home. Unless all of us remember that democracy is not a gift but a learned skill, we run the risk of destroying our way of life.

**It's like riding a bike.**



I recall a teacher with whom I worked on Professional Development School issues – a really good teacher – saying she had had “enough of that moral stuff” when she was growing up and “didn’t need any more of it now.” In spite of such reluctance to address moral questions, they are central to our work and must be attended to.

There is a small piece by Amitai Etzioni titled, “The Education of Business Leaders” in the fall 2002 issue of *The Responsive Community* that everyone concerned with educating educators should read. Etzioni describes a Harvard Business School faculty debate on the merits of an ethics program being developed by the school. He concludes his comments on this debate as follows:

“The proposed ethics program was put to a vote by the whole faculty. The faculty’s reactions ranged from cold to hostile. One economist argued, ‘We are here to teach science.’ Another faculty member wanted to know, ‘Whose ethics, what values, are we going to teach?’ A third pointed out that the students were adults who got their ethics education at home and at church. It was decided to return the program to the drawing board” (60).

Doesn’t this sound familiar?

### **“Whose ethics, what values, are we going to teach?”**

In spite of our reluctance to address moral questions and the quickness with which we raise the questions of “whose morality” or “whose ethics,” it is essential to recognize that as Michael Fullan has said, “Teaching at its core is a moral profession” (*Educational Leadership*, March 1993).

Nowhere may this be being more clearly demonstrated than in the newly renewed opportunities for schooling of young women in Afghanistan.

Susan Dominus wrote a compelling article titled, “Afghanistan’s Found Generation: Their First Semester in the New World” in the *New York Times Magazine* (September 29, 2002). She used a family of four young women to tell her story. In that article she reports that “President Hamid Karzai has declared that education for all children is one of the country’s highest priorities, and he has pledged to divert funds from the defense and interior ministries to support the cause.” Moreover, she says that “strengthened by his words, the teachers all share a fervent hope that the peace will hold in Afghanistan, that the students in that first class [the first to admit girls after the fall of the Taliban] will finish their schooling and that they will function as pioneers in the reconstruction of their country....”

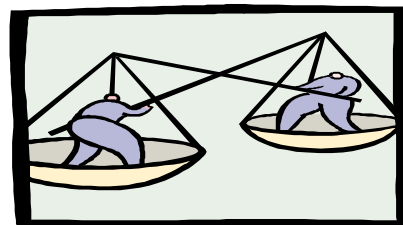
Subsequently, she describes the experiences of one of the young women – one who had been particularly fearful to enter school: “Whenever the teacher fixed her gaze on her and asked a question, Hafiza’s mind overloaded, and she panicked, unable to think. Finally, she got one too many math questions wrong. Corporal punishment is condoned in Afghanistan, including Hafiza’s teacher’s method of choice: she pulled out a clump of her student’s hair. Hafiza went home, humiliated, and announced to her parents that she was done with school forever” (46).

And she has not gone back.

The President of Afghanistan and his teachers insist that schooling is important, but what they teach may not accomplish their moral ends.

The high moral purpose driving

their intent to open schooling to more children may be defeated by the pedagogical strategies they employ.



Unfortunately, many who seek to change the schools in the United States also fail to recognize the importance of clarity regarding their values, having values consistent with the needs of a democratic society, and devising systems that are consistent with those values. Their visions not only lack an understanding of the systems of education, they seem to be based on the notion that any education is good or, if there is a value base to their work, to be driven by what Postman has called the “economic narrative.”

As he has observed educational developments in various locales including Kentucky and New York City, CUNY’s David Seeley has lately written about the need for comprehensive system change. In his writing, he notes that the “value base” on which the system change is built on is critical. In that regard, much of the work that John Goodlad and his colleagues in the National Network for Renewal (NNER) who have been working with him for the past 17 years, has attended to the building of a moral grounding for the work of educational renewal. While it is evident that there must be changes in the systems in which our children are schooled, we must also be clear regarding what we believe the purposes of education are and how we can make our behaviors consistent with those stated purposes.

*Continued on page 8*

## Partnership Uses NCATE PDS Standards

By Mark Kostin

During the 2001-2002 academic year, our new Dean, faced by the prospect of rapidly declining resources to support partner schools, directed our partner school governance committee to examine differentiated models of funding. A representative working group of this council agreed to ask each of the 14 partner schools to complete a National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education Professional Development School Standards (NCATE PDS Standards) self-study (NCATE, 2001). Each partner school completed a self-study that was subsequently reviewed by an independent panel of arts and sciences, education, and school faculty and administrators. Each partner school was asked to rate its work as either beginning, developing, or at standard using the NCATE rubric. The panel then reviewed the evidence submitted by each partner school and assigned a rating using the same scale.

As a result of this assessment, a three-tiered system was created to represent the three levels of development for partner school work. The panel judged four schools (one elementary, one middle, and two secondary) to be working "at standard," seven schools to be working at the "developing" stage, and the final three schools to be operating at the "beginning" level. The results of the assessment, including the final ratings completed by the review panel are being shared with each partner school's steering committee and are being used to help guide the level of institutional support and activity at each site.

The impacts of using the self-study process include:

1. A greater number of stakeholders within a partner school have a greater knowledge and understanding of the standards guiding the work of professional development schools;
2. The same group of stakeholders is better equipped to guide the development of their partnership based on the assessment of their

progress against the standards;

3. Partner school stakeholders (school and university-based alike) are now equipped with a peer-reviewed evaluation of their work against a rigorous set of standards to validate and make credible the work in which they have been engaged;
4. School and university administrators can now make sound decisions regarding the investment of funds and other resources because the impact of partner school work is now better understood and is framed in a more uniform context (the standards);
5. A greater number of school and university representatives have an increased understanding of the importance of partner schools and have first-hand knowledge of the impact and difficulty of this work by virtue of their participation as reviewers.

### Reference:

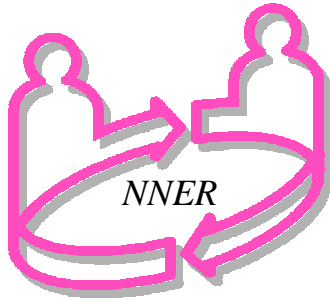
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. (2001). Handbook for the assessment of professional development schools. Washington, DC: Author.

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### *Clarification: Regarding the Arts Curriculum Matrix published in Issue 1 of this year's Newsletter*

The visual arts part of the matrix has been in development for at least ten years through collaborative work in Prairie Visions and through the Nebraska Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Frameworks grant project. The moral dimensions part of the matrix was roughed out by Frances Thurber, Gary Day, Donalyn Heise, and Joanne Sowell. It was implemented and tested during the summer Prairie Visions workshop by them as well as by Melissa Berke (music), Josie Metal-Corbin (dance), and Nancy Duncan (storytelling). The article in Issue 1 credited only Heise and Sowell as the authors of this project.



## AROUND THE NNER

### Hawaii

Hawaii launched the development of new Professional Development Schools with a workshop in December attended by school and university educators. Participants in the day-long workshop looked at NCATE PDS standards and at excerpts from Richard W. Clark's *Effective Professional Development Schools* as they learned about requirements for planning grants.

### Wyoming

Leaders of the Wyoming School-University Partnership met in Casper in December to review their partnership goals and set future plans. Carol Wilson from the Colorado Partnership facilitated the meeting attended by school, col-

lege of education, and arts and sciences educators as well as a representative from the state department of education.

### New Directory Available

***Another reason to bookmark the NNER web page!***

Each setting has been provided three copies of the new NNER Directory. In addition, the directory is on the NNER web page <http://depts.washington.edu/cedren/NNER>

The 2002-2003 edition includes leaders from school districts as well as from universities. It also lists past and present leadership associates and members of other

groups such as the journalist and arts programs.

### Journalist Program to be Featured at ASCD Annual Meeting

During the ASCD convention in San Francisco on March 9, 2003, journalists who have been Fellows in the IEI Journalism, Education, and the Public Good program will participate in a featured panel designed to help the educators in attendance gain a greater understanding of how journalists and educators can communicate more effectively in the public interest.

## Executive Committee Actions — December 2002

The Executive Committee met in Seattle on December 8 and 9 and developed an extensive set of recommendations regarding implementation of the new governance structure for the NNER. The recommended plan will be posted on the web page and distributed to the Governing Council in January. The Governing Council will be asked to act on the recommendations at their meetings during the AACTE conference in New Orleans.

The Executive Committee also discussed ways the NNER can help member settings with the policy environment in which they work. The committee authorized a study of current practices and directed

that plans be completed for work sessions that would be informed by the work in the various settings.

In other action, the committee completed the first round of screening of candidates for the NNER executive director/IEI senior associate position that is currently available. The committee directed that recruiting for the position continue with a January 10, 2003, deadline for identifying candidates. Plans are in place for interviewing selected candidates at the AACTE meeting in New Orleans on January 24.

A financial and participation report from the 2002 Annual Meeting in New Jersey revealed that approximately 300 people at-

tended. The session operated well within the budget allocated for it. Problems experienced with school visits and other aspects of the planning were shared with BYU who will host the next meeting in October 2003. The annual meeting in Salt Lake City will include the first meeting of the new Tripartite Council. The Executive Committee directed that steps be taken to ensure coordination of the two events.

The full minutes of this meeting may be found on the NNER web page at <http://depts.washington.edu/cedren/NNER>

# Missouri University Partnership Joins NNER

The Missouri University Partnership for Educational Renewal is the newest member of the National Network for Educational Renewal, but it is not a new partnership. Its development began in 1994 as a group of superintendents from Missouri School Districts met with the Deans of the MU Colleges of Education and Arts and Sciences. The new partnership began offering rich programs in professional development for schools in 1995-1996. Simultaneously, the university was making revisions in its teacher preparation program. The new program has featured partner schools from its inception — schools with the goal of simultaneously renewing schools

and the education of educators. A leadership team from the partnership took part in the Regional Leadership Development Program hosted by Montclair State University in 2001-2002.



The team included **Harriet Wolfe**, Superintendent of Pilot Grove Schools; **Ted Tarkow**, Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; and **Mary**

**Kay Cramer**, Executive Director of MPER. Accompanying the team at his own expense was **Richard Andrews**, Dean of the College of Education. Andrews was a faculty member and early participant at the University of Washington during the first phase of the NNER and, when Dean at the University of Wyoming, led one of the first two settings selected into the current configuration of the network. The enthusiasm of the school and university educators who are members of MPER promise to help this new setting contribute greatly to the work of the network.

## Charter Schools in the Future?

As the charter school movement continues to grow across the country, settings are faced with decisions as to how to relate to these new enterprises. In Hawaii, the long established Laboratory School has been converted to charter school status under state laws. Wright State reports that several of the partner schools that it works with are charter schools.

Some have raised questions about the relationship of such schools of choice and the responsibility that members of the network have to further the quality of public education. However, others see no problem with this approach since, at least in their state, charters are clearly viewed as “public schools.”

The charter school movement, home schooling, vouchers, private management of school systems, contractors operating individual schools for school districts, and public alternative schools are all staking their claim as the direction that the nation should take in educating its young. On the surface at least, it appears that the days of choice being limited to publicly funded schools or those sup-

ported by private tuition and endowments are past. The question for NNER members, of course, is what approach will best serve to prepare students for their lives in a social and political democracy.

It seems likely that the new tripartite commission will find this one of the many challenging issues it needs to confront as the new structure of the NNER emerges from the annual meeting in fall 2003.



# Governing Council Actions at Annual Meeting 2002

The Governing Council meeting was held in two segments. During the first day, council members visited Montclair High School, discussed issues related to research and policy concerning different routes of initial teacher preparation, and discussed approaches to continuing education for teachers. Also on the first day, the Council accepted the Missouri University Partnership for Educational Renewal as a member of the network.

Following an open hearing on the recommendations for changes in NNER governance, the featured activity for the second day was action on the tripartite study

committees report on governance and programming for the NNER. The report was adopted with amendments from the Executive Committee. The new structure will include a tripartite council with representatives from schools, colleges of education, and colleges of arts and sciences and will become effective at the October 2003 meeting in Salt Lake City.

In January 2003, the Governing Council will act on a revised governance document that reflects this decision and provides a transition process. The first meeting of the new Tripartite Council will be held at the annual meeting in Salt Lake City in October

2003.

Meanwhile, the existing Governing Council and Executive Committee will continue to lead the NNER. John Skillings was elected to replace Kelly Carroll on the Executive Committee since Kelly is no longer a member of the Governing Council.

Check out the NNER web page for the full minutes of this meeting:

<http://depts.washington.edu/cedren/NNER>

*This winter, settings will be asked to select three representatives to the new Tripartite Council and to designate one of them as their representative to the Governing Council.*

## Update on Developing Networks of Responsibility to Educate America's Youths

The Institute for Educational Inquiry is pleased to announce the first-year settings participating in the Kellogg-funded Developing Networks of Responsibility to Educate America's Youths Initiative. Three first-year settings will implement local leadership programs that include strong community participation. These settings are Guadalupe Union School District working with California Polytechnic University; the Northeast Collaborative of Denver, Colorado, working with the University of Colorado at Denver (part of the Colorado Partnership for Educational Renewal); and the Portal, Georgia, community working with Georgia Southern University.

Two settings have confirmed their participation as planning teams. These teams will participate in another setting's leadership program, use a planning grant to determine their communities' needs; They may elect to apply for funds to implement a similar program in their community. A three-member team from the Miami, Ohio, setting will work with the Georgia Partnership for Educational Renewal's program; and a team from the University of Texas at El Paso setting will work with the Colorado Partnership for Educational Renewal's program.

Five new groups (and five planning teams) will begin their work in year two of this initia-

tive. Many year one applications remain active for consideration for year two implementation. New applications for year two are due to arrive at the Institute for Educational Inquiry by February 18, 2003. Selected setting applicants will be notified by February 28, 2003.



# National Network for Educational Renewal

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Please submit suggestions for articles, information about people and events in NNER settings and comments on this issue to Dick Clark at rwcuw@msn.com

## Dates and Locations for Future NNER Annual Meetings

**2003 — Salt Lake City,  
Utah,  
October 9-11**

**2004 — St. Louis,  
Missouri,  
October 21-24**

We're on the Web  
<http://depts.washington.edu/cedren/>

### THE NNER

#### STATE

California  
Colorado  
Connecticut  
Georgia

Hawaii  
Illinois  
Maine  
Minnesota  
Missouri

Nebraska  
New Jersey

New York  
Ohio

South Carolina  
Texas  
Utah  
Washington  
Wyoming

#### SETTING

California Polytechnic State University  
Colorado Partnership for Educational Renewal\*  
University of Connecticut  
Georgia Partnership for Educational Renewal at Georgia Southern University  
University of Hawaii and Hawaii Institute for Educational Partnerships  
Illinois State University (Normal)  
University of Southern Maine and Southern Maine Partnership  
St. Cloud University and St Cloud School District  
Metropolitan St. Louis Consortium for Educational Renewal\*  
Missouri University Partnership for Educational Renewal  
Nebraska Network for Educational Renewal\*  
Montclair State University and the New Jersey Network for Educational Renewal  
The City University of New York and the New York City Public Schools\*  
Miami University  
Wright State University  
South Carolina Network for Educational Renewal\*  
University of Texas at El Paso  
Brigham Young University and BYU Public School Partnership  
University of Washington  
University of Wyoming and Wyoming School-University Partnership

\*multiple IHE site settings

*We are currently seeking book reviews of our publications. If you would like to submit one for a future newsletter, please send it to Dick Clark at [rwcuw@msn.com](mailto:rwcuw@msn.com).*

## *Moral Dimensions*, continued from page 3

As the members of the NNER pursue the Agenda for Education in a Democracy, there are four components to our mission, each of which has moral dimensions that require attention. We seek to:

1. Foster in the nation's young the skills, dispositions, and knowledge necessary for effective participation in a social and political democracy.
2. Ensure that the young have access to those understandings and skills required for leading satis-

3. Develop educators who nurture the learning and well-being of every student.
4. Ensure educators' competence and commitment to serving as stewards of schools (P-12 and higher education).

As we seek to advance the Agenda for Education in a Democracy, we combine the notions of the importance of moral grounding with an understanding of the importance

of continuous system change and the belief in the efficacy of partnerships as a strategy for ongoing renewal. We acknowledge that the questions about "whose ethics" are ones that must be addressed. We accept the challenge of promoting a moral and ethical agenda in a time when such a base for deliberations regarding education is not popular. In the long run, our children are too important to do anything else.