

InfoCLIPS



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Magical Maps & Lessons from the Maze

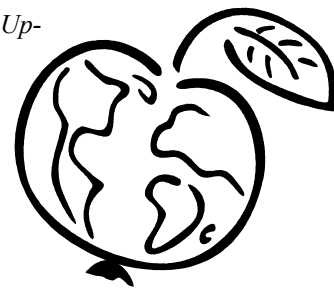
As educators move to standards-based schooling, they have no *magical map* to guide them through the maze of change, Gerry House told her audience at ASCD's Sixth Annual Conference of Teaching and Learning. But House did share some lessons she has learned as a superintendent and as president of the Institute for Student Achievement.

—**Ruthlessly prune your practices, policies, and procedures to remove those that don't support your driving principles.** "You'll have to slaughter some sacred cows," House said, "such as ability grouping, seniority and transfer practices, honors classes, and [overemphasis on] athletics."

—**Make professional development comprehensive and ongoing.** "For professional development to drive changes in classroom practice, we need to redefine it," House asserted. "It can no longer be viewed as a one-shot vaccine that will immunize students against poor teaching."

—**Plan your communications carefully.** "Having been a superintendent for 15 years, I can guarantee you that everyone will misunderstand everything on every possible occasion," House said wryly. Education leaders must make sure that employees, parents, and board members are "on the same page," she said. "For example, parents must clearly comprehend how basic skills are an integral part of standards-based instruction."

— Gratefully excerpted from *Lessons from the Maze; Education Update: Volume 44, number 1, January 2002. Pages 1 — 2.*
<http://www.ascd.org>



Develop your driving principles and beliefs and base all your decisions on them.

"These beliefs should be simple, clear and universal," House said. She cited several examples:

- Effort matters more than ability.
- Expectations should be the same for all students.
- If students haven't learned something, we haven't taught it. — Gerry House

Inside this issue

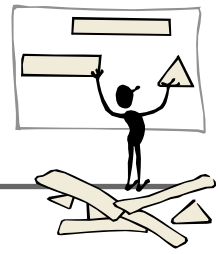
Changing Shape of Leadership	2
Customization and the Common Good	3
Coming Events	4

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The Changing Shape of Leadership

By Deborah King



The Annenberg Institute for School Reform's work with principals, superintendents, and other educators yields insights into the collaborative leading and learning going on in today's schools.

How Has Instructional Leadership Changed?

The roles of principals, superintendents, and other education leaders have expanded during the past decade to include a larger focus on teaching and learning, professional development, data-driven decision making, and accountability (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2000). With leadership for student learning as the priority, instructional leadership might simply be described as “anything that leaders do to improve teaching and learning in their schools and districts.”

This view implies that instructional leadership may look different in different communities—and, in fact, it does...

What Do Today's Instructional Leaders Do?

In our work with effective instructional leaders, we have observed a number of ways in which today's principals, superintendents, and other educational leaders work differently than their predecessors. Here are a few of their essential tasks.

Lead Learning

Today's principals and superintendents are learning leaders: They participate in regular,

collaborative, professional learning experiences to improve teaching and learning. They work alongside teachers in adult learning activities—study groups, school visits, and examination of student work. They recognize their own need to develop a broad knowledge base in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and they seek ongoing professional development activities to achieve that goal (Educational Research Service, 1999).

Focus on Teaching and Learning

Instructional leaders maintain and model a focus on improving teaching and learning by helping teachers improve their instructional practices and by making student achievement the highest priority. Terry, for example, identifies a key part of his role as superintendent as being “unequivocal about the focus on teaching and learning.”

Development Leadership Capacity

Today's educational leaders devote significant time to developing instructional leadership capacity in others in their schools or districts. By distributing responsibilities for getting the work done among teachers and staff members other than the principal or superintendent, they tacitly but clearly acknowledge that every member of the school community has the “potential and right to work as a leader” (Lambert, 1998). In short, leadership resides with the whole school community

rather than solely with those who hold formal positions of authority.

Create Conditions for Professional Learning

The new generation of instructional leaders actively create conditions that encourage professional learning communities. Current research findings show that schools that function as learning communities produce higher levels of student learning (Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1996; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995.)

Use Data to Inform Decisions

In the current context of performance standards and accountability, instructional leaders know they must develop the skills to collect and use data from a variety of sources to inform school improvement decisions. They work with parents, school board members, and other interested groups to share and interpret achievement results about what students are learning, areas that need improvement, and plans for improvement efforts. Trends in student achievement can guide district level planning.

Use Resources Creatively

Instructional leaders make creative use of all resources—people, time and money—to support school improvement.

— Gratefully excerpted from *The Changing Shape of Leadership* by Deborah King. Educational Leadership, May 2002.

[Http://webserver2.ascd.org/affiliates/montana/](http://webserver2.ascd.org/affiliates/montana/)

Customization and the Common Good

A Conversation with Larry Cuban

Today's trend toward customizing education conflicts with the longstanding norms of standardization and uniformity. In balancing these approaches, we must remember the basic aims of education—to provide both individual and social benefits.

We tend to think that a service tailored to the individual is better. Does that hold true for public education?

The short answer is “yes and no.” That’s because public schools provide two kinds of benefits in American society—*individual* benefits and *social* benefits.

For parents and students, the answer is *yes*. By attending school, students earn credentials that give them a passkey into the workplace. Kids in our society need a high school diploma, a bachelor’s degree, sometimes a master’s degree, and sometimes a doctorate. All of those credentials are benefits that flow to the individual.

But then there are the social benefits that taxpayers and leaders have historically attributed to the role of public schools in a democracy, going back to Thomas Jefferson. These are common goods or public goods, such as building good citizens and preparing people for the workplace.

So yes, the individual is considered important in tax-supported public schools. Meeting the needs of each individual

student is part of the mind-set of educators. And parents certainly want *their* kids to have individual attention. The impulse to customize schooling stems from this emphasis on the individual. At the same time, there’s a deep concern that we need something that’s common to all schools to ensure the social benefits of schooling. Learning to get along with others and respecting opinions different from the ones learned at home are crucial skills for civic action. The tensions between competing goals for public schools have always existed in U.S. public education.

Public schools are responsible for providing both kinds of benefits—individual and social. At certain times in our history, one has received more emphasis than the other. Right now, there’s far more emphasis on public schools serving parents’ needs for credentials for their sons and daughters, which merges with the common good in preparing students for the information-based workplace. But few speak about the importance of cultivating civic virtue in the young, a crucial common good.

Is the Standards Movement hampering educators’ attempts to customize? Do you think these two trends are in conflict—customizing and standardizing?

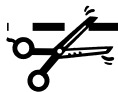
I certainly do. Those trends represent

conflicting values—almost incompatible values.

Here’s a classic example: In New York State, a group of schools—alternative schools, charter schools—wanted to use performance-based assessments rather than the existing Regents exams. They asked for a waiver, but the commissioner of education denied them the waiver. So these schools feel that to prepare students for these high-stakes Regents exams—to meet that external requirement—they will have to change some of their academic programs and some of the customization that they have done.

There are plenty of other examples where schools that depart from the conventional have to set aside time to prepare students for the district or state exam because they don’t want their students to be penalized by it. Or they’re giving up creative approaches to subject matter that are not consistent with the curriculum and performance standards of the state.

— Gratefully excerpted from *Customization and the Common Good: A Conversation with Larry Cuban*. Scott, *Educational Leadership*. April 2002.



MASCD Board 2002--2003



Election

(Vote for Four)

_____ John Moffat, Lewistown

_____ Chris Martineau, Superior

_____ Anne Shineman-Shearer, Canyon Creek

_____ Martha Young, Glendive

Please vote, then clip and send to:

Jan Thomson, Executive Director
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Summer Institute 2002 Highlights

June 10th and 12th found 250 educators from around Montana gathering for three days of high-powered professional development sponsored by MASCD, Helena Public Schools, Missoula County Public Schools, Bozeman Public Schools and the Office of Public Instruction

Featured speakers at *Summer Institute 2002—West* were Robert Greenleaf presenting on *Brain-Based Teaching and Learning*; Robert Marzano, Speaking on *Classroom Instructional Strategies That Work*; Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory presenting on *Leadership for Learning*; and Victoria Bernhardt talking about *Using Your Data to Make Decisions about Instruction*.

MASCD sponsored *Summer Institute 2002—East* in Glendive with Prairie View Special Education Cooperative, Dawson County Superintendent of Schools and the Office of Public Instruction on June 13th and 14th. Lisa Carter, nationally renowned presenter and facilitator, offered an interactive hands-on workshop that provided school district teams with the opportunity to work with standards, curriculum, and instructional alignment.



MASCD builds and fosters collaborative partnerships to produce meaningful, effective, and timely professional learning for all educators.

Coming in 2003

MASCD Book Fair
January 30th—Missoula

MASCD 2003
Summer Institute
*Instruction that Counts...
It's Learning that Matters*
June 17-19, 2003
Carroll College — Helena

MASCD Summer Institute 2003 will offer more opportunities for interactive and engaging professional development. Look for MASCD Summer Institute 2003 registration materials in the next issue of InfoClips.



Info CLIPS

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