

EDITORIAL

A New Beginning

Ronald S. Brandt

I remember how insecure I felt as I began my first year of teaching. I had held other responsible jobs, and I had done student teaching, but I felt inadequate nonetheless. If you recall your own experience of that first trial by fire, you know something of what I feel as I become editor of *Educational Leadership*. More about that later, but first I want to tell you of our plans for the year.

This first issue examines "The Realities of Curriculum Change." A few years ago, when innovation was the rage, it was relatively easy to make changes. Now, with the public distrustful and educators on the defensive, it is harder. This month's writers discuss how curriculum developers should cope with such realities as taxpayer revolts, negotiated contracts, and demands for "no frills" curricula.

Next month, our topic is what Gordon Cawelti calls "The Patchwork Curriculum." Schools have responded to every conceivable interest and need, adding this and rearranging that, until we have created a montage of bits and pieces. Our writers will review the situation and suggest what can be done to achieve a more coherent curriculum.

The December issue will focus on "The Three R's—What Works?" Schools try to teach a great many things, but some students fail to master even the basic skills of reading, writing, and calculating. We hope to do a fresh assessment of what has been learned about various approaches to skill development.

Next, in January, we turn to "Teaching-Learning Styles." In our attempts to individualize instruction, we have always understood that it was not enough simply to vary the pace at which students did similar lessons. Few of us could say with assurance, however, what individual characteristics were most related to learning or what adaptations to those characteristics were possible

and appropriate. Based on their own research and experience, our authors will explain provisions for individual styles that they say can and should be made.

In February, we will evaluate results of "The Quest for Equity and Quality," the movement that in recent decades has stimulated wholesale reconsideration of traditional practices. It began with demands for equal treatment of black people in the south, but expanded to include other racial and ethnic groups, people of both sexes, the handicapped—all human beings considered "different" by others. Is equity being achieved—and with what effects on learning? The well known Bakke case,¹ the phenomenon of "white flight," and controversy over admissions policies

¹T. J. Flygare. "Bakke: Implications for Affirmative Action." *Phi Delta Kappan* 59(6): 418-19; February 1978.

The new editor of *Educational Leadership* and Associate Director of ASCD comes to the Association from the Lincoln, Nebraska, public schools where he spent eight years as Associate Superintendent for Instruction. Ron Brandt was a member of the ASCD Publications Committee for three years, chairing the group in 1977-78. Earlier, he taught English and social studies and was principal of an inner city junior high school. His professional experience also includes 18 months (1965-66) with a teacher education project in Nigeria and four years in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he was a staff member of the Upper Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory and later (1968-70) Director of Staff Development for the Minneapolis Public Schools. He has been an active member of ASCD, serving on the National Board and twice as president of the Nebraska state unit.

at institutions like City College of New York² illustrate that some see a conflict between the goals of quality and equality.

The March issue will recognize a growing body of research and theory about how leaders behave, which should be very useful to those of us who are expected to supervise the work of others. We will examine the relationship between supervision and leadership, focusing on "Supervision—Leader Behavior" in education.

In April, we will consider "Socialization: Who Educates?" Schools have a special responsibility for education, but they do not and cannot do it alone. We propose to take a look at what other institutions contribute and what should be expected of them. If the American family is changing, what should schools do about it? What about the influence of television and other media on

young minds? Who is really accountable for the learning problems of some children? We don't expect definitive answers, but we think the questions should be asked anyhow.

As in past years, our May issue probably will not have a single theme. It will contain whatever we consider most interesting and valuable to our readers.

That is the plan we expect to follow—but we may not. If some unforeseen topic seems especially timely, we will rearrange things and set to work on it.

I said earlier that, although eager, I am also a little uneasy about my new responsibility. I am mindful of the regard ASCD members have for their journal and for Robert R. Leeper, who made it what it is. He is a remarkable person: gentle, considerate, self-effacing, but with a firm sense of purpose. From one little crisis to the next, he helped us remember our calling: to nurture human growth. I cannot replace him; no one can. As with any novice, I can only vow to do my best.

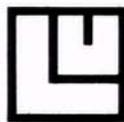
And you can help. The strength of ASCD is the quality—and diversity—of its membership. Please write to us with suggestions for what you want to see in future issues and with reactions to what we have published. With your participation, *Educational Leadership* will continue to be worthy of its name. [E]

²Theodore L. Gross. "How To Kill a College: The Private Papers of a Campus Dean." *Saturday Review* 12-20; February 4, 1978.

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Ronald S. Brandt is Editor/Director of Publications and Associate Director, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D.C.

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