

From the Editors

September 2014

This is our second issue for 2014. As many of us get back into the rhythms of school this fall, we present three feature articles, a commentary, a book review, and a policy brief that cover a spectrum of issues and provide thought provoking reading.

Margaret Zoller Booth, Erin Curran, Christopher Frey, Jean Gerard, Bruce Collet, and Jennifer Bartimole, in their paper “Ethnic Identity, Gender, and Adolescent Attitude toward School: Adaptive Perspectives in Diverse Settings,” examine the relationships between adolescent personal sense of ethnic identity and their attitudes toward school and school climate. While White female, and Hispanic and African American male students exhibit strong ethnic identity that correlates positively with school attitude, their interview responses reflect very different paths in getting to those outcomes, and overall underscore the need for attention to school climate.

Mary Bair considers the development of professionalism in one university’s college of education and school of social work in “Teacher Professionalism: What Educators Can Learn from Social Workers.” Her work leads her to conclude that professionalism and its nurturance means very different things for each discipline and its framework for preparation, and suggests that much work remains to empower teachers to see themselves and to be seen as full professionals.

Amy Hollenbeck and Eva Patrikakou report on Illinois school professionals’ perceptions of readiness regarding the implementation of Response to Intervention, along with their beliefs about this framework. The implications of their findings on wide scale implementation of RTI are discussed, with valuable points for consideration in advance of new policy initiatives.

This issue’s commentary, “Using the Power of Questions to Organize for Progressive Education,” is authored by Melissa Barone, Nadine Brockman, Allison Greer, Christina E. Martin, Kate McLellan, Kate Miller, Matias Orbea, Daniel P. Ryan, and Brian D. Schultz. These teachers, students, and administrators, who have created the Progressive Education Consortium in Illinois, challenge educators everywhere to find ways to engage in thoughtful dialogue as one means of counteracting the demands of the current reform climate.

In her book review, Jennifer E. Sanders offers an overview of Lisa Delpit’s *Multiplication is for White People*, and provides prospective readers with a flavor of Delpit’s comprehensive take on the current state of public education in America, particularly as it pertains to the educational attainment of African American students.

We are honored to continue to share publications from the UIC Research on Urban Education Policy Initiative with *MWER* readers. This issue’s brief is authored by Mark A. Smylie, Professor Emeritus of Education Policy Studies at UIC, and is called “Teacher Evaluation and the Problem of Professional Development.” Smylie describes the “weak link” and “weak quality” problems of professional development, arguing that teacher evaluation rarely includes provisions for professional development as a means of addressing issues for improvement (weak

link), and that even if such provisions are made, they are frequently of poor quality and offer little value for improving practice. Smylie outlines these chronic issues in detail and offers recommendations that are logical and doable, if the will to implement changes exists.

Opportunities with *MWER*

We continue to look for strong scholarship, both quantitative and qualitative, and extend an invitation to you to submit your work for publication, to serve as a reviewer for the journal, or to do both. With *MWER* online, there is more space to accommodate outstanding work and we will do our best to continue to offer a timely review and publication process. Please see our information for authors at <http://www.mwera.org/MWER/info-for-authors.html> and information for reviewers at <http://www.mwera.org/MWER/info-for-reviewers.html>, and let us know if you have any questions.

Special Issues

We look forward to a future special issue on *Midwestern Perspectives on Bilingual Education: Changing Demographics and Educational Challenges and Opportunities*, which will be edited by Pamela Konkol and Simeon Stumme of The Center for Policy and Social Justice at Concordia University Chicago.

If you have ideas for a special issue, or a special section for a forthcoming issue, we would be glad to discuss it further with you. Issues that are particularly relevant for the Midwestern United States are encouraged, but well developed and timely proposals in general are welcome. Just contact the editors at mwer1316@gmail.com

We look forward to hearing from you.

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