



# LODS Newsletter

## LODS Principals/School Leaders Convene

*"If we engage people in something they care about, they will become engaged in what we care about."* —Bill Mester

On the afternoons of Friday and Saturday, October 17 and 18, 2009, the LODS Principals/School Leaders met in Bellevue, Washington, during the NNER annual meeting. The two sessions focused on strengthening the understanding of the renewal process, building the capacity for leading school renewal, and deepening parents' and the larger community's understanding of both what schools are for and the necessary relationship between education and democracy.

John Goodlad opened the Friday afternoon session with comments about school renewal. "We have been tinkering and tinkering around in education for 100 years with this reform and that reform and promises of sweeping changes. . . . The League of Democratic Schools is a group of schools focused on the purpose of schools in our democratic society."

John introduced a special guest presenter, Bill Mester, superintendent of the Snohomish School District in Washington. For some time, John had wanted Bill to speak and work with the LODS principals/school leaders, and it took only a few minutes to understand why. He was truly dynamic and informative! He inspired and motivated us as he shared insights about his work, asked questions, and gave examples. He commented that "if we engage people in something *they* care about, they will become engaged in what *we* care about. People will support something they help to build."



The background readings for these sessions and Bill Mester's recommendations for additional readings are found on page 4.

### Message from John Goodlad

Greeting to all of you. In following your work this year, I noted what you have been doing to build understanding around the purpose of our schools and to engage your local communities. This work is interesting, informative, exciting, and messy, as you were reminded during the LODS Principals/School Leaders session and discussion with Bill Mester and me in Seattle this past fall. I think the League is coming back to vibrant life. Now we need to try to get some money to continue your good work, but that is not easy to do these days.

I have recently written three short articles for the *Washington Post* that may be of interest to you in your work. They are available online at <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/answer-sheet/john-goodlad/>.

Keep up your good work. I wish you all the best.

League of Democratic  
Schools  
Newsletter

Volume 6, Issue 1

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## **LODS Coordinators**

### **Eastern Region — Bernard Badiali, Co-coordinator**



Bernard Badiali is an associate professor of education in the Educational Leadership program at The Pennsylvania State University. He earned his Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from Penn State in 1985 where he initially served as an assistant professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. From 1990 to 1992, he coordinated the Office of Staff Development and School Improvement in the College of Education, an outreach arm of the Dean's Office.

In 1992, Bernard became an associate professor and chair of the Department of Educational Leadership at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, where he served for thirteen years before returning to Penn State in 2003. He was named a Danforth-Johnson Scholar in problem-based learning at Stanford University and was a Leadership Associate with the Institute for Educational Inquiry in Seattle, Washington, where he is currently affiliated as an AED Scholar.

### **Eastern Region — Dianne Bath, Co-coordinator**

Dianne Bath is interim director for the Georgia Center for Educational Renewal at Georgia Southern University. She received her undergraduate and master's degrees from Georgia Southern in high school education in the field of social sciences. She also has a specialist degree in Supervision and Administration.

Dianne has thirty-three years of experience in education, including teaching in high school, serving as principal of a PK-7 elementary school for twelve years, and serving ten years at the district level as Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning. She is currently one of the AED Scholars of the Institute for Educational Inquiry in Seattle, Washington.



### **Western Region — Jim Strickland, Coordinator**



Jim Strickland began his teaching career in Atlanta, Georgia, and moved to Seattle with his wife, Dana, in 1994. Since then, he has taught students with special needs in Seattle, Edmonds, and Marysville school districts. Jim is currently teaching in the Life Skills program at Marysville-Pilchuck High School.

Jim has a longstanding interest in democratic education, the implications of democratic values for our schools, and the idea of developing educative communities. He is active in engaging his community in dialogue around these issues and has published articles in *Natural Life Magazine* and *Education Revolution Magazine* and editorials in his local newspaper. Jim also co-wrote Chapter 7, "Toward Democratic Schools," in the 2008 book, *Education and the Making of a Democratic People*, co-edited by Goodlad, Soder, and McDaniel. He and Dana live in Everett, Washington, with their three children.

## Rocky Mountain/Plains States Region — Judy MacDonald, Coordinator

Judy MacDonald has been the coordinator of the Rocky Mountain/Plains States Region of the LODS for three years. She retired in June 2007 after serving as a district administrator in Poudre School District (PSD), Fort Collins, Colorado, where she was in charge of library media, instructional technology, and staff development for twenty-two years. Prior to that, Judy taught English and Speech at the secondary level in Iowa, Vermont, Georgia, and Colorado. She received a master's degree in instruction and a Ph.D. in administration from Colorado State University. Her undergraduate degree is from the University of Nebraska.



Judy has always been interested in international education. While at PSD, she served as a consultant with John F. Kennedy School in Berlin, Germany, helping to build the instructional technology and library media program. For the Poudre School District, she implemented two international learning programs for teachers in the district: *World Aware* and *Walk A Mile in Their Shoes*. The former allowed teachers to live and work in a school in another country for three weeks; the latter sent groups of approximately eighteen teachers and instructional aides to Mexico for cultural and language immersion.

Judy and her husband, Jim, have two daughters (one in Arlington, Virginia, and the other in Manhattan) and three granddaughters under the age of one!

## LODS Director — Dorothy Lloyd

Dorothy Lloyd served as the founding dean and professor of the College of Professional Studies at California State University, Monterey Bay, from 1994 to 2006. The areas under her deanship included education; business; liberal studies; health, human services and public policy; and human performance and wellness education. Dorothy's prior positions include:

- ♦ Five years as founding faculty, associate dean, and director of teacher education in the College of Education, California State University, San Marcos;
- ♦ Twelve years as professor of education, San Francisco State University;
- ♦ Four years as full-time lecturer in the Graduate School of Education at UCLA and senior researcher with John Goodlad;
- ♦ Eight years as team leader, demonstration and supervising teacher at the UCLA Laboratory School; and
- ♦ Five years as a classroom teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School District.



She has been an active presenter and keynote speaker at state, national, and international conferences. She is also a consultant, trainer, and staff development leader for school districts and universities across the country in the areas of leadership, school and instructional effectiveness, and staff development. She has conducted seminars and workshops in thirteen states and Canada and in more than thirty California school districts. Since her retirement in 2006, she has taught a leadership course at California State University, Monterey Bay, and served as director of the Institute for Educational Inquiry's League of Democratic Schools.

Her honors and awards include Educator of the Year Award, Western Region Professional and Business Women; Community Education Awards (San Francisco, Monterey, and San Mateo); Outstanding Educator, Leader, Professional, African-American Community, Monterey, California; and Monterey County Outstanding Woman in 2003. She was inducted into Leadership America in 2000.

## 2009–2010 Goal for the League of Democratic Schools

*Develop ongoing, sustainable mechanisms for deepening our community's understanding and engagement around the public purpose of schools in our democracy.*

### Some League Schools' Specific Goals:

#### Woods Learning Center

- ♦ Foster community awareness and service by actively engaging students in community service experiences and activities.
- ♦ Mentor other schools.

#### Lincoln Elementary

- ♦ Reaffirm our goal to advocate for students in need and not to make assumptions regarding families' or students' backgrounds.

#### Eagle Rock School

- ♦ Continue our efforts toward influencing renewal in education.

#### Park Forest Elementary School

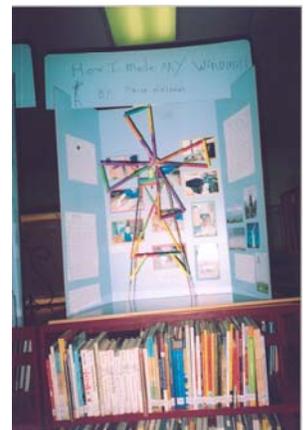
- ♦ Continue to put democratic structures in place that empower us to continue our journey toward becoming a more democratic school.

#### Pasadena Park Elementary School

- ♦ Establish an understanding of the LODS purpose and its positive relationship to the West Valley School District's 2008-2013 Strategic Plan.

#### Don Gaspar de Portola Elementary School

- ♦ Engage students, parents, and the community in planning for the redesign and expansion of the school to a K-8 school.



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### *"LODS Principals/School Leaders Convene" continued from page 1*

The background readings for the sessions were chapters from two books co-written or co-edited by John Goodlad and colleagues at the Institute for Educational Inquiry:

- ♦ Chapter 6, "Renewal" in *Education for Everyone: Agenda for Education in a Democracy*;
- ♦ Chapter 8, "A Tale of Two Districts," Bill Mester's section in *Education and the Making of a Democratic People*; and
- ♦ Chapter 7, "Toward Democratic Schools," Jim Strickland (LODS Western Region Coordinator) and Dianne Suiter (LODS principal) in *Education and the Making of a Democratic People*.

Bill Mester also recommended some other readings: William W. Purkey and Betty L. Siegel's *Becoming an Invitational Leader*, Margaret J. Wheatley's *Turning to One Another*, and Peter Block's *Community*.

# Engaging Our Communities

By Jim Strickland

Teacher at Marysville-Pilchuck High School and Coordinator of the LODS Western Region

The primary focus of our work in the League of Democratic Schools this year is to *develop ongoing, sustainable mechanisms for deepening our community's understanding and engagement around the public purpose of schools in our democracy*. The rationale for this goal is that public education in a democracy is education of, by, and for a public. Relinquishing the responsibility for planning and decision making in our schools to politicians and paid administrators is an abdication of our dream for a truly *public* education and a guarantee that the goals of schooling will drift farther and farther away from the real needs and interests of the people.

In her wonderful book, *Turning to One Another*, Margaret Wheatley writes that "there is no more powerful way to initiate significant change than to convene a conversation. . . . Real change begins with the simple act of people talking about what they care about."

*Conversation* is the foundation of democratic process. It must be open, inclusive, and ongoing. And it is *not* optional. We can skimp on conversation for short periods of time in the name of efficiency—and it can certainly be messy and time consuming—but in the long run, neglecting conversation is the death of democracy.

And while many fruitful conversations happen haphazardly at the proverbial water cooler, the conversations democracy requires must be intentional. Random, spontaneous discussions will not suffice.

With that in mind, I encourage you to consider ways to create such an "*ongoing, sustainable mechanism*" for this conversation to occur in your community. Start by inviting a few interested parents, teachers, administrators, school board members, students, community members, etc. Then lay out a few snacks, and just see where it goes!

Here are a few questions you can use to guide your conversation, or feel free to create some of your own:

- 1) What do we want for our children? What kind of people do we want them to become?
- 2) What experiences and opportunities will help our children grow into the kind of people our community, our world, and our democracy need?
- 3) In what ways can our schools provide these formative experiences and opportunities?
- 4) How do we balance the goal of individual self-development with the goal of developing responsible and effective citizens?
- 5) What should be the relationship between our schools and the larger community? How can we strengthen these connections and share educational responsibilities?
- 6) How can we deepen community engagement in this ongoing conversation?

You may want to determine a few concrete outcomes to shoot for, such as coming up with a citizen-generated statement of purpose for our schools and establishing priorities or goals that support that purpose. Then make sure you keep your community and local school board informed of the ideas and suggestions your conversation is generating and invite them to join you.

This may sound like a lot of work—and it is—but authentic conversation also has an enlivening and rejuvenating quality that makes it sustainable. And if you don't start the conversation, who will?





# Highlights from LODS Schools



## Woods Learning Center

- Three staff members conducted a research project on multiage learning in our school. They participated in the National Network for Educational Renewal's annual meeting in Bellevue, Washington, in October 2009. Presentations focused on circle groups and multi-age learning.
- A schoolwide study of Mexico included a "Day of the Dead" celebration put on by the sixth-grade class.
- All students voted in a mock election in November.
- The school's "flexible schedule" helped Woods score high on Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS) Science.
- Some schoolwide activities have included raising funds for the Heifer Project, having the whole school community participate in cleanup days, providing decorations and supplies for Meals on Wheels, and delivering Thanksgiving meals. Our musical groups have performed for senior care centers and provided support to a local museum. Middle school students helped send out mailings and served lunch for the annual Wyoming Reads event.

—Jennifer Grooms and Jim Gaither, Casper, WY

## University of Wyoming Lab School

- This fall, the UW Lab School implemented a weekly town meeting for all middle school students (grades 6 through 9) by following Eagle Rock School's model. Each week, a different advisory group facilitated the meeting. Student ownership of the town meetings was quickly established, and there have been noticeable positive effects on the school culture.
- Two Lab School teachers, Stella Nowell (K/1) and Theresa Williams (6-9 Math & Science), recently achieved National Board Certification. They join Joanie James (4/5) in completing this rigorous, advanced level certification.
- Faculty from the University Lab School participated in the National Network for Educational Renewal's annual meeting in Bellevue, Washington, in October 2009. Presentations focused on connecting educational theory with classroom practice and on the power of providing all students the opportunity to engage in qualitative research.

—Margaret Hudson, Laramie, WY

## Lincoln Elementary School

- Three staff members attended the 2009 LODS Western Regional meeting in Modesto, California. There they networked about community and service and how these concepts fit with the democratic model. In particular, they gleaned valuable information from the speakers for Habitat for Humanity and connected about the service work at our school.
- Our organic garden program dedicated six beds to growing food for the Food Bank, of which 220 pounds of produce were harvested and donated.
- We held our 15<sup>th</sup> annual Harvest Festival. During the opening weeks of school, the students spent much time in the garden and kitchen harvesting the crops they had planted in the spring and preparing food to be shared with the community from the vegetables they had grown. Each class planted a crop in the spring; then in the fall, the students graphed, counted, weighed, and cooked their crops. We fed 700 people such things as soups, tamales, salads, apple crisp, pumpkin pies, and apple cider from our garden bounty.
- We collaborated on designing an all-school theme for the year titled, "Sense of Place." We defined "Sense of Place" as a place with deep personal connection we each call home—starting from self to the state of Washington and beyond. We used a project-based learning model by which each child researched an animal, plant, indigenous tribe, or other topic related to Sense of Place and used different art forms as part of his or her project. The children shared their research results with the Lincoln community of family and friends at a culminating event.

—Marcela Abadi, Olympia, WA

### Whatcom Day Academy

- Susan Donnelly published an article, "Children's Imaginative Communities: Microcosm of Democracy," in the Winter 2010 issue of the *Journal of Educational Controversy* (<http://www.wce.wvu.edu/Resources/CEP/eJournal/v005n001/a001.shtml>). An online PowerPoint presentation about children's art is included.
- Whatcom Day Academy, along with the Educational Institute for Democratic Renewal at Woodring College of Education at Western Washington University and Explorations Academy, invited nationally known author and educator Alfie Kohn to talk on *The Schools Our Children Deserve* on Friday, October 9, 2009, and it proved to be a huge success. Over 400 community members, parents, and educators gathered to hear Kohn explain why the traditional "bunch of facts" model of instruction, with its emphasis on memorizing right answers and practicing skills, is virtually guaranteed to fail. As a result, the audience was stimulated in a productive discussion about what we want for our children.
- During the 2008-2009 school year, our strong sense of community sustained us through a serious threat to our existence. Due to the world economic situation, our enrollment was lower than expected, and we had to make significant budget cuts in the spring. Another private school in Bellingham made a bid to buy us out. However, our families remained loyal and supported our continued existence as an independent and unique choice in the county.

—Susan Donnelly, Bellingham, WA

### Park Forest Elementary School

- Park Forest Elementary School was honored in being selected by the Education Commission of the States and the National Center for the Leadership and Civics (NCLC) as one of ten schools in the United States to receive the designation of School of Success. Park Forest will share information about its experiences in service learning with other schools and receive \$10,000 to support and enhance future service learning opportunities. NCLC is hopeful that Park Forest will help to share its our successes with other schools so they can develop their own activities with service learning and the civic engagement of students. Representatives from Park Forest will team with community members in this venture.
- Students at Park Forest Elementary have internalized and embraced the nature of service learning.
- Park Forest Elementary School hosted the spring 2009 LODS Eastern Regional meeting in partnership with the Delta Program and Penn State University. We had three wonderful days of rich experiences and conversations. Over fifty people attended various parts of the conference that included students from other schools in the Eastern Region who were able to spend their time with the Delta Program students.

—Donnan Stoicovy, State College, PA

### Pasadena Park Elementary School

- Pasadena Park Elementary School has continued to celebrate and learn about Abraham Lincoln in literally hundreds of ways. The district had a large group of representatives from West Valley School District (WVSD), and our Civic Thinkers came together once a month to plan and develop ways that our school district and students could promote our values in preschool through grade 12. Students engaged in an exhaustive list of activities to learn about Lincoln's role. WVSD made the newspaper at least five times outlining the special 200<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration.
- Students at Pasadena Park had discussions about democracy as we held our student elections for officers for the 2009-2010 school year. Students registered to vote in grades three through five and were encouraged to ask their parents if they were registered to vote. Student leaders were asked to develop a list of activities for the rest of the student body.
- Staff members had monthly collaboration meetings that followed specific protocols to ensure "voice." Most of the protocols modeled would be effective in almost any classroom.
- LODS presentations were made to the Pasadena Park Parent Teacher Organization.
- Articles were written periodically for the Pasadena Park newsletter in support of the goals of LODS and the strategic plan.

—Robyn Davis, Spokane, WA



### Don Gaspar de Portola Elementary School

- Since Portola Elementary School is a new school, the two main highlights were the launching of a Dual Immersion Parent Night at which families engaged in strategies for helping their students learn two languages and played fun learning games with students and staff and the creation of a Dia de los Muertos museum.
  - Portola Elementary is closing at the end of the year, and a new K-8 school is being created to accommodate Portola and Junction (currently grades 6 through 8) schools. I am trying to make this process open and democratic by including all stakeholders as much as possible. I am using what I learned from our October 2009 LODS Principals/School Leaders meeting to help guide this work. The silver lining is that I am getting a lot of practice in facilitating community engagement events and finding ways to reach out to and draw in the wide range of stakeholders.
  - We have held meetings with every class to discuss their concerns and hopes for the new school. Students had opportunities in class to provide input as to what aspects of the school should be continued and what could be added to create the best school ever. And we have held parent and community meetings for understanding, clarification, and input.
- M. Jamal Fields, Livermore, CA

### Eagle Rock School

- In addition to our normal efforts in furthering renewal of education nationwide (Initiatives of the Professional Development Center), we hosted visiting educators from around the world; spoke at conferences; sponsored twelve fellowships with Public Allies; offered a variety of learning opportunities to pre-student teachers, student teachers, graduate students, and researchers; provided technical assistance to schools and districts; and published articles in educational outlets such as the *New York Times* and *Teacher* magazine as well as in books.
  - We had a chapter published in a book entitled *Learning from the Student's Perspective: A Sourcebook for Effective Teaching*. We are also featured in the forthcoming book entitled *Small Schools, Big Ideas: The Essential Guide to Successful School Transformation*.
  - In the spirit of progress, Eagle Rock's Director of Curriculum Jeff Liddle and Director of Professional Development Michael Soguero spearheaded an initiative to rethink our curriculum.
  - The twentieth annual National Youth-At-Risk Conference hosted by the College of Education at Georgia Southern University, in collaboration with the National Network for Educational Renewal, recognized winners of its 2009 High Flying Schools Award last spring. The awards were presented to Eagle Rock School and four other schools during the opening ceremonies of the conference held in Savannah, Georgia.
  - Dan Condon visited legislative offices in Washington, D.C., to share his thoughts on the future of the federal role in education. He joined seventy-five students and educators from eighteen states representing thirty different schools, all of whom shared insights from their experiences in schools and the field of education.
- Dan Condon, Estes Park, CO



## Message from Dorothy Lloyd, LODS Director

Thank you for your high level of ongoing commitment to and solid work on being democratic schools—schools that are developing students as individuals who have the knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, values, and democratic character for successful lives and effective participation in our democracy. Your commitment is so clearly evident, exciting to see, and renewing for all who have visited your schools on their own or as participants in the LODS Regional Conferences. What a pleasurable and informative learning experience it has been to have visited nine of your schools and participated in all three of the 2009-2010 Spring Regional Conferences in Casper, WY, Bend, OR, and Ithaca, NY. All were superb in content and experiences. Indeed, "a picture is worth a thousand (plus) words"!

This has been a year filled with energy and enthusiasm, renewing and renewal, and movement forward. We turned our spring regional meetings into conferences and stretched in our goal of engaging our communities. Middle and high school students and parents traveled to participate in the conferences.

Thank you for your ideas, suggestions, and support for both strengthening and deepening our work and for sustaining the League. You are awesome!



# Summaries of 2009-2010 Regional Meetings



## ROCKY MOUNTAIN/PLAINS STATES REGION

The Rocky Mountain/Plains States Regional meeting was held on Thursday and Friday, March 25 and 26, 2010, at Woods Learning Center in Casper, Wyoming. The theme of the conference was "Democracy Is Worth the Effort!" with the purpose of (1) studying the art of creating democratic learning societies in our schools that help produce citizens who have the knowledge, skill, and commitment needed to maintain our constitutional democracy; and (2) building a network of schools that share the belief that the primary purpose of schools is to help students develop into effective, responsible participants in a democracy. There were more than fifty participants at the regional meeting, including teachers, principals, district administrators, school board members, and university professors.

The conference began on Thursday evening with dinner and guest speaker Dr. Joel Dvorak, superintendent of Natrona County Schools, who spoke about the challenge of maintaining democratic principles in this era of school accountability. On Friday morning, participants had an opportunity to visit and learn from schools in the Casper area—Park Elementary, Evansville Elementary, and Fort Caspar Academy—that are striving to create and sustain democratic learning environments. Then, the leadership team for a new, innovative school—Summit Elementary—that will open in Fall 2010 talked about the challenges and triumphs of building a democratic learning environment from the ground up. On Friday afternoon, Dr. Cammy Rowley of Casper College talked about "Circle Groups: A Place to Practice Democracy," and an optional activity was offered where attendees observed and participated in circle groups.

## WESTERN REGION

The Western Region's mini-conference was held on Friday and Saturday, April 23 and 24, 2010, at Westside Village Magnet School in Bend, Oregon. The theme of the mini-conference was "Education as Engagement: Engaging Students, Families, Schools, and Communities."

With the overall LODS goal being to develop ongoing, sustainable mechanisms for deepening our community's understanding and engagement around the public purpose of schools in our democracy, the Western Region's mini-conference also focused on the following outcomes: (1) Engaging students and families—Develop a working knowledge of service learning principles and methods for engaging students and families in learning that addresses real concerns in our communities and our world; (2) Engaging communities—Learn various strategies for facilitating community conversations around the public purpose of schools in our democracy and develop action plans for doing this in our own communities; and (3) Engaging schools—Explore ways to strengthen and grow the League in order to further the Agenda for Education in a Democracy.

## EASTERN REGION

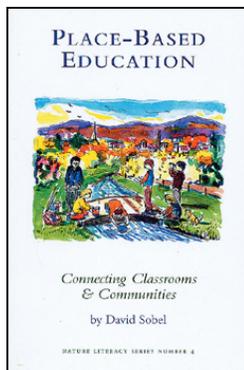
The annual meeting of the Eastern Region was held on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, May 13, 14, and 15, at Lehman Alternative Community School (LACS) in Ithaca, New York. Maddy Friga, a senior at LACS, and Joe Greenberg, principal, hosted the meeting. Thanks go to Maddy and Joe for arranging an excellent school visit and an informative and inspiring meeting. The conference included participants from LACS, Central Academy in Middletown, Ohio; Georgia Southern University; Park Forest Elementary School in State College, Pennsylvania; and Pennsylvania State University, as well as more than twenty-five student representatives from Rochester, New York.

Lehman Alternative Community School is a small, public school (grades 6 through 12). One entire day of the conference was spent attending classes and interacting with students and faculty. Participants also attended an all-school meeting as well as a special meeting of the governing council. LACS not only professes democratic practices; it lives and breathes them every day. The conference experience was affirming and inspiring for all of us.



# Noteworthy Books Being Read by League Members

***Place-Based Education: Connecting Classrooms and Communities***, by David Sobel (Great Barrington, MA: Orion Society, 2004).

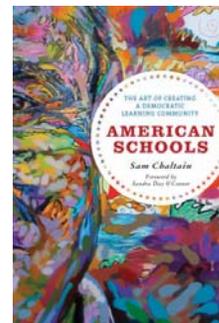


In the introduction, the author notes that "a significant transformation of education might begin with the effort to learn how events and processes close to home relate to regional, national, and global forces and events, leading to a new understanding of ecological stewardship and community."

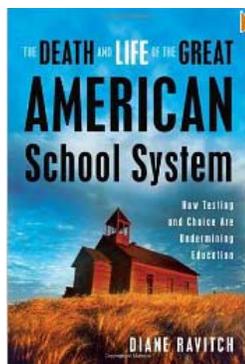
Place-based education is about restoring the essential links between a person and his or her place. Projects related to this concept are now spreading across the country, adapting to and evolving from the uniqueness of each community. According to Sobel, "place-based education is not simply a way to integrate the curriculum around a study of place, but a means of inspiring stewardship and an authentic renewal and revitalization of civic life." This book offers a comprehensive review of place-based education and includes many practical examples from classrooms at all levels in a variety of areas throughout our country. In these classrooms, students are learning about stewardship of the environment in ways that will affect their behavior throughout their lives.

***American Schools: The Art of Creating a Democratic Learning Community***, by Sam Chaltain (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009).

In *American Schools*, Sam Chaltain interweaves the leading ideas from the education, business, and scientific communities to outline a framework for leadership that helps educators and organizational leaders create the optimal conditions for transformational change. By pairing a rich theoretical framework with the stories of communities that have, over several years, tried to create more democratic learning communities, Chaltain does what any reader of this book will have to do: provide enough structure to empower people to do their best work and enough freedom so that each person's inherent creativity can be unleashed.



***The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education***, by Diane Ravitch (New York: Basic Books, 2010).



A passionate plea to preserve and renew public education, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* is a radical change of heart from one of America's best-known education experts. Ravitch—former assistant secretary of education and a leader in the drive to create a national curriculum—examines her career in education reform and repudiates positions that she once staunchly advocated. Drawing on over forty years of research and experience, Ravitch critiques today's most popular ideas for restructuring schools, including privatization, standardized testing, punitive accountability, and the feckless multiplication of charter schools. She shows conclusively why the business model is not an appropriate way to improve schools. Using examples from major cities like New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Denver, and San Diego, Ravitch makes the case that public education today is in peril. She includes clear prescriptions for improving America's schools.

# Exciting Announcements

- ◆ **Susan Donnelly** of Whatcom Day Academy is co-editing (with Lorraine Kasprisin of Western Washington University) the next issue of the online *Journal of Educational Controversy*, the theme of which is "The Education Our Children Deserve." This issue was inspired by the talk that Alfie Kohn gave in Bellingham in October 2009, based on one of his books, *The Schools Our Children Deserve*. Commitments for articles have already been received from Kohn, Lisa Delpit, and Howard Gardner. K-12 educators are invited to contribute as well. The deadline for manuscripts is December 31, 2010. For more information, please see the call for papers at <http://www.wce.wvu.edu/Resources/CEP/eJournal/v006n001/CallForPapers.shtml>.
- ◆ **Kenneth Griffith** of Guernsey-Sunrise School in Guernsey, Wyoming, has been elected president of the National Association of Secondary School Principals beginning July 1, 2011; he will serve as president-elect beginning July 1, 2010. He has over thirty-five years of experience in education at every level from kindergarten through college, of which nineteen years were as a principal. In 1998, he was chosen as Wyoming's Principal of the Year. Congratulations, Ken!
- ◆ In Fall 2009, the Wyoming University-School Partnership created a position to support the LODS efforts in Wyoming. **Jennifer Grooms** is now the coordinator for the work of the Wyoming League schools. She recently retired after thirty years in the classroom, with her most recent position having been at Woods Learning Center in Casper. To learn more about the work of the Wyoming LODS schools, please visit the Partnership's web site at <http://uwacadweb.uwyo.edu/wsup> and click on the "Wyoming League of Democratic Schools" link.



## 2009-2010 Membership in the League of Democratic Schools

### ROCKY MOUNTAIN/PLAINS STATES REGION

*Judy MacDonald, Regional Coordinator*

- ◆ New Vista High School, Colorado
- ◆ Woods Learning Center, Wyoming
- ◆ University of Wyoming Lab School, Wyoming
- ◆ Guernsey-Sunrise School (K-12), Wyoming

### EASTERN REGION

*Dianne Bath and Bernard Badiali, Regional Coordinators*

- ◆ Central Academy, Ohio
- ◆ Bulloch County Performance Learning Center, Georgia
- ◆ Park Forest Elementary School, Pennsylvania
- ◆ Lehman Alternative Community School, New York
- ◆ Dayton Regional STEM School, Ohio

### WESTERN REGION

*Jim Strickland, Regional Coordinator*

- ◆ Friday Harbor High School, Washington
- ◆ Lincoln Elementary School, Washington
- ◆ Westside Village Magnet School, Oregon
- ◆ Whatcom Day Academy, Washington
- ◆ Portola Elementary School, California
- ◆ Pasadena Park Elementary School, Washington

# League of Democratic Schools Newsletter

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## Agenda for Education in a Democracy



## Common Characteristics of LODS Schools

- **Democratic Purpose:** LODS schools believe the primary purpose of schooling is to develop in young people the knowledge, skills, and attitudes students require for successful participation in our nation's social and political democracy.
- **Student Achievement:** Students in such schools are successful academically and socially.
- **Ongoing Professional Development:** All members of the school community engage in continuous learning.
- **Approaches to Learning:** These are schools that use a wide variety of approaches to learning, including engaging students with parents and other adults within the community.
- **Personalization:** These schools deliberately personalize the relationships among students, teachers, parents, and administrators by faculty members' gathering as a group for dialogue and by making other arrangements to facilitate communications among the members of the school community.

**See past LODS Newsletters at:**  
[www.ieiseattle.org/LODSnewsletters.htm](http://www.ieiseattle.org/LODSnewsletters.htm)

**NOMINATE A**



**TO BECOME A NEW MEMBER OF THE LODS**

Do you know of a school that should be a member of the League? Send the name of the school and the principal's name, email address, and phone number to the appropriate regional coordinator:

- ♦ **Dorothy Lloyd, LODS Director**  
dlloyd@csumb.edu
- ♦ **Jim Strickland, Western Region Coordinator**  
livedemocracy@hotmail.com
- ♦ **Judy MacDonald, Rocky Mountain/Plains States Region Coordinator**  
judymacd@gmail.com
- ♦ **Dianne Bath, Eastern Region Co-Coordinator**  
dbath@georgiasouthern.edu
- ♦ **Bernard Badiali, Eastern Region Co-Coordinator**  
bxb8@psu.edu