STETSON UNIVERSITY

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Inform and Reform***

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Voices of Reform: Editor Statement

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When *Voices of Reform: Educational Research to Inform and Reform* was conceptualized, our goal as an editorial team was to produce one, high-quality issue per year, with an occasional thematic issue as a second issue when appropriate. COVID-19 has led to what I consider to be the “research dump,” where many faculty members knew that their work had to get out before they would have to adjust their research (or projects being completed) due to the long-lasting changes in education. Because of that, we had a record number of submissions, and decided to create a second issue for this calendar year. As editor-in-chief, I would like to state that this is not the norm, and this is another example of COVID-19 being a wicked problem and disrupter for all of education. That being said, the quality of article submissions is fantastic, and we think that you will enjoy the various perspectives of reform from across the United States.

Our first article from Mary Boudreaux and Jill Faulkner examines student achievement, teacher effectiveness, and merit pay in a rural Tennessee school district. Merit pay continues to be a hot-button issue across the United States, with many school districts seeking creative ways to use extrinsic rewards to increase teacher motivation. Boudreaux and Faulkner explain a unique system in their paper, and present findings that could influence other school districts as they search for creative ways to incentivize and motivate teachers.

We follow the Boudreaux and Faulkner article with an exploration of research design from Susan Curtin, David DeJong, Derrick Robinson, Karen Card, and Ayana Campoli. Curtin and her team of researchers found that the leading educational leadership journals are more frequently publishing qualitative research as opposed to quantitative research, which is a major shift from how educational leadership was historically studied. Their article addresses the implications of this shift in terms of more practitioner-oriented Ed.D. and Ph.D. programs and offers insights for aspiring researchers and scholars seeking publication in more high-impact journals.

Next, Hani Morgan from the University of Southern Mississippi offers a commentary on the disproportionate representation of students of color in special education programs in the United States. Morgan explores student placement from an equity and social justice lens, and offers suggestions which may help to reduce biased placement in exceptional student education programs. While this may be a problem that is virtually impossible to fix; Morgan’s suggestions offer ways that school districts can be mindful of misrepresentation in their placements of students.

The process of identifying talent to lead our schools is something that has been recently deemed a critical need across the United States. In “Perceptions of Leadership Identification: A Collective Autoethnographical Study,” Chris Parfitt, Brianne Lopez-Romano, Danielle Hudzina, and Sarah Rogozinski discuss experiences across school districts they have worked with that have been successful in identifying high potential school administrators. This article offers a unique perspective, as it is written by two scholars and two practitioners, which provides a theoretical and practical look at school administrator succession planning.

Our last traditional article in this issue comes from C. Angelique Scherer and W. Kyle Ingle, who examine the extent to which a large, urban school district applied PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) to reduce suspensions and improve standardized test scores. As school districts throughout the country search for potential “magic bullets” to improve discipline data and assessment results, identifying strategic ways in which positive relationships can be built between teachers, administrators, and students is a crucial piece of education reform in 2020.

Voices from the Field is our practitioner-scholar piece in each issue, and in this issue, Jeffrey Hartmann, principal of Stow-Munroe Falls City Schools in Stow, Ohio discusses how his school implemented the Resilient Leadership framework to better understand how the emotional systems in schools can be targeted and focused on to lead to school improvement.

We end with a book review from Kellie McClarty, a Science Resource Teacher (District Employee) from Volusia County Schools in Central Florida. Kelly reviews Kanold, Toncheff, Larson, Kanold-McIntyre, and Schuhl’s “Mathematics Coaching Collaboration in a PLC at WorkTM. Every Student Can Learn Mathematics.” As Professional Learning Communities (PLC) continue to be a major professional development program throughout the United States and the rest of the world, examining how mathematics departments can utilize PLC’s for instructional improvement can contribute to higher performance across all subject areas.

We are extremely excited for this issue and hope you enjoy it as much as we have. We welcome your submissions for upcoming issues, and welcome any questions for our editorial board or for our authors.

Dr. Lou L. Sabina

Editor-in-Chief

Voices of Reform