Clearinghouse on Educational Policy and Management

CEPM

College of Education · University of Oregon

PUBLICATIONS

- Books & Monographs
- Browse Publications
- ERIC Digests
- Forthcoming
- How to Order
- News Bulletins
- Policy Perspective
- Policy Reports
- Problem-Based Learning
- Publications Available Online
- Research Roundups
- Search Publications

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT **INFORMATION**

Fall 1997   University of Oregon - Eugene

Book Brings Vision into Focus

What is organizational vision? Why does it matter? How is it developed? These are the central questions that receive indepth coverage in

- .

Writing with eloquence and insight, Larry Lashway is a sure-footed guide for all school executives in their quest for vision--those who are ready to begin, those who are far down the path, and those who have already found it but need some help sharing it with others.

Lashway insists that vision-building is not some mystical process reserved for a few elite leaders, but rather "a core leadership task that must be mastered by all leaders." In chapter 1, he lays some groundwork by exploring what vision is and is not, what it accomplishes, and what role leaders must play.

Chapter 2 examines the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that lead to vision. Although mention is frequently made of "the school's vision," in reality vision resides within people, not organizations. The school merely acts as a lens that focuses people's beliefs, values, and insights. "Before there is a vision, there must be people who have vision--people who can see the implications of their values and beliefs, not only today but projected into the future," states Lashway.

Chapter 3 has two foci. The first section offers a "readiness check" for leaders interested in developing or renewing organizational vision. Two strategic decisions that shape the direction of the vision process--Who will lead? and Who will participate?--are the focus of the remainder of the chapter.

Vision is not always the result of rushing down what seems to be the most direct route or of setting an "arrival date" that must be met at all costs. Vision evolves over time and is successfully approached via many different pathways, some more direct and structured than others. The first part of chapter 4 looks at schools whose visions emerged from less than a finely orchestrated plan, while the second part of the chapter offers guidelines for leaders who want to pursue a more systematic approach.

A vision statement should not be perceived as evidence of excellence but rather as a call for change, notes Lashway. For a vision to do much good, it must

become more than feel-good rhetoric; it must be institutionalized. Chapter 5 emphasizes realigning structures to support the vision and integrating the vision into the school's culture.

Preparing for what to do "when today's futuristic, exciting vision looks anemic and out of touch" is the focus of chapter 6. This chapter explores how schools can better anticipate where things are headed and adjust their own course accordingly by becoming learning organizations.

● gives administrators a solid base from which to proceed as they move to construct a vision that will "energize their schools and inspire everyone to commit their energies to organizational excellence."

CHAPTER TITLES

- The Value of Vision
- Developing Personal Vision
- Paving the Way
- Pathways to Vision
- Living the Vision
- Beyond Vision: The Learning Organization

Popular 'Roadmap' Updated and Expanded

Just as the physical landscape is constantly being reshaped by a variety of natural forces, the landscape of educational restructuring continues to change as well. The second edition of the Clearinghouse's bestselling book *Roadmap to Restructuring*, by David T. Conley, reflects recent changes in the topography of restructuring.

The new edition contains over 100 pages of additional text. Most of the new content was added to part 3, the Dimensions of Restructuring, where the following topics receive new or expanded treatment:

- learning standards
- state curriculum frameworks
- proficiency standards for admission to college
- a critique of constructivism
- issues in assessment
- the difficulty of installing accountability systems in schools
- methods of organizing the learning environment
- school-to-work programs
- creating learning communities--places where kids feel they belong
- the Internet and problems facing technology in schools
- parental involvement
- block schedules
- site councils
- charter schools
- principals as facilitative leaders
- paraprofessionals
- changing role for counselors, library media specialists, and other certificated specialists
- professional unionism

The book's twenty-five chapters are divided into four parts. In part 1, Conley compares the contemporary restructuring movement with significant change efforts undertaken in the past.

Part 2 deals with changing roles and responsibilities. In particular, discussion focuses on the relationship between the central office and the school, the role of teachers, and the community's link to education.

In part 3, the centerpiece of the book, Conley sets forth a framework of twelve Dimensions of Restructuring. The first chapter previews the dimensions, while the following twelve chapters each focus on a separate dimension.

The introduction to part 4 presents a new model for organizing the process of restructuring. This model provides the structure for the first four chapters in this last part of the book. The final chapter summarizes research on the effects of restructuring on learning and school organization, followed by Conley's personal vision of restructured schools. Those who want to keep up to date on the changing landscape of restructuring will benefit greatly from reading the second edition of Conley's book.

From the Foreword

"Someone needed to make sense out of important but misunderstood, diverse restructuring activity. David Conley has done this and provided a great service to the education profession." "At the end of this 'roadmap' the reader knows where he has been and where to go. The contents are also a one-stop shopping location for systemic restructuring. The book serves multiple audiences of practitioners, policymakers, and scholars. Once you start down this road, you will want to continue."

--Michael T. Kirst

Contents

New 'ERIC Digests' Available

Six new titles have recently been added to the A*ERIC Digest* series:

Two pages in length, *ERIC Digests* present concise information in a question-and-answer format followed by a list of references. Although there is no charge for single copies of Digest titles, a postage/handling fee of $3.00 is required to cover the Clearinghouse's expenses. This fee is waived if (1) you enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope, or (2) you order other materials from the Clearinghouse for which there is a charge. In addition to being available in paper copy from the Clearinghouse, the full texts of Digests 78 and later are posted on the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management website.

On the Web: Resumes of In-Process Documents

Wish you could preview resumes of items recently indexed by our Clearinghouse before they end up as entries in the ERIC database? Now you can. All it takes is access to the Internet and a few keystrokes. Through a new service available on our website, you can search items that we have indexed and shipped to the ERIC Facility for processing but are not yet available on searchable CD-ROMs (this process can take up to six months).

We add new resumes to the in-process documents file twice monthly, and delete them once they appear on CD-ROMs, which are produced quarterly by Knight-Ridder, Silver Platter, and other vendors.

The Facility uses these resumes to compose the upcoming issues of Resources in Education (documents) and Current Index to Journals in Education (journal articles). The Facility may change some of the data before publication or delete resumes that are duplicates or have other problems. In other words, a resume's appearance on the website does not guarantee the item will be added to the ERIC database.
Go to the In-Process Abstracts page

'School Leadership' Wins Award

The third edition of

- *School Leadership: Handbook for Excellence,* edited by Stuart C. Smith and Philip K. Piele, won an APEX '97 Award for Publication Excellence. Sponsored by Communications Concepts, Inc., in Springfield, Virginia, APEX Awards are based on excellence in graphic design, editorial content, and the ability to achieve overall communications excellence.

School Leadership was one of eleven books winning awards in this year's competition, and the only one from the field of education. Published in January 1997, it examines leadership from four perspectives: the person, the values, the structure, and the skills. The third edition added chapters on ethics, vision, school culture, quality work teams, and shared decision-making.