

A message from the editors

by Lisa Laurier and Lori Johnson

In our work as literacy educators in pre-service teacher education, we recognize that the concept of literacy is undergoing expansion. We have many opportunities to see these growing interpretations of literacy addressed in various ways. The traditional view of literacy as reading and writing has, in the 21st century, been expanded to include technological literacy, visual literacy, media literacy, math literacy, cultural literacy, and more. Common Core encourages this more comprehensive view of literacy as it folds content areas such as social studies and science into English Language Arts at the elementary level. In addition, the inclusion of standards that address speaking and listening emphasize the role that literacy plays in learning across subjects. Learning is a function of communication of ideas and communication requires effective oral and written skills so literacy, in that sense, is the basis for achievement in all disciplines. The ability to access information, process it and use it to solve a problem is a direct reflection of one's literacy. Our national affiliate, ASCD, recently published an article on financial literacy as yet another strand of literacy acquisition. With this broad view in mind, the articles contained in this edition of *Curriculum in Context* represent literacy from a variety of lenses.

- Michelle Ziminsky writes about her work as a literacy interventionist and how she sees her role in supporting classroom teachers and enhancing student success through the development of individualized curriculum.
- Laura DeMersseman shares the definition of visual literacy and how strategy instruction can enhance learning across disciplines. She also considers student voice and how ownership over one's learning can be supported.
- Kristin Souers presents her work in emotional literacy and its role in establishing resilience in the face of trauma.

- Hannah Gbenro provides an overview of implementation literacy as a vehicle to innovation.
- Julie Stannard reflects on her growth as a teacher of writing and her awareness that the developmental nature of literacy acquisition requires her to be flexible in identifying student needs and slowly supporting their growth. Her article on differentiated writing instruction speaks directly to the unique ways that children gain literacy independence.
- Val Laiho considers how her work as a 6th grade reading/English language arts teacher in a rotation setting prepared her to be effective in her current role as a literacy coach.
- Math literacy is a growing area of focus in educational research as it becomes more apparent that many children who are able to demonstrate skill in computational math lack conceptual understanding of how mathematics actually works. Math literacy focuses on student understanding of the ideas associated with all levels of math and how these connect and support effective problem-solving. Ryan Seidel's article addresses the importance of developing math literacy at the high school level along with strategies for classroom use.

It is our hope that as you read these articles, they will begin to illustrate the comprehensive nature of literacy and its role in ensuring the critical thinking and effective communication skills needed in the 21st Century, and provide a forum for you to reflect on your own work and ways in which you might expand your own view of literacy and your practice as a literacy educator.

The theme for the next journal will focus on *Data-Driven Decision Making to Improve Educational Outcomes for All Learners*.



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