



WASHINGTON STATE ASCD

Learn. Teach. Lead.

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Theme: Innovative Approaches to School and Learning

The spring issue of *Curriculum in Context* will focus on innovations in education and/or non-traditional school concepts. How are educators using engaging strategies that are project-, problem- or place-based? How are schools rethinking the idea of what it means to educate? How are hundred-years-old traditional conceptions of schools being challenged? How are we helping our students to cultivate vital 21st century skills such as critical thinking and the ability to collaborate, work independently and learn from feedback? These questions exemplify some but not all of the important pieces that may signify writing for this theme. Related topics under this theme that may contribute to the conversation include:

- Innovative school design
- Project-based learning
- Problem-based learning
- Place-based learning
- STEAM or STEM education
- Design Thinking
- Inquiry-based education
- Experiential learning

John Dewey in 1938 and Paulo Freire in 1970 published thoughts on re-imagining what it means to educate. Dewey argued for a "progressive" approach to education because he criticized the "traditional", which he likened to the "acquisition of what already is incorporated in books and in the heads of the elders" (19). Both writers argued that for critical thinking to happen in the classroom, a democratic framework must be in place so that students feel empowered to explore, to enter in discussion and debate, to experience that which speaks to where they are. Further, Freire contended that, "Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world and with each other" (2000, p. 72).

Pockets of classrooms and schools all over Washington State are challenging the traditional notion of schooling. WS ASCD readers would like to learn from these examples. *Curriculum in Context* is accepting articles that address Innovative Approaches to School and Learning. Please consider submitting a manuscript on this topic to Dr. Doreen Keller (dkeller@whitworth.edu). Potential articles submitted for the *Learn* section should be a current book review between 500 and 750 words and should include the APA reference for the book. Manuscripts for the *Teach and Lead* sections should be between 850 and 2500 words, focus on either the classroom (i.e., teacher) perspective or the leadership perspective, and include citations written in APA format.

References

- Dewey, John. (1938) *Experience and Education*. New York. Touchstone.
- Freire, Paulo (2000) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th anniversary edition. New York: Continuum Publishing Company.