
Editorial—

Off and Running

We are at the starting gate and ready to run with the 16th Annual Conference for the International Alliance for Invitational Education. “Inspiring Education Start to Finish,” the conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Lexington in Lexington, Kentucky October 15-18. The conference promises interesting and provocative programs with an outstanding array of speakers. If this issue of the JITP makes it out of the starting gate on time, the can serve as a last minute reminder to come and join with and share with your colleagues in Lexington.

This issue of the JITP offers an assortment of topics quite relevant to invitational education. David and Cheryl Aspy’s article, “The Self According to Allan Bloom and Charles Reich” examines the concept of self outside the normal parameters of theoreticians with whom we are more familiar. Bloom and Reich make social observations of forces which help shape who we are and who we become. This seems particularly apt at a time when some are beginning to raise questions about the oversimplification of self-concept theory that is becoming increasingly prevalent in much of the popular press. You probably will not find many answers in this thought provoking article, but it will challenge your thinking.

Closely related to the Aspys’ article is a contribution by Flora Roebuck, Gene Russell and Mack Wedel. In their presentation, “A Suggestion for Restoring Public Support for Public Schools: Learn to Invite Patrons”, the authors characterize schools as being not too different from many other bureaucracies in our culture which get caught up in their own agendas and become disinviting to those they would serve. The article is strong and poignant with a

riveting case example which will certainly make many pause and reflect.

Dawn Walker offers an observation of her own journey, personally and professionally, as an individual and as a teacher. She especially calls attention to the reciprocal effects of teachers on students, teachers on teachers, and students on teachers. Many of her observations, perhaps, will evoke the response, "Yes, I have been there as well" in many of our readers.

James Mahoney, a practicing school superintendent, makes a case for effective leadership in order to achieve more inviting schools. Not surprisingly, Mahoney recognizes the school superintendent leads, in part, by example in his contribution, "The Inviting School Superintendent." Mahoney draws of his own experiences as a school superintendent presenting some suggestions of how the superintendent can be more inviting and in the process help to make the school a more inviting environment.

Jack Schmidt and Christy Shields provide a follow-up of an earlier article by Schmidt, Shields and Ciechalski dealing with the Inviting-Disinviting Index. In their earlier article (Volume 5, Number 1, pp 31-42) they examined the validity and reliability of the Inviting-Disinviting Index. In "Integration of Guidance Lessons Using Invitational Concepts in a Friendship Curriculum," they describe a guidance program conducted by classroom teachers. The program utilizes invitational concepts to help students learn how to make and keep friends, and in this study with fifth-grade students Schmidt and Shields measured pre- and post-test results of the students with the Inviting-Disinviting Index.

We are in the starting gate and are ready to run. We hope to see you in Lexington in October. In the meantime, enjoy this issue of the JITP.

William B. Stafford
Editor