



Foreword

Here in New Hampshire, we struggled through a long and difficult winter this year followed by a spring that came on so quickly and forcefully that the world seemed changed overnight. From the moment the last snowflake melted, the daffodils at my doorstep seemed to grow like time-lapsed photography before my very eyes. The grass in the backyard went from matted and brown to upright and sparkling green in less than one week. So this year, in particular, I'm reminded of the power of transformation.

We've heard it before – change is scary. It's difficult. Change forces us out of our comfort zones and often requires a leap of faith. But change is also exciting. It's rejuvenating. It asks us to take a look at where we are and to move toward something even better. As a sign in the window of a local shop reads, “Spring reminds us how beautiful change can be.” In this regard, I can't help but reflect on the exciting and wholesale transformation taking place at Plymouth State University. As University President, Donald Birx, and co-author and professor, Annette Holba, explain, the university aspires to fundamentally change how we approach higher education. Through the innovative restructuring of both curriculum and administrative structure, PSU is leading the way toward a more truly integrative view of post-secondary teaching and learning.

Just as PSU is asking us to look at education differently, the other authors in this edition have shared their insights in hopes of inspiring changes in educational practice. In “How New Hampshire's Educators Can Stimulate Growth in Science”, author Thom Smith makes a plea to change how we educate new teachers in the field of science. And author Julie Grimm makes the case for introducing mindfulness and meditation into our educational practices while Tomkins and Ward share the benefits of a coaching model designed to improve the adoption of professional development initiatives. PSU authors Meyer, Sandy, and Everson ask us to reconsider the notion of conflict and explain how to use it constructively in the classroom.

There is no denying that social media has already changed classrooms at all levels of education. Authors Carrobbis and Harris offer suggestions on how schools can navigate this new medium,

highlighting the opportunity school leaders have to harness its power with a planned and managed approach to a school's online presence. Julie Moser writes about an online professional learning network leveraging technology to come together in the name of transforming their own teaching practices and improving student learning.

Sometimes we can see the impact of change on a grand scale, and sometimes it's measured by individual successes. In "Using Phonemic Awareness to Help Jade Crack the Code," author Karen Deighan tells the story of how one intervention helped a young English Language Learner begin to read. And Michelle Robinson writes of the powerful impact of a high school program designed to support all students in college and career preparation.

Whether using a new medium, adopting a new teaching practice, or advocating for educational reform, all of our authors are, in their own way, asking us to change – to transform our current understandings of what works in education and to reach for the future. I hope the stories in this edition of the *NHJE* inspire all educators to remain open to change and transformation in their own classrooms, schools, and organizations.

Sincerely,

Stacey Curdie, Co-Editor



Letter from Dean Mears

Welcome to this Edition of the *New Hampshire Journal of Education: Teaching Today: Pedagogy, Perspective, and Practice*. How exciting to see educators across all levels of education come together to consider pedagogical approaches designed to engage all learners and meet 21st Century needs. Initiatives such as STEM to STEAM, competency-based education; design thinking, innovative uses of technology, and the emphasis on team work attest to our understanding that we need to develop citizens who can deeply consider the implications of decisions and actions on multiple stakeholders, use technology to optimize outcomes, and work effectively with others to identify and implement the best approaches.

At PSU we are undergoing a major reorganization of our campus into Integrated Clusters to ensure all students are involved in authentic learning experiences that involve teams of students, faculty, staff and external partners. While students will continue to have major areas of study, their education will be enhanced by a focus on cross-disciplinary, project-based learning that helps students learn to integrate and analyze information across multiple disciplines. We understand that the complex issues our students will face post-graduation require the ability to look at examine issues from different perspectives, to work collaboratively in teams, and to integrate information across disciplines. We recognize that this pedagogical shift has been implemented in many p-12 districts and we want to continue this good work.

Education has moved from the transmission of information to shared learning experiences that involve students, educators and the community. Information is readily accessible and no longer the prime focus of education. Understanding, analysis, integration and effective application of knowledge is now required. Rows of chairs with a teacher in the front of the room represents of pedagogy that belongs to an earlier era (though many of our classrooms are still set up this way). We are struggling to make the transition from a model of education that imparts knowledge to a model of education that engages learners. Of course there is foundational knowledge that still needs to be mastered and developmental implications in terms of how to best structure and scaffold learning experiences, yet we are clearly in a shifting educational

environment. This shift calls for revisioning of our understanding about how to best support student learning. Information recall is still a necessary element but clearly not the heart of the educational journey.

As we move to align our pedagogical approaches to this new reality, many of us realize the need to rethink, retool, refresh and at times recreate our past practices. The *New Hampshire Journal of Education* brings us all into a professional learning community where we can share our ideas, strategies and concerns. I am honored that PSU continues to be an active member of this community and grateful to all of you who play a vital role in our shared learning. I want to particularly thank our journal co-editors Dr. True and Dr. Curdie and all of the contributing authors.

As always, I look forward to our continued collaborations!

Regards,

Gail Mears, Dean

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