ASCD in Action

New Program Helps Teachers Apply Cognitive Research

Late this spring ASCD will publish a new staff development program, Dimensions of Learning, by a team of authors who have been working on the project for more than three years. Designed to reflect recent cognitive research about the learning process, the Dimensions program incorporates numerous teaching strategies within a comprehensive model for planning instructional units.

The Dimensions model integrates the teaching of thinking with the teaching of content. Rather than teaching thinking skills for their own sake, teachers select strategies to help their students do the thinking associated with various kinds of learning. For example, if students have acquired introductory information about two new concepts that are alike in some ways and therefore could be confused, the teacher might clarify similarities and differences by having the students compare the concepts to one another. In Dimensions, "comparing" is one of eight strategies for "extending and refining" knowledge.

Senior authors Bob Marzano and Debra Pickering of the MidContinent Regional Education Laboratory, Aurora, Colorado, worked with educators in the Cherry Creek, Colorado, schools to develop draft materials for the program in 1987-89. Next, McREL and ASCD organized a consortium with some 80 participants from 17 different agencies who field-tested the materials and helped revise them at eight weekend meetings during the 1989-90 and 1990-91 school years. Final revisions have now been completed, and ASCD staff members are preparing the materials for publication.

When published, the Dimensions materials will include a trainer's manual, a teacher's manual, an implementation guide for administrators, and one or more videotapes. ASCD will provide detailed information about the program at the time of publication, and will offer opportunities for qualified educators to become trainers.



Student-initiated projects are part of the Dimensions model. These Glenview, Illinois, students provide feedback to one another.

To be placed on the mailing list for more information as it becomes available, write to Ron Brandt, Executive Editor, ASCD, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314 or Bob Marzano, McREL, 2550 S. Parker Rd., Suite 500, Aurora, CO 80014.

New Formats at Annual Conference

"Transforming Learning: Paradigms, Practices, and Possibilities," is the theme of the 1992 ASCD Annual Conference to be held in New Orleans, April 4-7. With more than 500 sessions to choose from, organized by strand, grade level, and subject area—including unique hands-on Action Labs and Technology Labs—participants will be able to obtain the information and explore the issues that they most care about.

Of special interest this year are exciting new meeting formats.

A **Curriculum Library** will allow folks to browse through on-line directories of the newest curriculum materials produced by agencies and institutions across the country.

The **Professional Development Strand Center** will bring together presenters and participants in informal small group discussions of innovative professional development practices. A Conference Facilitator will be on-hand to acquaint participants with presenters, materials, and with each other. Check the Conference Program for further details. Call ASCD headquarters for registration materials.



▼ *Take Action*

The **Global Education Network** provides communication links between educators concerned with global education issues. The Network promotes professional development in global education and works to develop worldwide collegiality. Contact facilitator:

Marilyn McKnight
Milwaukee Public Schools/Forest Home School, 5225 W. Vliet St.
Milwaukee, WI 53208
414-645-5200



▼ *Take Note*

The new *ASCD Curriculum Handbook* offers educators a one-stop source of authoritative information about curriculum policy and planning for mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts. In addition to the loose-leaf handbook, subscribers receive a resource database on computer diskette. A one-year subscription includes the *ASCD Curriculum Technology Quarterly* newsletter.

To order, call 703-549-9110. Price $325 before March 1, after March 1, $375. Stock # 611-91111.



▼ *For Your Calendar*

Upcoming Annual Conferences
1992, New Orleans, April 4-7
1993, Washington, D.C., March 27-30 (ASCD's 50th Anniversary)
1994, Chicago, March 19-22

Upcoming Mini-Conferences
January 15-17, 1992, *Developing a Cooperative Community: A Mini-Conference*, Orlando, Florida
January 22-24, *Assessing Student Thinking*, Austin, Texas

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