## Teacher Leadership:
THE SUPERINTENDENT IS ESSENTIAL
Especially During Tough Times

On January 29, 2010, Bob Maxfield and Kay Cornell presented a session at the annual mid-winter conference of the Michigan Association of School Administrators. Their presentation focused on the role of superintendents in supporting teacher leadership. Emphasis was placed on the need to grow and support teacher leadership in tough financial times. Many of the insights presented were drawn from a recent Galileo Institute study of principal perceptions of the importance of superintendent support for successful teacher leadership. A copy of the presentation power point is available on the Galileo Institute website.

GALILEO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS DISCUSS RESEARCH INITIATIVES OF THE INSTITUTE AT THEIR RECENT MEETING (Back Row, from left): Richard Repicky, Thomas Tattan, Mike Morawski, Twianie Roberts, C. Robert Maxfield, Christine Abbott, Lauren Childs, Robert Wiggins. Front Row: Priscilla Brouillette, Kay Cornell and Monica Eason. The next meeting of the Advisory Committee is May 7, 2010 at Meadow Brook Hall.
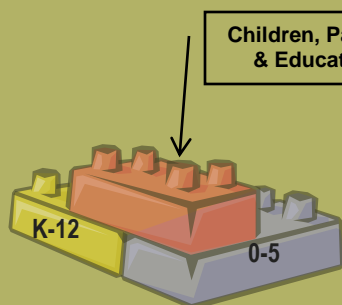
Extending the Galileo Reach to EC Leaders

Children, Parents & Educators

K-12   0-5

On Tuesday, February 9, the Galileo Institute is joining the Oakland University Early Childhood Department, Oakland Schools, and Great Start Oakland to continue the dialogue entitled "Building a Connected System". Teams from several Oakland County School Districts will learn more about the Galileo Teacher Leadership program, explore development of a Galileo-like program for early childhood educators, and identify ways to more effectively connect early childhood programs with all aspects of their school districts.

Let Data Be a Flashlight, Not a Hammer

The Data Quality Campaign recently released its report from its 2009 annual national survey. This foundation-funded agency in Washington, DC has identified the overarching imperatives for changing the culture around data use and maximizing states' infrastructure investments:

1. Expand the ability of state longitudinal data systems to link across the P–20 education pipeline and across state agencies;
2. Ensure that data can be accessed, analyzed and used, and communicate data to all stakeholders to promote continuous improvement; and
3. Build the capacity of all stakeholders to use longitudinal data for effective decision-making.
4. Establish a culture of trust among all who access and use the data by clearly defining the use of the information and demonstrating that the data are accurate and relevant.

Education data coming from a state education agency historically have not been very timely, user friendly or helpful to educators. However, as states are making progress toward creating longitudinal data systems designed for the end user, a change in culture is required so that data are viewed not as a hammer, but as a flashlight to illuminate areas of success and improvement.

GALILEO RESEARCH REVIEW:
CRITICAL EVENTS IN ACHIEVING STAFF SUPPORT FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL
By Richard M. Repicky, Jr.

Given the proper focus, professional learning communities (PLCs) are the most effective form of professional development. Current literature shows no other instructional model hitting as close to the mark of entrusting teachers to manage what they are teaching, how they are teaching, and what their students are learning.

As simple and noble as this rationale sounds for schools adapting a PLC model, there are significant hurdles that consistently arise to threaten the implementation of such promising practice. The simple, thus, becomes complex for a variety reasons, many rooted in the emotional resistance to change rather than in the logical acceptance of efficacy.

This work identifies many of these predictable problems as they appear in high schools and notes practices used in the four schools studied for overcoming these hurdles. In addition to the practical, the work also documents change theories that support a transition to a new system of solutions. The work focuses on answering three questions:

What are the benchmarks (essential structures and cultural indicators) that define a PLC?
1. What significant hurdles do high schools face in the PLC transformation process?
2. What change processes are effective in overcoming these obstacles?

In my decade of PLC work, the vast majority of PLC promoters have taken on this challenge for one simple purpose—to increase learning for students by developing efficacy in staff. Hoping to encourage the spread of this cause, this work is dedicated to helping PLC builders, particularly those working at the most challenging level of high school, to enter their work with their eyes opened to predictable hazards and their minds prepared with probable solutions.


BOOK TALK *with Kay Cornell, Education Consultant*

Productive Group Work
by Nancy Frey, Douglas Fisher and Sandi Everlove   ASCD, 2009

We know that learning is a social process and the best learning is collaborative. Yet many teachers still struggle with using groups in their classrooms. This book is a clear, concise guide to forming and norming groups, to teaching students collaboration skills and to dealing with problems when groups "go wrong." Not only do these skills motivate students and increase learning, but collaboration, communication and interpersonal skills are necessary if students are to be successful in their adult lives and careers. This easy-to-read, easy-to-use book will help teachers "engage students, build teamwork and promote understanding." From the back of the book: "The authors address the most frequently asked questions about group work, including the best ways to form groups and accommodate mixed readiness groups. Throughout, they build a case that productive group work is both an essential part of a gradual release of responsibility instructional model and a necessary part of good teaching practice." This is another book that would be a great book study for staff!!
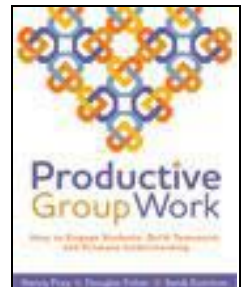
KEEPING UP WITH THE PODCASTS

Oakland University.
PODCASTS FOR
"Leaderful"
SCHOOLS

Recent podcasts have focused on successful examples of school reform in Canada and the United States. The interview with Dr. Bill Hogarth, Director of Education for the York Regional School Board in Ontario, described a very successful effort to align systems a large (110,000 students) diverse school district to improve student achievement, close achievement gaps, and empower staff at all levels. Michael Fullan has worked closely with the York district. Jay Mathews, education columnist for the Washington Post, provided interesting insights into urban school reforms, the Obama administration's education policies, and the remarkable impact of International Baccalaureate programs across the country.