Welcome to Dimensions Online, the electronic edition of FASCD’s monthly newsletter. In it, readers will find current news and information that pertain to our roles as instructional leaders in today’s schools and classrooms. You make a difference, and FASCD wants to support your work and your efforts.

Tom Lindsay, FASCD Executive Director

10 Recent Neuroscience Findings About Goals

2013 will soon be a memory, and 2014 confronts us with that time when we begin setting our annual goals, both personally and professionally. Recently, I read a very interesting article regarding goals and the brain. ([http://www.goalsontrack.com](http://www.goalsontrack.com)) The author cites 10 recent neuroscience findings related to goals.

1. Giving up a goal takes a psychological and physical toll.
2. Being more specific can help you reach your goal.
3. Our brains may have an internal guidance system for reaching goals.
4. Your inner voice is a potent goal-achievement tool.
5. Fist power could keep you from choking.
6. Sharing your goals with friends improves your chances of reaching them.
7. Over-motivation can undermine goal achievement.
8. And so can fantasizing.
9. And so can over-thinking.
10. Finally, try to stay optimistic.

It is a great website to join. Check out the complete article for specifics.

If you want to reach a goal, you must see the reaching in your own mind before you actually arrive at your goal. Zig Ziglar

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FASCD Welcomes New and Renewed Members

We would like to thank the following people for their new/renewed FASCD memberships for October. These are the names and spellings that I received from ASCD.

Michelle Thomas  Kathleen Oropollo  John Verner
Susan Taylor     Jeffrey Kaplan     Deanna Albert
William Halbleib Paula Ginn       Barbara Sistrunk
Sybille Oldham   David Langenmayr  Ariana Leonard
Rebecca Musselman Wendy Lane      Judy Muth
Christopher Amos Sherry Donaldson  Tery Medina
Tiffany Cantwell  Nongongoma Majova-Seane
Victoria Brioc   Nicole Huff-Robinson  Wendy Katz

Nominate an Outstanding Math or Science Teacher

Nominations for the 2014 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) are now open. Anyone -- principals, teachers, students, parents, or the public -- may nominate exceptional math or science teachers who are currently teaching grades K-6. Teachers may also self-nominate. The President bestows up to 108 awards each year. Since the program's inception, over 4,200 teachers have been recognized for their contributions in the classroom and to their profession. **Nominations close on April 1, 2014.**

Whole Child Tenets:

- Each student enters school **healthy** and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.
- Each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally **safe** for students and adults.
- Each student is actively **engaged** in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.
- Each student has access to personalized learning and is **supported** by qualified, caring adults.
- Each student is **challenged** academically and prepared for success in college or further study and for employment and participation in a global environment.

The Whole Child Initiative
Rick Hess to Speak at ASCD’s 2014 Leadership Institute for Legislative Advocacy

ASCD has announced that education policy expert and ASCD author Rick Hess will present the keynote address at the 2014 Leadership Institute for Legislative Advocacy. Hess will share his perspective on school improvement, the Common Core State Standards, and more. The conference will be held January 26-28, 2014, in Washington D.C. Attendees will take part in sessions that build their advocacy skills, visit Capitol Hill to meet with federal lawmakers, and more. Learn more and register now.

Early Education for All

The latest edition of ASCD’s Capitol Connection newsletter provides details about new legislation that seeks to help states provide high-quality preschool to low- and moderate-income families. The bipartisan legislation would also increase the quality of infant and toddler care in center-based and family child care settings. In this edition, you’ll also find results from The Nation’s Report Card.

How Will Schools Be Affected by the Federal Health Care Law?

At a recent congressional hearing intended to determine the effect -- if any -- of the federal health care law on K-12 schools and colleges, lawmakers largely were divided along party lines. Republicans said that to meet the requirements of the health care law, schools could be forced to cut staff and programming and make other cuts, while Democrats, for the most part, said they believed those claims were overstated. Education Week (premium article access compliments of EdWeek.org)

Obama Announces Grant Program That Connects Students With Careers

President Barack Obama announced Nov. 19 the launch of Youth CareerConnect -- a competitive program that would award as many as 40 grants next year for initiatives intended to overhaul high schools to align students’ skills with industry needs. The grants would support high schools working with institutions of higher education and employers, as well as innovative programs to teach job skills. Politico

U.S. Department of Education Announces 31 Applications as Finalists for $120 Million Race to the Top - District Competition

The U.S. Department of Education announced today that 31 applications have been selected as finalists for the Race to the Top-District (RTTT-D) competition. The 2013 RTTT-D program will provide close to $120 million to support locally developed plans to personalize and improve student learning, directly increase student achievement and educator effectiveness, close achievement gaps, and prepare every student for success in college and careers.

In late October, the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics (WHIEEH) launched its monthly webinar series. These webinars aim to highlight "Bright Spots" throughout the country and connect national and local leaders on federal programs and initiatives, relevant policy issues, and evidence-based practices benefiting the Hispanic community. Invitations for future webinars will be sent through the WHIEEH listerv.

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) funds tuition-free summer programs for school and college educators. Participants receive stipends to help cover travel and living expenses. Programs are held across the U.S. and abroad. These one- to five-week study opportunities focus on important topics, texts, and questions in the humanities; enhance the intellectual vitality and professional development of participants; build a community of inquiry and provide models of excellent scholarship and teaching; and promote connections between teaching and research in the humanities. The deadline for applications is March 4, 2014

“Dealing with Burnout, Which Doesn’t Always Stem from Overwork”

Do you ever find yourself feeling like this? If so, check out the New York Times article at http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/30/your-money/a-solution-to-burnout-that-doesnt-mean-less-work.html?_r=0
Teacher language influences students’ identities as learners. It is one of our most powerful teaching tools. Think back to your experiences as a student and recall the voices of your favorite and your least favorite teacher. What kinds of words did they use? What was the tone of their voices? Teacher language permeates every aspect of teaching. Our language can lift students to their highest potential or tear them down. It can help build positive relationships or encourage discord and distrust. It shapes how students think and act and, ultimately, how they learn.

How can we ensure that our language supports our students’ learning and helps create a positive, respectful community?

1. Be direct. When we say what we mean and use a kind, straightforward tone, students learn that they can trust you. Avoid indirect language. Comparative language can damage student relationships, e.g. “I like the way Brian and Tim are sitting.”

2. Convey faith in students’ abilities and intentions. Then students are more likely to live up to our expectations of them. Take the time to notice and comment on positive behavior, being quite specific. Such observations give students hard evidence for what they should believe in themselves.

3. Focus on actions, not abstractions. Focusing on actions also means pointing to the desired behaviors rather than labeling the learner’s character or attitude.

4. Keep it brief. Students understand more when we speak less.

5. Know when to be silent. The skillful use of silence can be just as powerful as the skilled use of words. When teachers use silence, we create a space for students to think, rehearse what to say, and sometimes gather the courage to speak at all.

When teachers incorporate these five principles of language into their daily communication with students, classrooms are built where students feel safe, respected, and engaged. By paying attention to our language, we can use it to open the doors of possibility for students.


This seminal book has the potential to change the way we think about teaching and learning. Run, don’t walk, to get a copy. This is essential in every educator’s professional library. Check out bestwebbuys.com to buy your books! It is my favorite and does all the price comparisons for you.
Legislative Action Center

Tell Congress to undo cuts in core programs like Title I and IDEA

President Obama will shortly sign into law the NEA-supported Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, which replaces $63 billion in sequester cuts this year and next. How the money will be divvied up is still to be determined. America’s most vulnerable students have borne a disproportionate share of the sequester cuts. To help mitigate the damage, this week NEA joined the American Federation of Teachers, American Association of School Administrators, Council of the Great City Schools, and National Schools Boards Association in urging the appropriators crafting the Labor-HHS-Education and other funding bills (the current stopgap spending law expires Jan. 15) to make undoing the cuts in core formula grant programs that benefit students most in need, like Title I and IDEA, a top priority.

TAKE ACTION TODAY! – Tell Congress to restore funding for core formula grant programs like Title I and IDEA.

*** If you know of other professionals in your school that are currently not members, please pass this information along and encourage them to join and share their expertise, too. We are only as strong as our membership to make a difference in teaching, learning, and leading here in Florida. Membership forms are on the FASCD website at http://www.fascd.org. FASCD Strong!

Until we meet again……Tom

“Apples are fine, but I find today’s teacher prefers a nice latte.”

Anderson