# Clearinghouse on Educational Policy and Management

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ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT *INFORMATION*

**Fall 1999**     **University of Oregon - Eugene**

# Student Motivation

## Book Seeks to Cultivate a Love of Learning

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"This book makes the case that young children's natural motivation to learn will survive only in schools where the curriculum is worth learning and teachers help students see why it is worth learning; where students focus on learning (not on competition or grades); and where students feel valued, and therefore are disposed to care about the school's values, including learning.

"After reading this volume, it will be hard to think about 'motivation' without seeing it as the very heart of education, and without thinking about the important, well-taught curriculum, close, supportive relationships, and high expectations that are its foundation."

*—From the Foreword by Catherine Lewis*

*Developmental Studies Center*

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This latest book from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management explores the question of why children who start out with a lively curiosity about the world often lose their excitement for learning as they move through the schools. Looking for a way to reverse this trend, Linda Lumsden offers strategies for increasing student motivation at the classroom and school levels.

In chapter 1, "What Is Student Motivation?," Lumsden examines theories behind the concept of motivation and introduces terms and concepts key to understanding motivation. She points out that

> Nearly all decisions about schooling, whether made in the school board chamber, the central office, the principal's office, or the classroom—even decisions about policies and procedures that seem remotely related to instruction and learning—have an effect, intended or not, on students' motivation to learn. Without some grounding in motivational concepts and how they apply to the classroom, however,

administrators, educators, and policy-makers may remain unaware of the motivational implications of many of their decisions.

Lumsden argues that teachers and administrators must send a consistent message to students concerning the value of effort and active engagement in learning.

In a lucid examination of the various ways of conceptualizing student motivation, Lumsden covers extrinsic versus intrinsic orientations, mastery versus performance goals, the meaning of *motivation to learn,* and the distinction between learning and performance. She also describes the role of psychosocial development and the importance of students' self-perceptions of their ability and competence.

In chapter 2, "Caring and High Expectations," Lumsden emphasizes the integral relationship between students' motivation to learn and their perception that adults care about them in the school environment.

Caring is "the one element that appears to most strongly influence whether school is a place" students enjoy. This point is movingly and convincingly made in Lumsden's review of studies that have solicited students' perspectives on their schools and teachers. "The nature of students' relationships with teachers is central to what makes school appealing or distasteful, inviting or uninviting," Lumsden concludes.

This chapter also explores the importance of high expectations. Lumsden summarizes research showing that teens yearn for order, structure, and moral authority; that they equate hard work with success and satisfaction; and that they resent teachers who imply that some work is too difficult for them. One way the best teachers care for students is to set strong expectations for them to live up to.

In chapter 3, "Perspectives of Practitioners," two teachers (one elementary and one high school) and a principal offer practical advice gained through their "real world" interactions with students in the classroom.

For example, Cindy Boyd, who teaches math at Abilene (Texas) High School, plans lessons that "present the material through a variety of sensory modalities—visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and so forth—to reach the whole range of learning styles represented in her classroom."

Chapter 4, "Classroom Considerations," focuses on classroom-level factors affecting student motivation. These include a supportive and respectful climate, less competitive environment, meaningful and relevant content, challenging and varied assignments, substantive feedback, and positive peer relations.

Chapter 5, "Schoolwide Strategies," identifies actions that can be taken at the school level to encourage student motivation. Lumsden recommends steps school leaders can take to complement the work of teachers in their classrooms. She examines the role of student-recognition programs, resource allocation, evaluation practices, scheduling decisions, school size, and the organization of curriculum.

Finally, the conclusion notes that although teachers and schools can do much to draw out students' sometimes dormant passion for learning, ultimately teachers

and administrators can perhaps best serve students by helping them to find their own good reasons to learn.

## New on the Web

In recent weeks we have added the following new content and features:

Profiles of five new organizations to the online Directory of Organizations in Educational Management. (Current total: 158 organizations)

Full text of five new *ERIC Digests:*

- "Performance Contracts for Administrators"

- "Implementing Whole-School Reform"

- "Equity and Adequacy in Educational Finance"

- "Holding Schools Accountable for Achievement"

- "School-Based Budgeting"

  (Current total: 53 titles)

New or revised discussions of these *Trends and Issues* topics:

- Instructional Personnel

- Relationships with the Community

Full text of one new *Research Roundup:*

- "Accountability"

  (Current total: 9 titles)

An online ordering form gives you the option of placing your order for publications from the website using Visa or MasterCard. Until the end of the year, you can receive a 10 percent discount off the single-copy price when you order online. See the order form at right.

Finally, please use the customer satisfaction survey to give us feedback on how well we are meeting your needs.

## New PBL Project: Managing Technological Change

Without a doubt the rate of technological change will continue at a frenetic pace into the new millennium. By the year 2006, the Bureau of Labor predicts that more than 1.9 million jobs will exist in the information technology sector

alone. To fill this need, more than one million new information-technology workers will be needed.

These statistics reflect just the tip of the iceberg, however, for countless workers who are not considered technology specialists must be adept at using various forms of technology on a daily basis. In response to our culture's growing reliance on technology, now more than ever schools must have a comprehensive, coherent plan for implementing new learning technologies.

To address this issue, the Clearinghouse recently added a fifth title to its lineup of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Projects. Copublished by ERIC/CEM and the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL), *Managing Technological Change* asks students to assume the role of a principal who is confronted with how best to implement new learning technologies.

Designed for use in administrator training, PBL Projects are the basic unit of instruction in a PBL curriculum.

Prepared by Philip Hallinger of Vanderbilt University and Joseph Slowinski and Brenda Rodriguez of NCREL, the project deals not only with issues such as staff resistance and budgetary constraints, but also explores new models for using technology in schools, the implications of technology for instruction and learning, the role technology can play in restructuring, and the development of a long-term technology plan that takes into account the needs of students, teachers, and parents.

Like other projects in the PBL series, *Managing Technological Change* consists of eight separate components. An introduction explains the project, followed by the presentation of the problem itself. Learning objectives for the project are stated, and students are presented with resources that facilitate the project. "Product specifications" detail what should be included in the performance or product the students present at the culmination of the project. Guiding questions direct students to key concepts presented through the project.

Assessment exercises provide students an opportunity to make suggestions for improving the project. Finally, time constraints give students a more realistic sense of the need to set priorities.

Both student and instructor editions are available.

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*Managing Technological Change*
by Philip Hallinger, Joseph Slowinski, and Brenda Rodriguez • 1999

*Instructor Edition:* ISBN: 0-86552-145-X

46 pages plus 6 pages Teaching Note
$7.50 • Code: EPRTCI

*Student Edition:* ISBN: 0-86552-146-8
46 pages • $7.00 • Code: EPRTCS

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