



# Connections

## the Journal of the National School Reform Faculty

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The National School Reform Faculty welcomes you to the NSRF journal, *Connections*. This journal will provide an ongoing opportunity for reflective educators to share their practice in a most public forum.

**Please return frequently to watch for the release of our next issue.**



### About this issue, from editor Dave Lehman - Spring 2010

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This spring issue of Connections our second on-line issue, is largely devoted to protocols. The Interview section is about the unique opportunity provided by having an author in this case Debbie Meier available for text-based discussions, the Book Reviews are about two great books dealing with multiple uses of protocols with students, elementary and secondary. We would love to hear from you about your uses, modifications, and different experiences using protocols. If you have stories to share, and particularly examples of using protocols with students, please let us know.

Dave Lehman

Editor, Connections

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Connections  
the Journal of the National School Reform Faculty  
Spring 2010

**Book Review**

*By Laura Marshall*



*“Tools for Leaders: Indispensable Graphic Organizers, Protocols, and Planning Guidelines for Working and Learning Together”*

*By Marjorie Larner*

*New York Scholastic Inc., 2007*

*([click here](#) to view protocols discussed in this article)*

Marjorie Larner is a former teacher and administrator who is currently Site Coordinator for University Partnerships at the Denver Center for International Studies, International Studies Schools Network Consultant, and Co-Director of Colorado Critical Friends Group.



Marjorie is the author of two other books - Pathways: Charting a Course for Professional Learning (Heinemann 2004), and "Access to Power: From School to Life," in a collection, The Right to Literacy in Secondary Schools: Creating a Culture of Thinking (TC Press 2008).

This concise, compact, ready to photocopy guidebook, written for the leaders of "professional learning communities" (PLCs), is a gift to the fast-paced life of school improvement advocates.

My own experience as a teacher and school improvement leader in a "low-performing" school is that change is constant and we must be "sharpening the saw" (as Steven Covey puts it) every year in order to keep up with the demands placed upon us and to improve programs for the good of children. As a trained CFG Coach, I have also seen the effectiveness of using teacher-created and teacher-tested protocols, sensitivity/awareness activities and data analysis guidelines. Without these protocols for guidance, it was at times difficult to see past our own biases and frustrations. We are human, after all, and even with the best of intentions we may not be able to see what is best for kids without a little prompting.

Marjorie, as a staff developer, former teacher and administrator from Colorado, and as co-director of the Colorado Critical Friends Group, has included tried and true protocols, graphic organizers, readings, and planning guides, all in one 175-page package. No need to browse several websites or school improvement textbooks for the tools you need; it's all right here! Included are activities for setting the tone for school change and for beginning the fragile, but necessary conversations with your staff. There are exercises for improving staff ability to listen to one another, promote healthy working relationships, examine data, and to solve issues and dilemmas that inevitably arise.

Marjorie has written this text with the trademark NSRF focus on embracing diversity and creating student-centered learning environments. Some of my favorite protocols from the CFG training are included, such as: Diversity Rounds, Probing Questions, Consultancy, Futures, and the Tuning protocol. Some samples follow this Review.

We at my school will be using this guide this spring to re-evaluate the function of the PLC's in our school and to revise our norms and protocols for our Site Council for the 2010-11 school year.

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## Book Review



*By Dave Lehman*



*“The Power of Protocols: An Educator’s Guide to Better Practice” 2nd Edition*

*By Joseph McDonald, Nancy Mohr, Alan Dichter, and Elisabeth McDonald*

*Teachers College Press, Columbia University., 2007*

Joseph P. McDonald is Professor of Teaching and Learning at New York University’s Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development. The late Nancy Mohr was Director of the New York Center of the National School Reform Faculty. Alan Dichter is on the staff of the New York City Leadership Academy and is a former New York City Deputy Superintendent for School Reform and Leadership Development. Elisabeth C. McDonald is a Master Teacher in the Department of Teaching and Learning at New York University’s Steinhardt School and a former elementary school principal.

This updated, Second Edition of *The Power of Protocols* is a must for anyone facilitating a CFG, and particularly for those beginning any professional development activities. It is usefully organized into five chapters – 1) *The Basic Ideas*, which explains what protocols are, why they’re needed, and how “facilitative leadership” works; 2) *Facilitating*, with advice, step-by-step activities, and an introduction to the format for using protocols; 3) *Tapping Outside Sources*, with protocols on how to explore others’ writings and advice from outside “experts;” 4) *Working on Problems of Practice*, including protocols for problem-solving, planning, and other kinds of on-the-job learning, using artifacts and experiences from teachers’ own practice; and 5) *Exploring Student Work*, from many

different perspectives – with a concluding section: Jumping In; and two Appendices: Suggested Uses for Protocols, and Additional Resources; a section on References; and a quick-guide Index.

The authors, all steeped in professional development and CFG facilitating, emphasize that “at its heart, facilitating is about promoting participation, ensuring equity, and building trust.” They go on to note that “...protocols are deliberately designed with these tasks in mind, while most other meeting formats are rife with opportunities for ignoring them.” We are all too familiar with the faculty “meeting” where the Principal delivers a monologue while staff grade papers and check their e-mail, or the “discussion” in which two or three staff typically dominate and others tune-out. Protocols are designed to meaningfully engage all members of a faculty, to hear all voices, and to address real issues in collaborative, productive processes.

Lastly, in the back of the book, on a page which might be easily overlooked (although there is mention of this in the Preface), is a valuable reference to “FREE Abbreviated Protocols” on-line. These are “...designed to be used after you have read the full descriptions in the book. They are not designed to be used as stand-alone guides, nor do they contain all the information necessary to successfully conduct a session.” Readers are encouraged to “customize” these to suit their own professional staff development needs, adding notes, varying the times, adding or deleting steps, and posing provocative questions, making them useful to each facilitator’s own context. You can find them at [www.tcpress.com](http://www.tcpress.com) where there is a list of Teachers College Press books. Scroll down to The Power of Protocols, and simply click there on the word “Protocols.”

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**Interview with Participants from the “Building Collaborative Learning Communities” Leadership Seminar in Bloomington, Indiana, Nov. 2009 and March 2010**



*By Michele Mattoon*

The National School Reform Faculty’s National Center, just completed a Leadership Seminar in Bloomington, Indiana. This training focused on

teaching participants how to increase student achievement through collaborative learning communities. By the end of the training, participants learned to improve student learning, create equity in the classroom, increase efficient, effective communication and enhance personal performance through the use of protocols and reflective practice. The seminar was led by Dave Lehman, the Interim Director of NSRF and Michele Mattoon, the Training Coordinator for NSRF. This was an open training, so educators came from such places as California, Texas, Florida and Alabama to attend, as well as some teachers from Harmony School in Bloomington.

This particular seminar was unique. One of our themes was “Democracy in Schools” and we were privileged to have Debbie Meier, a well-known educational reformer, writer and activist, as an integral part of the seminar. She gave an inspiring keynote speech the first day, and, using NSRF protocols that are used for in-depth text-based discussions, we discussed several of her writings, particularly related democracy in the school setting, with Debbie present and participating in the conversation, entering at various points throughout each protocol as the Participants discussed each writing. The following are responses from two of the participants, reflecting particularly on this unique involvement of an author in having text-based discussions.

**NSRF** - Please tell us your name, where you're from and what you do.



**Phu Tranchi** - Principal of General Studies at Shalhevet School in Los Angeles; I also teach science.



**Kaethe Perez** – University of Florida, Lastinger Center for Learning Facilitator, working mainly in the Pinellas County School District, in Largo Florida; I also work with a UF Professor in Residence to support the school district as they develop and deepen an understanding of active, engaged instruction, teacher inquiry, effective professional learning communities, and how those elements foster improved teacher learning and teacher practice.

**NSRF** - Was this seminar a worthwhile experience? In what ways?

**Phu** - The NSRF Seminar was a tremendous experience for several reasons. First of all, having Debbie Meier present was incredible. She is such a massive figure in education and to have her join us in a small group

setting was a true privilege. I am very excited about what I learned and look forward to implementing Critical Friends in my school. I have no doubt that it will have a profound impact on our education. The faculty who I have started to train are very positive about the nature of the collaboration and eager anticipate learning more. I really enjoyed the practical approach of the seminar, where we were forming a CFG among the participants without even realizing it. The way that we went through the protocols effectively modeled how relationships can be developed among educators in a school, while giving the participants the confidence to facilitate at our own schools. Finally, I thought that we had a very special group of educators in attendance and I felt honored to spend the time together, learning from and inspiring each other.

**Kaethe** - I appreciated the seminar format of three days, followed by a few months break, followed by a two day follow-up. This stretched-out format gave me time to 'settle in' to the philosophy, try out various protocols, and integrate the work into my current program. Fortunately, I have the support of UF Lastinger faculty and facilitators who have had this NSRF experience, either first hand in a five day seminar, or in co-facilitating with NSRF facilitators and coaches in the UF network.

Coming to the seminar helped me understand the underlying philosophy of NSRF, that a quest for equity and democracy drives this work. Giving voice to and empowering teachers and leaders to study their practice systematically and within conversational structures provides leverage, which assists development of collegial relationships. This in turn strengthens the professional practice of teaching and learning in classrooms, team meetings, school staffs and districts. In a prior educational role, I became certified as a trainer in another program that uses strategies to build resiliency, long term relationships, and community. While the protocol aspect of the NSRF seminar has some similarities, I can now better appreciate that the mission and message of NSRF is one of equity and democracy.

**NSRF** - How was it having Deborah Meier in the seminar as a keynote speaker, an author of texts that were discussed, and a participant?

**Phu** - As mentioned above, it was an absolute thrill to just have her present, never mind participating with us throughout the sessions. She is so prolific and still providing us with novel insights to democratic education. The fact that we could discuss her texts with her present to clarify and expand upon her work was such a unique opportunity. Her sense of humor around what she was thinking when she wrote some the pieces was relieving because we tend to be so serious about what we are doing all the time. She reminded us that it is just as important to enjoy leisure and to have fun with what we do. Again, it was such a great privilege.

**Kaethe** - Deb's experiences and passion for her life's work in education was the exclamation point on the seminar!! Having the author of many of the texts used in the text-based protocols gave additional depth to our conversations. She is not the least bit shy in challenging the status quo in small group discussions which pushed me to deepen my thinking about equity within and outside the educational system.

Deb's life wisdom is inspirational, as is her zealous return time and time

again to equity and democracy, the underpinning philosophy of NSRF. In one of our small group conversations, I had an 'AHA' moment when Deb emphasized that NSRF is not about protocols, that the protocols are a vehicle that can empower equity and democracy of voice, whether administrator, teacher or student.

**NSRF** - Were you able to use what you learned back at your school? Would you like to share any successes or roadblocks?

**Phu** - I have started to implement some of the CFG protocols successfully with two specific groups so far. My primary focus is on training our Educational Leadership Team, composed of department chairs and other administrators involved in our educational program. We have established an environment of safety within critique and learned a lot more about each other in the process. We recently completed our first consultancy protocol, which spawned one of the most profound conversations I've ever had about education in the ten years I've been at this school. I'm trying to be patient about getting this out to the faculty as a whole, though I've used some of the meeting protocols with them. I also trained some student leaders to facilitate sessions with students and teachers using some of the protocols, which was amazing to watch. I envision different CFGs being used throughout the school and at all levels eventually.

**Kaethe** - Successes: In Pinellas County Schools, we provided job-embedded professional development with 19 elementary schools, facilitated school leadership institutes, coaching academies, principal institutes, and are now partnering with the district to redesign professional development. Since the NSRF seminars I stepped up to the plate, offering to build the original agenda for a follow-up combined regional principal meeting, thinking both about the content objectives as well as the most appropriate protocols to bring an equity of voice to the work. The original agenda then became a 'weather-vane', so to speak, when emailed locally to our colleagues in Gainesville and Miami for their well-respected input. After a few iterations, the facilitator group met face-to-face to finalize and strategically think through the agenda, keeping in mind the original objectives, the participants, and the flow of the day.

Challenges: In this principal meeting, I had included a well-received protocol demonstrated at the NSRF two day follow-up (Penny for your Thoughts), as well as a protocol from the NSRF website newsletter. Dave Lehman has written a Two-minute Consultancy which we used to gather feedback about the district PD redesign from this group of 80+ principals. I realized halfway through the protocol that table groups of five or six could sustain the silence and give good written feedback. The larger table groups of 8-10 were losing energy fast – so I gave a moment of 'energy release', and encouraged groups to keep passing their question page around. Implication for future work? The size of the group and the purpose of the task need careful consideration!

**NSRF** - What is one thing that has stuck with you about this seminar?

**Phu** - Wow, it's hard to delineate the one thing that stuck with me because there were so many great things. I guess what continues to resonate with me is how dramatically you can improve school culture through the CFG



approach. It makes so much sense, but unfortunately remains very counter-intuitive in schools. Education must continue to evolve and I hope that CFGs will be a part our development.

**Kaethe** - Dave and Michele were excellent models of facilitation. Most important was the transparency of facilitation moves that both of them drew to our attention. I appreciate so much more the power of co-facilitation – the dance – which strengthens the work to be accomplished. Lots of pre-planning, time to review and revise the original agenda, debriefing at the end of each day to prepare the best agenda for tomorrow – all these things were modeled with patience and poise. This seminar helped me realize my role as an NSRF coach is to be the frame/support for the participants to actualize their empowerment towards improved professional practice. When I can provide the most well-thought out agenda and protocol(s) for a particular group, the group itself grows and deepens in their practice.

NSRF - Any other comments?

**Phu** - As we look to continue to reform education to benefit our students, it is important to develop strategies for benefiting teachers. It is very clear that there is no better way to improve schools than to ensure that teachers have the opportunity to learn and develop ourselves. From my brief experience with CFG strategies, I can vouch for the efficacy of this approach to developing professional learning communities. I've not seen educators so genuinely excited about the prospect of professional development. The intent of the approach comes across and disarms teachers when they can see that it is so clearly directed at their benefit and consequently their students. I've enjoyed a very memorable experience that will remain with me. I hope to always promote and be involved in a Critical Friends Group for the rest of my career.



**Kaethe** - I am so fortunate to have a local support system which includes Don Pemberton, director of the UF Lastinger Center and Sylvia Boynton, my colleague in Pinellas County. It was Sylvia who recommended I attend this seminar, which she had attended a few years ago in Tampa. I am grateful to be working with two Florida NSRF Facilitators, Pete Bermudez and Magdi Castaneda, who are UF Lastinger faculty members. Bottom line: you can read the website, you can attend meetings and workshops where these protocols are used, but to experience the full seminar with the focus on equity and democracy – this has helped me refine my own practice. Thank you.

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## “Reflecting on ‘Democratic Communities’ and What It Means to be a Democratic Citizen’ in the 21st Century”



*By Dave Lehman, NSRF Interim Director*

““Democratic living is not given in nature, like gold or water. It is a social construct, like a skyscraper, school playground, or new idea...Democratic citizens are constructs, too.” (from *Teaching Democracy: Unity and Diversity in Public Life* by Walter C. Parker)

Our NSRF mission statement includes the phrase “...empowering all people involved with schools to work collaboratively in reflective democratic communities.” So what does that mean?, what does that look like?, what are students and teachers doing in a “democratic community?”, particularly the students? Specifically, what are the skills, attitudes, and knowledge they will need to become empowered, not only within their school communities, but in their greater communities? What are the skills, attitudes, and knowledge needed for global citizens in the 21st century?

Carl Glickman (one of the conveners of the Forum for Education and Democracy), in a February 2008 essay entitled, “Closing the Participation Gap: A Thought Piece,” noted – “There are strong indicators that participatory democracy in America is in a state of grave decline.” He went on to add – “Connections to civic and religious groups are fewer; people are less connected to family and friends, more Americans live alone; people are less informed about public affairs; and trust in key institutions is low. Disturbingly, the decline in all these categories has been most pronounced among people with the least education.”

In a similar vein, Paul Woodruff (Professor in Ethics and American Society and Distinguished Teaching Professor in the Department of Philosophy, The University of Texas at Austin), in the “Afterword” to his book, *First Democracy: The Challenge of An Ancient Idea*, 2005, states – “...the United States seems to be moving away from ideal democracy” and asks the question – “Are Americans ready for democracy?” He then goes on to summarize the seven key ideas of his book asking a series of provocative questions that, as educators concerned about educating our

young people for global citizenship, we should consider:

1) Freedom from Tyranny (And from Being a Tyrant) – “...can chief executives be accountable and still effective?, must political parties always seek tyrannical powers?”

2) Harmony – “What is causing the climate of political anger than now appears to divide the country, and what steps can we take to moderate it?”

3) The Rule of Law – “Can the United States take on the unique dangers of policing troubled parts of the world and protect its own people while still observing the rule of law both at home and abroad?”

4) Natural Equality – “Can the United States reduce the political advantages of wealth?”

5) Citizen Wisdom – “How can the wisdom of citizens guide the state on decisions of increasing complexity?”

6) Reasoning Without Knowledge – “Can we employ free, open, and honest adversary debate in the service of good decision making?”

7) Education (Paideia) – “Will education merely train people for jobs?, Will education in the United States divide people into dogmatic groups, each bound on forcing its views upon the others?, Can a renewal of reverence give us the ability to see what is wrong with religious movements that claim to speak with the voice of God?, and Can education bring the people of the United States together around shared values, such as justice and reverence?”

In the Foreword to the 2010 book, *The Art of Creating A Democratic Learning Community*, by Sam Chaltain (Director of the Forum for Education and Democracy and Founding Director of the Five Freedoms Project), Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor reminds us – “... our public education system [is] the only institution in the United States that engages 90 percent of the next generation of adults, is governed by public authority, and has the explicit mission to prepare people for the rights and responsibilities of democratic citizenship.” She goes on to note, sadly, that “... the average American is more likely to know the five members of the Simpsons cartoon family than the five freedoms of the First Amendment.” Justice O'Connor closes her Foreword with this call to action – “Public education is a vitally important solution to preserving an independent judiciary and maintaining a robust constitutional democracy.... And for each student who is educated in intellectually engaging ways, we will gain the greatest strength a democratic society must have: an informed and engaged citizen able to think freely and independently and contribute to society as a whole.”

Lastly, by way of introduction, (Chinese born Michigan State University Distinguished Professor at the College of Education), Yong Zhao, in his 2009 book, *Catching Up or Leading the Way: American Education in the Age of Globalization*, says he realized in preparing initially to write about China's efforts to decentralize curriculum and textbooks, diversify assessment and testing, and encourage local autonomy and innovations in order to cultivate creativity and well-rounded talents – “...that what China

wants is what America [with its current overemphasis on standardized tests and prescriptive curricula] is eager to throw away – an education that respects individual talents, supports divergent thinking, tolerates, deviation, and encourages creativity; a system in which government does not dictate what students learn or how teachers teach; and a culture that does not rank or judge the success of a school, a teacher, or a child based on only test scores in a few subjects determined by the government.”

In the 2008 book by Tony Wagner (Co-Director of the Change Leadership Group at Harvard Graduate School of Education), *The Global Achievement Gap - with the provocative subtitle, “Why Even Our Best Schools Don’t Teach the New Survival Skills Our Children Need, And What We Can Do About It,”* - he poses the essential question for us: “What, then, does it mean in today’s world to be an active and informed citizen, and how does a democratic society best educate for citizenship?”



The following are some of the kinds of answers that have been developed to that question. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills provided the following framework of “skills, knowledge and expertise” a student should master to work and live in the 21st century:

- 1) core subjects
- 2) learning and innovations skills
- 3) information, media, and technology skills
- 4) life and career skills

Likewise the Metiri Group, a consulting firm in California, produced the following similar framework for the North Central Regional Laboratory:

- 1) digital-age literacy
- 2) inventive thinking
- 3) effective communication

4) high productivity and quality, state-of-the-art results

And the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union outlined the following combination of eight key competences of knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed in the 21st century in order to “adapt flexibly to a rapidly changing and highly interconnected world:”

- 1) communication in the mother tongue
- 2) communication in foreign languages
- 3) mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
- 4) digital competence
- 5) learning to learn
- 6) social and civic competences
- 7) sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- 8) cultural awareness and expression

To return to our original authors above, Tony Wagner identifies what he calls “seven survival skills for teens today:”

- 1) critical thinking and problem solving
- 2) collaboration across networks and leading by influence
- 3) agility and adaptability
- 4) initiative and entrepreneurialism
- 5) effective oral and written communication
- 6) accessing and analyzing information
- 7) curiosity and imagination

Carl Glickman takes a somewhat different tact in identifying five “aspects of educating for citizenship:”

- “1) Education should build upon student interest.
- 2) Schools and school programming should reflect the fact that students need to examine, challenge, and improve upon conventional assumptions.
- 3) Education should enable students the capacity and choice to work and participate in communities different from the community of one’s birth.
- 4) Schools should be intellectually challenging places and involve students, faculty,

parent/caregivers, and community members in decision making.

5) Schools need to use a pedagogy of democracy throughout classrooms.”

And Yong Zhao in a section of his book with the heading – “Teaching Global Competencies: What Schools Can Do” – he outlines the following qualities of global competency:

“... To live in the increasingly globalized world, citizens need to be able to competently negotiate cultural differences and manage multiple identities, comfortably interact with people from different cultures, and confidently move across cultures as well as the virtual and physical world.” From here he goes on to describe three crucially important skill and attitudes:

“To do so, they need a global perspective – a deep understanding of the interconnectedness and interdependence of all human beings; a set of global skills – cultural knowledge and linguistic abilities that enable them to appreciate and respect other cultures and people and interact with other people; and global attitudes – emotional and psychological capacities to manage the anxiety and complexity of living in a globalized world.”

In his 2003 book from which the opening quote was taken, *Teaching Democracy: Unity and Diversity in Public Life*, Walter C. Parker (Professor of Education and Political Science, University of Washington, Seattle) reminds us that “...educators are the primary stewards of democracy. They must do what no one else in society has to do: intentionally specify the democratic ideal sufficiently to make it a reasonably distinct curriculum target, one that will justify selecting from the universe of possibilities a manageable set of subject matters, materials, instructional methods, modes of classroom interaction, and school experiences.” He goes on in his book to “...propose practical tools with which educators can draw children creatively and productively into this way of life, this civic culture” of “pluralism and equality,” and bases this on the following five assertions as crucial for educators:

“First, democratic education is not a neutral project, but one that tries to predispose citizens to principled reasoning and just ways of being with one another.

Second, educators need simultaneously to engage in multicultural education and citizenship education.

Third, the diversity that schools contain makes extraordinarily fertile soil for democratic education. Schooling is the first sustained public experience for children, and it affords a rich opportunity to nurture public virtue – for example, kindness and tolerance and the disposition and skills to dialogue across difference.

Fourth, this dialogue plays an essential and vital role in democratic education, moral development, and public policy. In a diverse society, dialogue is the avenue of choice to enlightened action.

Fifth, the access/inclusion problem that we (still) face today is one of

extending democratic education to students who typically are not afforded it...Democratic education is for everyone, and this certainly includes those who (for now) have the most power, for they are in a position to do the most harm when they lack virtue. Just as multicultural education is not only for 'others,' neither is citizenship education."

Parker's main "tool" for those who would be teachers/educators of democratic citizens is "deliberation," where diverse groups of students at any age are brought together in a variety of settings to deliberate, not just to "discuss," but to reason together, generate and consider alternatives together, and to arrive at a decision to do something, to take action on something that concerns them. For example, Parker notes that - "Elementary and middle school students are in an ideal setting to deliberate classroom and school policies together. High School students should be doing this as well, but they should also be deliberating pressing domestic and foreign policy questions, from environmental issues to questions of 'free trade,' haves and have-nots, and war and peace." He goes on in his book to discuss several specific examples of ways in which elementary and secondary school students can get involved and "deliberate."



David Sehr (Social Studies Teacher at West Orange High School in West Orange, New Jersey) in his earlier book of 1997 (actually part of a series on "Democracy and Education" edited by George Wood), Education for Public Democracy, offers the following detailed description of what our students will need to exhibit as global citizens, specifically the "Values, Attributes, and Capacities Needed for Public Democratic Citizenship." I will quote it in its entirety as it seems to provide such a thorough framework for us as classroom teachers, school administrators, and all educators concerned about developing democratic, global citizens:

"1) An ethic of care and responsibility as a foundation for community and public life

a) understanding of the interdependence of people as 'individuals-in-relations'

b) understanding of the need for individuals to live as responsible members of communities

2) Respect for the equal right of everyone to the conditions necessary for

their self-development

a) a sense of justice based on that right

b) principles of equal individual civil and political rights, and equal political power and vice, within a context which balances the right of individuals against their responsibilities to the larger community

c) acceptance of the fundamental equality of members of all social groups in society including that of social groups other than one's own

d) acceptance of a person or a groups' right to be different from oneself, or from accepted norms and values of the community, as long as the rights of others aren't threatened

3) Appreciation of the importance of the public

a) appreciating need to participate in public discussion and debate, and to take action to address public issues

b) recognizing need to expand and create new public spheres as sites for discussion and debate of public issues

c) understanding public nature of certain person problems

4) A critical/analytical social outlook

a) habits of examining critically the nature of social reality, including the 'commonsense' realities of everyday life

b) habits of examining underlying relations of power in any given social situation

5) The capacities necessary for public democratic participation

a) analysis of written, spoken and image language

b) clear oral and written expression of one's ideas

c) habits of active listening as a key to communication

d) facility in working collaboratively with others

e) knowledge of constitutional rights and political processes

f) knowledge of complexities and interconnections of major public issues to each other and to issues in the past

g) self-confidence, self-reliance, and ability to act independently (within context of community)

h) ability to learn more about any issue that arises"

Lastly, Sehr goes on to describe the "Characteristics of School Life Likely



to Engage Students in a School's Programs:"

- “1) an atmosphere in which students feel a sense of belonging or membership in the school community
- 2) a feeling of students' safety, both physical and emotional/psychological
- 3) schoolwork with intrinsic interest for students
- 4) schoolwork that is meaningful not only for school purposes, but also in the real world outside school
- 5) a sense of student ownership of their school.”

I will end with this from Walter C. Parker, and then a challenge to the readers of Connections. “Without democratic enlightenment [knowledge of the ideals of democratic living, including the ability to discern just from unjust action and the commitment to recognize difference and fight prejudice], participation cannot be trusted: the freedom marchers of the Civil Rights movement ‘participated,’ but so did Hitler’s thugs and so did (and does) the Ku Klux Klan. Participation without democratic enlightenment can be worse than apathy.”

So what do you think are the “skills, knowledge, and attitudes/dispositions” of a democratic, global student citizen? What do you do in your school to teach these to your students? We at NSRF would be interested in you sending us information about just how you teach these “skills, knowledge, attitudes/ dispositions.”

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Thank you for your support and attention. If you have any news, stories, resources or ideas for these Updates from the National Center, please let us know.

On behalf of the NSRF National Center,  
Dave, Leslie, Michele, and Scott

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