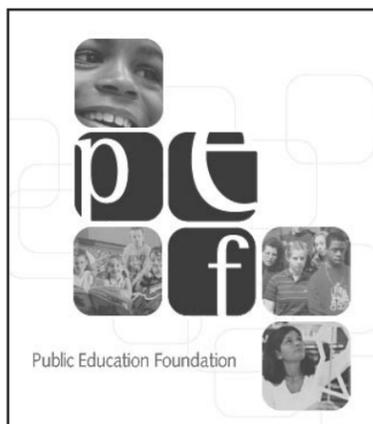


Being at an assistant principal CFG meeting in Chattanooga, Tennessee is like being a thirsty camel at a big oasis! Each month, around 17 busy assistant principals get together and spend some time focusing on the 'real' work that we as administrators should do each day.

This year, the Assistant Principal CFG in Chattanooga centered on ways to raise student achievement through supporting teachers in our buildings. We decided to focus on how to help raise teacher expectations of student achievement. We started the process with a text-based discussion using an article about highly effective teachers titled "Teacher Effectiveness: Improving Instruction One Classroom at a Time" by James H. Stronge from the College of William and Mary.

We then went back to our buildings and looked for folks in whom we could identify some of the characteristics that we discussed from the article. We met the next month and did a success



analysis protocol and developed a list of qualities that our own highly effective teachers possessed. We looked at the list and teased out the qualities to which we, as assistant principals, could lend support. The qualities on our current working list are: organization, planning, modeling, teaching strategies, time for reflection, effective procedures and routines, and high expectations. We intend to look at this list and

focus on these issues in our buildings to encourage all teachers to expect the most that they can from our students.

As colleagues, we enjoy the increased trust and communication that we have developed this year as a result of doing the hard work of a CFG. It is a wonderful thing to be able to speak honestly and know that you are supported and encouraged to be successful. ■

*The Public Education Foundation is a local, independent, nonprofit foundation whose mission is to help all Hamilton County students to be successful in school. Since 1988, the PEF has provided expertise, leadership and financial support to build a strong foundation for the students in the public schools.*

For more information visit the PEF website, [www.pefchattanooga.org](http://www.pefchattanooga.org).

Contact Marcy O'Neill at [<mto@pefchattanooga.org>](mailto:mto@pefchattanooga.org)

### In the Next Issue

*Connections* will focus on gender issues in schools in our Fall 2003 issue. If you are interested in submitting a piece, particularly student work, please contact Katy Kelly at [<kkelly@harmonyschool.org>](mailto:kkelly@harmonyschool.org) or Debbie Bambino at [<dbambino@earthlink.net>](mailto:dbambino@earthlink.net)

Scott Murphy is writing a feature on the Future(s) Protocol, which he authored. If you have used it he is interested in hearing your feedback. You can contact him at [<smurphy@jeffco.k12.co.us>](mailto:smurphy@jeffco.k12.co.us)

See our website for submission guidelines, [www.nsrffharmony.org/connections\\_guidelines.html](http://www.nsrffharmony.org/connections_guidelines.html) or contact Katy Kelly at [<kkelly@harmonyschool.org>](mailto:kkelly@harmonyschool.org) if you have any questions or comments.



Lidia Gazdyszyn (left) and Scott Murphy (center)

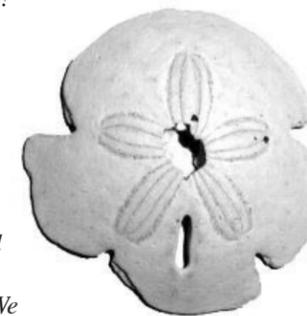
We at the National Center were eager to hear the opinions and experiences of Winter Meeting 2003 participants. When we unpacked after our trip to Los Angeles and sat down to read the Reflections Sheets, we were rewarded with thoughtfulness, insight, humor and honesty. Reflections have, for us, always been a useful tool for improving our work and learning from our experiences, and that certainly proved true in this case. Here is a sample of some of the reflections that spoke to us.

*The power of professional learning communities depends on practice and trust and a common goal of improving student achievement. It is always good to have the refresher, which NSRF offers.*

*I really think this winter conference is a good way to connect with other coaches, especially those who have been in a group longer. They have shown us newer coaches how the ebb and flow can be established. I was amazed how we were on the same wavelength and spoke the same language. So positive, so refreshing, so reflective of the capabilities of interacting with other colleagues. I want NSRF to know that their work is of enormous value – thanks!*

*Quote for the day: A: "That article riles me up; I don't even want to talk about it." B: "Then I think you should talk about it; you will have something valuable to share." A: "I choose to be silent." B: "Let me know how it goes." (Re: An Academic Standoff: Literacy Task Preferences of African-American and Mexican-American Male Adolescents vs. Teacher Expected Preferences, by Carolyn Orange and Rosalind Horowitz)*

*What a powerful way of starting this conference with a speaker like Terry Tafoya! He had so many insights that opened my mind and heart to the importance of the work we are undertaking. Life is all about making connections and we make connections by telling our stories. We need to tell our stories to our students and allow them to tell their own stories. CFGs allow us as educators an opportunity to make connections with other educators and hear each other in order to grow in our profession.*



*Dr. Tafoya was an amazing speaker. I'm excited to share his work with others and thankful to have been introduced to his work.*

*The success protocol was a great stimulator – success breeds success and we pass our enthusiasm on to each other*

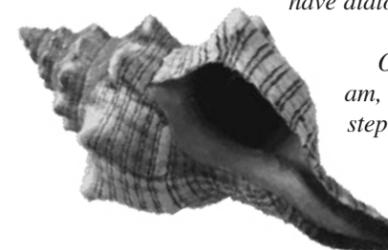
*I loved the World Café. It felt like the structure totally melted typical communication barriers, largely through the use of forcing people to be physically proximal, and by creating an environment of intimacy. Very interesting to see all the different directions the conversations went.*

*I really enjoyed the opportunity to have "clinics". I felt the range and type of offerings was perfect*

*Today, I went to the 3-hour coaches clinic "Descriptive Review of a Child." I felt it was a very extensive analysis. A lot of what was discussed would be very useful in my own classroom. Much of which was dissected really struck and helped me reflect on my own practice.*

*This was a very fulfilling journey. It began with a bang! And ended the same way. How can we ever be the same after hands and hearts have connected? Looking forward to next winter meeting.*

*Before I forget: I wanted to mention that one of the most valuable parts of this WM is the opportunity to interact and have dialogue with people from backgrounds and cultures and ethnicities different from my own.*



*Overall this training has been a wonderful time for me to step back and remember who I am, within the larger web of our community, our culture, our world. I love the opportunity to step back inside myself away from the demands of everyday life.*

*It's great being able to [have] time to indulge in the luxury of feeding my soul. ■*