

# REFLECTIONS

## Fellow Educator:

It is a privilege to share with you my reflections on teacher professional development (PD), the theme of this issue of *Pacific Educator*.

I hold this topic close to my heart, having begun my own teaching career without the required higher education credentials. I was totally reliant on highly knowledgeable and compassionate mentors and teacher developers who understood adult learning theories. I required relevant, timely, high-quality staff PD to help me live up to my day-to-day teaching responsibilities.

It is proven that effective instruction has a measurable effect on children and their learning. I could not have been an effective teacher for my students had I not taken time out for my own learning. I took pride in seeing my students transformed from non-readers to avid and enthusiastic independent readers.

Teacher PD comes in many different forms. It can be as simple as spending time in another teacher's classroom observing different teaching strategies, or as formalized as learning through

college education courses. Whatever the manner of learning or the environment in which it takes place, the key is that there is substance to what is being learned and sustainability to address growth over time. I treasured development opportunities that allowed me time to reflect on current practices and discuss with colleagues perceptions of what my teaching meant to my students, based on their learning outcomes.

Teacher PD is essential in order to meet demanding and challenging student learning expectations. The highly qualified teacher provision of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) requires our school systems to provide a minimum guarantee and evidence that teachers are able and competent in the classroom. Accountability is measured using student-learning outcomes, which are directly tied to the quality of teaching. Teacher PD contributes greatly to the cultivation of world-class educators who have the ability to learn from their students' performance and adapt as necessary.

Hafa Adai,



Rita Hocog Inos, EdD  
Chair  
Board of Directors

## Dear Colleagues:

With great pleasure, I welcome you to this edition of *Pacific Educator*.

Few topics in education are getting more attention than that of what constitutes a “highly qualified” teacher. Under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) legislation, a highly qualified teacher is defined as one who holds a bachelor's degree, has full state certification, and has demonstrated subject matter competency in each subject taught.

This edition of *Pacific Educator* is dedicated to the topic of teacher professional development (PD). In

the Pacific, many teachers and states do not meet the standards established by the NCLB. The Pacific is not unique in this respect. Every year, in every state, unqualified emergency teachers are hired by the thousands.

This edition shares with you some of the ways in which many of our colleagues are addressing the need to have a qualified teacher in every classroom, every day. Inside, you will find methods that already

may be familiar to you, as well as new ideas—strategies you can add to your own plans for addressing teacher preparation and development. Also, you will read that parents are recognized as teachers who need to be included in the continuum of who is a “teacher.” Alternative systems for teacher certification and preparation, and for PD, are also shared.

There is no easy quick fix for the teacher shortage in the Pacific. Reaching the attainable goal of having a highly qualified teacher in every classroom will take time, dedication, and resources. We congratulate the trailblazers who have been working for so long on teacher PD in an effort to address this critical need. We welcome hearing from you about your own strategies, successes, and not-so-successful learning experiences. We learn and grow from it all.

Enjoy this edition of *Pacific Educator*. Pass it along to others and look for it on our website, too.

Sincerely,



Thomas W. Barlow, EdD  
President & CEO