Kappan Call for Manuscripts, 2015-16

Kappan is committed to being a lively magazine that explores the many issues surrounding K-12 education. Because our audience is largely composed of K-12 practitioners, we are most interested in exploring topics that will be interesting to K-12 educators and valuable in their day-to-day work. We seek articles that are written in a conversational style and draw lessons from both research and practice. We welcome submissions from researchers as well as teachers who we believe have vital stories and insights to share with others.

The questions included with each theme are not intended to be exhaustive but merely meant to be helpful to writers as they consider topics for publication.

Please review Kappan’s Writer’s Guidelines before submitting a manuscript. Editors will not consider manuscripts that do not meet the guidelines. All submissions should be sent to manuscripts@pdkintl.org. This will ensure that a Kappan staff member acknowledges receipt of your submission and includes the manuscript in our review process.

Kappan’s Common Core Writing Project

Kappan has an ongoing interest in manuscripts related to implementation of the Common Core. As part of the Get it Right project sponsored by the Learning First Alliance, Kappan is developing a separate web site that will make all of our Common Core articles available to all educators. In addition, because space in Kappan is limited, Kappan editors will also be reviewing and editing some Common Core articles for online-only publication.

We have a special interest in how individual teachers or teams of teachers have adapted their instruction in light of Common Core standards, and we will be reserving a portion of the web site to present those articles. We also are especially interested in manuscripts that address how districts and states have overcome challenges related to implementation and what lessons these experiences can provide to other educators.

What can the U.S. learn from schools around the world?  Deadline for submissions: August 1, 2015

Educators around the globe face many of the same challenges as American schools. Instead of looking only inside our borders for answers, we want to devote an issue of Kappan to looking beyond the U.S. to learn who has made significant progress on some of the same challenges facing American schools. Manuscripts should identify a single large problem, explore how a particular nation or nongovernmental organization tackled it, and present ideas about how the same solution could translate to American schools. Kappan will consider a variety of topics for this issue including teaching quality (preparation, recruitment, and retention), immigration, changing demographics, assessment and evaluation practices, educating low-income students, professional development, early literacy, dropouts, ramping up the image of the profession, career-technical education, improving learning in core subject areas (mathematics, science, and language arts), and getting technology into the hands of impoverished/remote students.

Immigration  Deadline for submissions: September 1, 2015

Immigration and the history of the United States are inextricably linked. Throughout the history of public education, American schools have been regarded as vital in shaping new arrivals for citizenship. But immigrants are playing an equally important role in shaping American schools. Kappan will consider manuscripts that examine this complex and changing dynamic. What role should American schools play in helping immigrants assimilate? How do schools help immigrant students adapt when they have been traumatized by the violence in their home countries? How have immigrants changed American schools? How has the immigrant role in American public education changed over the decades? What accommodations, if any, are schools making to serve immigrant students? How have other countries responded to rising numbers of immigrant students? How have American schools embraced — or not embraced — immigrant teachers?

College access and opportunity  Deadline for submissions: October 1, 2015

Earning a college degree results in greater individual earnings and having a population where more adults have at least a postsecondary education is good for the American economy. But we need to send more under-represented students on to higher education — especially those who would be first-generation students or from low-income, African-American, Hispanic, and Native American homes. What can K-12 schools do to increase the number of under-represented students who enroll in college ready to succeed? What obstacles prevent more under-represented students from enrolling in two- and four-year institutions? What strategies have been successful at boosting the number of under-represented students in enrolling in and being successful in college? Early college? Dual enrollment options? Mentorship programs? Community-wide scholarship programs? What can K-12 schools do to prepare these students to be savvy consumers as they select among many higher education opportunities? How can high schools help students be best prepared to take charge of the significant financial commitments of postsecondary education?
Teacher tenure

A perennial hot topic in education, tenure is in the spotlight more than ever. We are not interested in manuscripts that detail the history of teacher tenure but manuscripts that would help the United States chart a future course. Do educators still need a system of tenure? Does the current system of tenure provide teachers with sufficient job protection or should states and districts be doing more? How do tenure protections for teachers compare to job protections in other careers? Does tenure hurt or improve student learning? What evidence is there that tenure has hurt or improved the quality of America’s teaching workforce or the ability to recruit teachers into the profession? Does tenure hurt or improve teachers’ willingness to be innovative? What other strategies should we consider for ensuring that teachers are able to teach without fear of being discharged for personal or political reasons? What similar systems of protection are in place for teachers in other countries?

Building a better teacher

As the debate about improving schools has continued, much of the conversation has shifted to include teacher preparation programs. Among the questions that manuscripts might consider are these: Who’s responsible for improving teaching quality? What should be the federal government’s role in improving teacher quality? What systemic supports (at the teacher preparation or school-district level) need to be in place to raise the overall level of teacher quality? What changes are occurring in traditional teacher preparation programs aimed at improving the quality of teaching? Why are those changes the right changes to make? What are charter schools and other education reform groups doing to improve the quality of teaching in their schools? Is there a place for teacher residencies in any of these scenarios? What are other countries doing to ensure high-quality teaching in their schools?

The role of sports at school

Once an unquestioned part of American schools, sports programs are now threatened by budget cuts, concerns about safety, and questions of equitable access. Even as they become an almost essential part of a student’s college application, budget cuts threaten to limit the number of sports and the number of students who can participate. What is the proper role of athletics in American schools? Are sports necessary for a well-rounded education for college- and career-ready students? In particular, what is the future of high school sports? Would a European-style sports program, which rely on clubs rather than schools to assemble teams, make more sense for American schools? If schools choose to continue sports, how can they ensure equitable access in an era of budget cuts? What is the evidence that incorporating sports into school life improves academics? How should schools evaluate the value of sports and other extracurricular activities if budget limits require choices?