We kick off this school year with a look at the future of school leadership. While none of us has a crystal ball to help predict the future, this issue of Principal does provide a glimpse of how schools can more effectively prepare for uncharted territory and adapt to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse and technologically sophisticated student population. This issue’s theme is one that educators must ponder now rather than later and one that NAESP has been focused on for the past 18 months, through an extensive and exhilarating initiative called Vision 2021. During the Vision 2021 process, NAESP members from across the country participated in discussions about what role principals will play in the future and the key trends and developments that will shape the future of schools.

The results of these discussions are published in two new books that NAESP released at its national convention in Nashville, Tennessee (and which are excerpted here in this issue). Vision 2021: Transformations in Leadership, Learning and Community and the second edition of Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do are intended to help shape the preparation and practice of school leadership in the future. The publications outline implications for the profession, define standards for school leadership, and examine the role of K-8 principals in preparing children for success.

Also featured in this issue of Principal are articles by Gary E. Martin and Rosemary Papa, who argue that in order to bridge the gap between principal preparation and practice, a deliberate partnership between school districts and universities must first be established; Christopher Wooleyhand, who urges principals to become more adept at teaching diverse populations; and Michael Chirichello, who describes how five common misbeliefs about change can be major obstacles to achieving it.

In this issue, we’re excited to introduce two new columns, Member Voices and Principal-to-Principal, which were designed to include more principal perspectives in the magazine. Member Voices will feature letters to the editor and stories from members who are working with their local legislators. Principal-to-Principal will feature two participants in NAESP’s PALS program—one novice principal and one veteran principal—working together to tackle common school leadership issues. We’ve also replaced Humor with On the Lighter Side, with the same intention of providing a brief respite from the workday. We encourage you to send letters, comments, and feedback about these new sections, as well as the magazine’s other articles, to publications@naesp.org.

This is my final column as editor of Principal—I’m on to a new life adventure—but I wish you all the best as you start the new school year and continued success in providing the nation’s children with the best possible education, now and in the future.

—Raven Padgett

WEB EXCLUSIVES
Gaining Ground on AYP—Anita Stephenson
School-University Partnerships: Focusing on Results—Richard Weigel, Wendy Burke, and Russ Owell
It’s All in the Family—Linda Kight Winter
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