

Teacher Leader



Sleigh Bells Ring



John Bernia and Stephanie Dulmage pictured here with members of the Michigan State Board.

Hunkering Down or Stepping Up: The Role of Teacher Leaders in Reclaiming the Education Agenda by Suzanne Klein

The Southwest Michigan Galileo Consortium for Teacher Leadership welcomed its newest cohort of 120 Galileo Teacher Leaders in May, 2013, bringing the number of its teacher leaders to more than 800. All of this capacity building for leadership has happened at a time when public education in general, and teachers in particular, are under scrutiny from a variety of sources in the media and other entities interested in educational reform. Members of the Galileo Institute for Teacher Leadership, the Galileo Consortium for Teacher Leadership and its network of teacher leaders agree that it is time to step up rather than hunker down. They share the strong belief of Peter Senge (in Fullan, 2010) who states that “real change is possible but only by taking a truly systemic approach...(using) clear strategy, broad engagement (especially educators themselves) and a consistent message that this can only be done by all of us working together across all levels of the educational system”.

The Galileo Institute has hosted EdCamp and is actively partnering with Avondale Schools, six districts in Macomb County and has new partnership explorations underway with a number of other school districts and community organizations. These partnerships are powerful because they broaden the opportunity to better define teacher leadership; demonstrate how teacher leaders have led meaningful school reform to improve student achievement; become thought leaders in their community, region and state; and formed alliances with like-minded individuals throughout the United States who are also committed to quality leadership in high reliability schools.



Students that attended the Kathleen Cushman student engagement seminar.

Keeping Up with Podcasts—Check out some of this season’s podcasts at www.oakland.edu/galileo

- In a reversal of roles Linda interviews Bob in his new role as Interim Dean. (Vol 7, Ep 1)
- Dave Pontzius, Elementary Principal in Rochester, Michigan, shares his thoughts on building a collaborative school culture with a focus on success for all. (Vol 7, Ep 2)
- Carol Burris, Principal of Southside High School in Rockville Center, NY, discusses strategies for eliminating achievement gaps by detracking. She also explains her role in opposing excessive testing of students. (Vol7,Ep3)
- One of the highlights of Oakland University's Center for The Study of Autism is the summer film camp for children and young people. This interview features Kathy Sweeney, Project Director, and Joey Travolta, CEO of Inclusion Films, who has conducted this camp for the past 8 years. (Vol 7, Ep 4)

My Style Of Teacher Leadership

The Brains, Heart, and Courage of Teacher Leadership by Marcia Hudson, Avondale Schools

As a young child, I remember staying up late at night, creating a makeshift tent, blankets over my head, flashlight wedged within my pillows, everything delicately balanced so that I could shine the light upon the pages of a favorite book. Although I was happy to read most anything- Little House on the Prairie or Henry Huggins... I especially enjoyed reading and rereading my mother's worn, tattered copy of L. Frank Baum's THE WIZARD OF OZ. I simply couldn't get enough of this story! Being a child of the seventies- (long before the days of Netflix and DVD players) - I remember waiting each spring, in breathless anticipation, for my local television station to air the movie. I can still picture sitting in front of our mammoth television set, a bowl of Jiffy Pop popcorn in my lap, wide-eyed and agog as the beautiful Land of Oz unfolded before my eyes. As a high school student, I helped my friends bring the story to life, and played "The Good Witch" in the annual spring musical. Indeed, the story is part of my bones.

Fast forward forty-something years, and the story still holds a special place in my heart. I believe that Dorothy's journey to the magical Land of Oz still resonates for me, and many others, because as teacher leaders, I'd like to believe that we see a bit of ourselves in the story, and we can recognize the wisdom that runs throughout.

Dorothy, hopeful and inquisitive, leaving home to search for happiness in a better world, following the promise of the twisting, turning pathway before her; Teacher Leader, thought-filled and determined, leaving home to begin his/her career and make a difference, following (sometimes hesitantly) the pathway before them. The story helped me to recognize that it's importance of "somewhere over the rainbow", grand thinking... so that you might envision your own, bright future as well as the futures of those in your care.

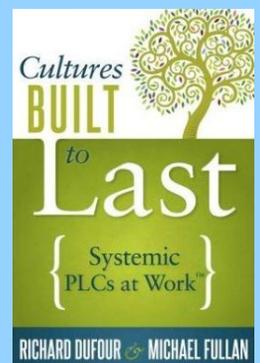
Dorothy, meeting friends of many shapes and sizes along the way, each friend offering the best of themselves in order to help the others along the way ; Teacher Leader, connecting and building a network of trust with an ever-changing ensemble cast of colleagues and students, amplifying the smarts and capabilities of the people around them. The story helped me to recognize that when someone needs your help, it is important to do your best to give it.

Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tinman, Cowardly Lion—and Toto, too-- each seeking something personal and unique, arm in arm, destination: "The Wizard", Emerald City. When they finally met with the wonderful Wizard of Oz, they realized that it was not a wizard, but a humble, simple man standing behind the curtain...yet, in the end, each received what they needed. The story helped me to recognize that as teacher leaders, we know that the going gets tough at times, and that we all understand the importance of sticking together. We know that challenges teach us to be creative and resourceful. We also know that there are good witches and bad witches, good wizards and bad wizards, and there are lessons to be learned from each.

BOOK TALK *with Kay Cornell, Education Consultant*

Cultures Built to Last: Systemic PLCs at Work, Richard Dufour & Michael Fullan, Solution Tree, 2013.

With the popularity of PLCs as models of collaborative school improvement, many schools and districts have worked tirelessly to build PLCs that make a difference for students. What just about everyone has learned is that this is VERY hard work, and the development of high functioning PLCs takes focus and support. It isn't enough for there to be pockets of excellence. What is crucial is the need for systemic PLCs and why systemic reform is best. This book for school leaders shows: how to make PLCs an ongoing endeavor rather than a program to be implemented, how to change the culture of the system that leads to whole-system reform, and how to approach systemic change both from the top-down and bottom-up. There is also a great discussion of ways to recognize the warning signs when a PLC is faltering. It's a short book that I think school leaders will find incredibly valuable.



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