

Author's Response:
To the Review
of *From Standards to Success:
A Guide for School Leaders*

Mark O'Shea
California State University, Monterey Bay

Since 1996, I have spent much of my time working with teachers and colleagues to understand what teaching might look like in a standards-achieving classroom. These efforts led me to concur with Black and William (1998) that teacher cynicism and frustration with the standards results from the lack of a clear process for working with standards to improve instruction. In an important study led by Rodney Ogawa (2003), a substantial and protracted exercise to install standards in a large California school district collapsed when the administration failed to identify a role for teachers in their school reform plans. Across California, this failure to identify a role for teachers in the standards-achievement process has led to the devolution of the teacher's role to robotic use of scripted curricula and supplemental instruction focused on test preparation. I couldn't agree more with the viewpoint of Stella C. Batagiannis that accountability measures based on large scale assessments have diverted the standards movement away from its intended purpose to close the achievement gap and help all students learn at higher levels.

From Standards to Success is a brief monograph that introduces a planning protocol now taught in several colleges and universities and implemented in schools across the country. I call it the Standards

Mark O'Shea is a professor with the College of Education at California State University, Monterey Bay, and the author of From Standards to Success: A Guide for School Leaders, which is reviewed by Stella C. Batagiannis on pages 89-93 of this issue of Issues in Teacher Education.

Achievement Planning Cycle (SAPC). In this book I propose that teachers should be given the time to work collaboratively as they engage standards and curriculum resources to describe standards-achieving instructional targets. These targets take the form of performance outcomes derived from skill and content statements found in standards. After instruction, the teachers meet again to examine student work and compare it with the performance criteria they included in their plans.

The SAPC is a protocol by which teachers make professional decisions about the use of curriculum resources, the setting of expectations for student learning, and the assessment of student work based on criteria of their making. It is emphatically not "sterile, technocratic teaching" as characterized by Batagiannis in her review. It stands in sharp contrast with explicit orders for teachers in low performing schools to teach with scripted curricula by rote, followed by intensive test preparation before exams.

As for Batagiannis' oft described disappointment with my supposed failure to grasp the larger purposes of public education and important aspects beyond curriculum standards, I can only state that these essentials were simply not within the scope of this work. Teachers need help in finding their way with the standards, and principals want to know how to support them. *From Standards to Success* is intended to help our school colleagues find their way to rewarding, collaborative, professional practice as they achieve state standards.

References

- Black, P., & William, D. (1998). Inside the black box: Raising standards through classroom assessment. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 80(2), 139-144.
- Ogawa, R., Sandholtz, J.H., Martinez-Flores, M., & Scribner, S.P. (2003). The substantive and symbolic consequences of a district's standards-based curriculum. *American Educational Research Journal*, 40(1), 147-176.