

Re Carolyn Bunting's My View, "Returning Teaching to Teachers" (May 2018):

From my years as a teacher and administrator in traditional public schools, I am well aware that the **PUSH OF OUTSIDE REGULATION** can get in the way of what teachers are naturally good at and what they genuinely love about teaching.

In my current role leading a state organization of charter schools, I can tell you that we are working to rebalance this equation. It is a part of **OUR CHARGE AND MISSION** as charters to develop and model change that helps charters while also opening new options for the traditional settings. As charter and traditional camps listen and learn from each other, both will grow.

RHONDA DILLINGHAM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION,
CHARLOTTE, N.C.

Inspirational Profile

The profile of Michelle Saylor, superintendent of the Bellefonte schools in central Pennsylvania ("From Modest Start to Model Leader," August 2018) is an inspirational story. It reinforces the idea that we should continue to work toward a robust teacher-to-administrator pipeline to ensure that deserving candidates can earn top posts.

ALEXANDER MOORE
PROGRAM CHAIR,
FIORELLO H. LAGUARDIA HIGH SCHOOL,
NEW YORK, N.Y.

Critical Thinking

Re "Better Citizens Through Critical Thinking" by William T. Gormley (April 2018):

Whether the following statement was uttered by Abraham Lincoln is less important than its timeless wisdom and insight: "The philosophy of the classroom in one generation will become the philosophy of the government in the next."

Read the expanded letters at www.aasa.org/SAletters.aspx.

In his article, Gormley recounts experiences from the preceding years at schools across the country that are chronicled in his recent book *The Critical Advantage: Developing Critical Thinking Skills in Schools*. Through these, he came to better understand how essential and empowering learning opportunities that engage students as agents within their communities truly are.

When I worked in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, Gormley visited one of our elementary schools at the culmination of an extended project-based learning module.

For this unit, students determined the learning target: They would take a stand against violence in their community. Working alongside incredible faculty and one of the most powerful principals I've ever met (Virginia Hill), we helped students to design a multi-grade-level project that brought civic engagement and activism to light.

In his April article, Gormley suggests "our best hope for civic enlightenment is to ensure that the next generation of citizens has strong critical thinking skills." This claim is not made in service of promoting 21st-century skills, as doing so too often generates a meaningless echo chamber. Rather, his claim is made in the spirit of engaging today's students in growing into the roles they will fill tomorrow.

SHAUN ALLEN TOMASZEWSKI
DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT,
NORTHGATE SCHOOL DISTRICT,
PITTSBURGH, PA.

Offbeat Job Titles

I enjoyed the Leadership Lite section in your August issue as it mentions our organization's fun job titles. As you can see from my signature, we are all lucky enough to have something a little quirky in our titles. Now, when our chief wonder officer position needs to be filled, I'll be sure to let you know.

JENNIFER GUILD
MANAGER, COMMUNICATIONS AND CURIOSITY,
SCIENCE MUSEUM OF VIRGINIA,
RICHMOND, VA.

LETTERS SHOULD be addressed to: Editor, *School Administrator*, 1615 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Fax: 703-841-1543. E-mail: magazine@aasa.org

EDITOR
Jay P. Goldman
MANAGING EDITOR
Liz Griffin
SENIOR EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Juli Valentine
DESIGN/PRODUCTION
David Fox, AURAS Design
PRINTING
Lifetouch National School Studios Inc.

HOW TO REACH US

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SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR
1615 Duke St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
TEL: 703-875-0772; Fax: 703-841-1543
E-MAIL: magazine@aasa.org
WEBSITE: www.aasa.org

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