Operations Council Chair Attends Summer Symposium
Trudie Barnett, Moberly School District

The University of Missouri and MPER recently sponsored Mark Penny, Assistant Superintendent of Moberly School District and Operations Council Chair, to attend the 2007 Summer Symposium held July 16–20 in Seattle, Washington. This conference was hosted by the National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER) and the Institute for Education Inquiry (IEI).

There were two overarching purposes of the 2007 Summer Symposium. First, participants were introduced to the Agenda for Education in a Democracy (AED) in such a manner as to provide them with the background and strategies required to advance this work in their settings; and second, the participants were provided an opportunity to build a network of colleagues across the NNER for further collaboration toward the advancement of the public purpose of schooling in a democracy.

During the conference, Penny attended various breakout sessions:

- Tuesday, July 17 — Participants deepened their understanding of issues related to democracy and schooling; equity and access to knowledge; as well as the application of these concepts in collaborative work to advance the Agenda for Education in a Democracy.

- Wednesday, July 18 — Participants were provided the opportunity to expand their understanding of social justice as a critical factor in advancing democracy, experience democracy in public places, and apply the learning to an understanding of the public purpose of schools.

- Thursday, July 19 — Understanding nurturing pedagogy and its application to the work done in schools and universities in advancement of the Agenda for Education in a Democracy and preparation of future teachers. Participants increased their understanding of “conditions” as a critical component of the Agenda for Education in a Democracy, and considered issues related to unpacking the “postulates” and issues related to the ecology of school renewal.

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Important Upcoming Dates

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<td>TFP Monthly Mentor/Liaison Meeting</td>
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<td>October 16</td>
<td>Mental Health Leadership Academy</td>
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<td>October 23</td>
<td>Combined OpCo/Governing Board Meeting</td>
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<td>November 13</td>
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Collaborative Efforts Produce Award-Winning Results
Sally Widbin, Mentor Teacher
Paxton Keeley Elementary, Columbia Public Schools

Interesting discoveries were made when Paxton Keeley Elementary School began the application for the 2007 Richard W. Clark Partner School Award presented by NNER. Recognizing high quality collaborative practice and commitment to partner school efforts. Our school and the University of Missouri (including, since 2003, MPER) work collaboratively to improve Paxton and teacher education in varied and highly effective ways.

Paxton Keeley and the University worked together before the school opened in 2002; RPDC helped teachers with early goal setting, while Dr. Tim Lewis assisted in establishing Positive Behavioral Support. Since 2002, the collaboration has led to more than 12 research studies and grants. Paxton hosts the Teaching Fellowship Program, Senior Year On Site Program (in both Elementary and Special Education), field placements, and a variety of other pre-service programs including school faculty who serve as adjunct professors at MU.

This strong partnership is evidenced through the sheer numbers of pre-service teachers hosted, totaling over 55 this semester. Paxton teachers understand that there is no better place for education students to learn than in an actual classroom. Reflecting with education students turns the spotlight on classroom practices and student learning. This has sparked an interest in classroom research; this year alone, 15 Paxton Keeley teachers are involved in action research within their classrooms.

Receiving the 2007 Richard W. Clark Partner School Award is an affirmation that schools working together with teacher education programs create a vibrant learning community for all.

MPERspective is interested in publishing articles on partner districts and university departments. Narrative reports on successful improvement initiatives, district and departmental updates, quotes on MPER and affiliated programs, and other feedback are all welcomed for consideration. Submissions may be directed to MPERspective Editor David J. Downs, via email (jdowns@hallsville.org).
Dr. Mike Pullis Named Interim Co-Director of MPER

Mike Pullis, Chair of the Department of Special Education, will serve as the Interim Co-Director of MPER for the 2007-2008 academic year. He will “sit in” for Dr. Deb Carr, who has assumed the role of Interim Department Chair for the Department of Educational, School, and Counseling Psychology as they conduct a national search for a new department chairperson.

Pullis has been in the College of Education since 1988. With background as a special education teacher, he completed his doctoral training at UCLA in 1979. At MU, he served as Chair of the Department of Special Education for six years, then as Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Research for six years before returning to the department last year. Pullis was heavily involved in the very beginnings of MPER, including advising one of the first two Teaching Fellows during the first year of that program. He continues to teach in the Fellows program and has served on the Teaching Fellows Academic Committee for several years.

OpCo Chair Attends Symposium (Continued from page 1)

- Friday, July 20th – Participants engaged in reflection on educators’ moral and professional responsibilities related to the public purpose of schools, made plans to advance the work in their local settings, and evaluated the symposium.

Over forty participants nationwide met at this conference to collaborate and share information on successes within their districts. One highlight of the conference was the chance to meet John I. Goodlad, author of *Education for Everyone, Agenda for Education on a Democracy,* and *Educational Renewal: Better Teachers, Better Schools.*

MPER Welcomes Three Districts to the Partnership

Dr. Dan Lowry, Co-Director of MPER
University of Missouri–Columbia

The 2006–2007 academic year began with two MPER membership positions to be filled. Due to the increased number of students in the College of Education coming from the St. Louis area, the Governing Board advised the Co-Directors to limit the search to districts in the St. Louis area. Nine school districts replied to the first letter indicating they would be interested in becoming members of MPER. That list of nine was narrowed to five applicants. Site visits were conducted by a team composed of representation from the Operations Council, Governing Board, and the Co-Directors. Application materials and site team observations were reviewed by the Operations Council and recommendations were made to the Governing Board.

After careful consideration of the growth within College of Education programs and the present composition of MPER, the Governing Board made the decision to enlarge the membership and become a partnership of twenty-two school districts. With this growth of one additional school district, the MU Partnership for Educational Renewal now represents over 190,000 students in 427 buildings. The new partner districts include Hazelwood (Tier I), Lindbergh R-VIII (Tier II), and Maplewood-Richmond Heights (Tier III). All three districts have elected to pay the membership dues for 2007-2008 and thus became active participants in MPER this academic year.

“*The first educational question will not be ‘what knowledge is of the most worth?’ but ‘what kind of human beings do we want to produce?’*”

—John Goodlad