



# GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



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## ***Thoughts for the week***

***By Richard Marotta, Ph.D., Headmaster***



The Guild is the association of the Heads of New York City independent schools; this association meets three times per year in Manhattan to discuss emerging issues in the world of independent schools as well as educational and political matters that may have an impact on our schools. At our meeting this past Wednesday evening, an interesting discussion about leadership took place among a group seated together for dinner.

Heads of independent schools often think about the idea of leadership in all of its complex permutations. In fact, the most recent issue of *Independent School*, published by NAIS, focused on the idea of leadership from many perspectives, including the daily implementation of leadership skills as well as the long term strategic leadership role played by the head of school.

As I think about what leadership means, it seems to me that it really is a matter of creating an environment in which others can perform at the highest level. There is essentially no difference between being teacher and a head in terms of the daily and long-term creation of a productive environment. A teacher needs to create a classroom environment, a learning context, in which students can develop their skills, the sense of the world and their sense of themselves. A teacher who establishes this learning culture has achieved the success of the classroom leader.

The same is true for the Head. If the Head of School can create an environment that allows others to thrive and flourish in their work, then the Head has succeeded. Leadership in my view is not about power; in fact power is the least of its attributes. It is about responsibility and the implementation of that responsibility within the community of learners. Mark Luria, the Executive Director of NYS AIS has as his guiding motto that "leadership is creating an environment in which others can do their best." I think that Dr. Luria has expressed this in exactly the right way. Leadership creates environments that engender success.