



GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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Thoughts for the week

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This week, I will be attending the Heads of School Conference in Mohonk, New York, starting on Wednesday afternoon and continuing until Friday afternoon. Each year, the Heads of independent schools gather to discuss the most pressing issues within our educational community. The goal of this conference is to explore the issues and then develop solutions to help each of our schools. The problems are universal; the solutions are individual to each school.

Among the topics for this year's conference are the following:

***Personal Computer, Personal Thinking.** This session will explore how to use technology in ways that are creative rather than simply computational and administrative. There will be another workshop that takes this question even further as the issues of classroom makeovers in the face of the glitz of technology needs to grow into a viable and deeper understanding of this new medium.

***Addressing the Challenges of the Global Achievement Gap.** Here, the focus will be on preparing our students to face the challenges of what has become a global economy, a global information model and, in fact, a global culture. This is a topic that has grown in importance for each school as we plan educational programs for the future.

***The Partnership Paradigm.** This workshop will examine the model of a school in relation to its community. Here, we will examine how a school can 'partner' with its community to create an environment in which schools provide service opportunities for students with the goal of community sustainability always in mind.

* **Understanding Everyday Youth Practices.** For this session, we will examine the everyday life of the student, from issues of privacy to bullying. There has been a national discussion of bullying over the past ten years; however, there has been little discussion of student privacy. This workshop will explore these issues in relationship to each other.

* **The Finnish Lesson.** Recently a great deal of excitement has been generated by the educational model from Finland. This model has been predicted to be a force for change within the global educational community. One key idea is 'restorative discipline' as an approach to student issues.

I have attended these conferences for most of the years that I have been Head of School and have always come away with ideas for Garden. What is particularly intriguing about this meeting is the attention that will be given to the practical application of these discussions to our individual schools. A conference that provides ideas and then the means to implement those ideas is precisely where I want to be.