

## Colleagues

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### Letter From the Editor

Clayton Pelon

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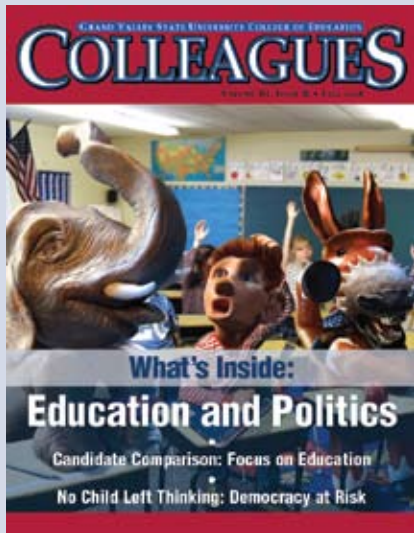
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Pelon: Letter From the Editor

## DEAN'S CORNER

# Message From the Dean

In *The Politics of Education*, Paolo Freire claims that "education is a political act, whether at the university, high school, primary school, or adult literacy classroom" (p. 188). In his writings, Freire was quite critical of the leading education approaches of his time which he named "factory schooling." He believed that teaching practices objectified students through irrelevant curriculum, teacher control and imposed time and space. Knowledge produced in this paradigm, he felt, would ultimately create citizens who were naïve, obedient, silent, and ignorant of politics.

At a time when our nation faces unprecedented civic challenges, Freire's vision of the passive citizen is particularly frightening. It is essential in these times to exercise our civic responsibility and speak out about our vision for education. In this issue, we examine current attitudes on politics as well as provide a comparison of the 2008 presidential candidate views on education. Enclosed within you will



also find a lively discussion of educational issues such as democracy, equity, and school safety.

I agree with Freire that education IS a political act. I believe, however, that by actively engaging in the world around us, we will be making the best investment in our shared future. ♡

Elaine C. Collins, Ph.D.

Dean, College of Education

# Letter from the Editor

Coming off an award winning year, we want to ensure continued quality and relevance this year for the magazine. The obvious choice of topic for this Fall was Politics & Education.

In this issue you will find insightful articles and quality information. Civil society and political participation is the reason we have a public education system, yet politics is a difficult subject to deal with in the classroom. It is therefore worthwhile to consider the father of the American public school system Horace Mann's words:

"Education then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is a great equalizer of the conditions of men, the balance wheel of the social machinery. I do not here mean that it so elevates the moral nature as to make men disdain and abhor the oppression of their fellow men. This idea pertains to another of its attributes. But I mean that it gives each man the independence and the means by which he can resist the selfishness of other men. ... The spread of education, by enlarging the

cultivated class or caste, will open a wider area over which the social feelings will expand; and, if this education should be universal and complete, it would do more than all things else to obliterate factitious distinctions in society." Horace Mann – 1848 (Twelfth Annual Report of Horace Mann as Secretary of Massachusetts State Board of Education)

What we teach and value in schools directly impacts the health of our democracy. We need to reinforce the belief that education gives students the tool to better themselves not only financially (and thereby the society monetarily) but politically. Students that do not understand their civic rights and duties then become citizens that are so impaired.

The articles within this publication should give you pause and hopefully encourage you to reflect on how you are impacting the next generation of American citizens. ♡

Clayton Pelon  
Editor-in-Chief