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### An Interview with Dr. Ed Stehno, Education Professor: 1988 Cunningham Award Recipient

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AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. ED STEHNO, EDUCATION PROFESSOR  
1988 CUNNINGHAM AWARD RECIPIENT

MARIAN J. BOONE and DOUGLAS CHANEY

Fort Hays State University

Summer 1993

## CHAPTER II: AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. STEHNO

**MARIAN:** We are here today at Fort Hays State University in the office of Dr. Ed Stehno, Education Professor. We are here to interview him because he was the recipient of the 1988 p Cunningham award. Hello, Dr. Stehno. How are you today.

**DR. STEHNO:** Fine.

**MARIAN:** Good. We would like to explore your career in education. Perhaps you could begin by telling us what you think influenced your decision to be a teacher, or who influenced your decision to be a teacher.

**DR. STEHNO:** I do not know if there was any one special person who influenced me to be a teacher. I went into teaching strictly because of coaching. I started my career at a junior college in Fairbury, Nebraska. I went there in order to play basketball and discovered it took a lot of practice; however, I did play. The only kind of a certificate you could get there was a teaching certificate, and at that time you could start teaching with two years of college. I wanted to be a big coach someday, so after graduation, I accepted a job in Jamestown, Kansas. I was young at the time, probably 19 or 20 years of age. My first assignment was 32 students in the seventh

and eighth grade. I taught all subjects and coached. That is how I started my teaching career. My folks probably had more influence than anyone on my being a teacher, but if they had their way, I am sure I would be farming today.

**MARIAN:** So, teaching was not their choice for you?

**DR. STEHNO:** No, I do not think so. Although, they never said.

**MARIAN:** Would you describe the positions you have held as an educator, and any interesting experiences you can think of while you had those positions.

**DR. STEHNO:** I never considered myself above average as a teacher in any way, shape, or form; but, I have always thoroughly enjoyed teaching. Since I have been teaching, I do feel it is probably the number one profession in the world. I feel that I have more influence over not only a child, but the economy of the United States, by being in the area of teaching rather than any other profession. You show me a nation where the economy is rising, and I will show you a nation where the standard of education is rising. I feel that there is a direct connection there.

I have always been proud of the fact that I am a teacher. I have never been ashamed to say I am a teacher. After I got into the

profession, I never wanted to be anything else.

I started teaching in Jamestown, Kansas. During my first week of school, I was asked by a Mrs. Davies, who taught fifth and sixth grade, "Are you going to teach seventh and eighth grade?" I said, "Yes, I was going to, attempt to." She said she felt very sorry for me because I had a student by the name of Gary Finch. I will never forget that name. Gary was so bad in the sixth grade that Mrs. Davies actually took a rope and tied him to his desk. He would not sit still. He was from a family where the children were already grown. He came late in his parents' marriage, and they protected him. I was going to have him in class and knew he would be a problem for me. So immediately, I picked out Gary Finch and put him right up next to me. Gary Finch could not sit still because he was hyper. We did not know how to handle hyper youngsters. We thought that they were supposed to sit at a desk and study all day, and there was no way that Gary could do that. About Friday of that first week of school, Gary was fidgeting around right in front of me, and I got up and shook him really hard. He hit his head against the bookcase, and that gave him a black eye. So, that is how I started my career. Within my first week of teaching I had given a kid a black eye; but, I

had a good experience with those seventh and eighth graders. I felt wanted and was very well accepted into the community. The fact is, I still correspond with some of those students. I do not know how much math or science I taught them, but we definitely had a bonding. I did discover one thing. I was not cut out for coaching, and that was the only reason I went into teaching. Before ballgames, as long as I was playing, I was okay; but when I was coaching, I could not eat. My food would come back up. My stomach was a total mess, and so, after two years of that, I got out of coaching.

I went back to school to get my bachelor's degree. I got married in the meantime, and stayed on and got a master's degree. I was interested in electronics at the time, and so my master's degree was in that area.

I went to Bonner Springs, Kansas, and taught at the high school level. I taught electronics there for two years, and we were doing a lot of what they are doing now in industrial education. They offered woods, electronics, electricity, and metals. There were three of us that worked together, and we would just rotate students through those segments. I spent two years doing that and then was asked by the superintendent of schools if I would take over the adult

education program.

There were a lot of minorities in that particular area, and as a suburb of Kansas City, there were a great deal of poor people. In fact, there was one area uptown that did not have any running water. It was in the city limits. It had electricity, but it did not have any sewer system. I worked with the adults there, and went into homes where they lived with dirt floors. While I was teaching in Bonner Springs, I had a student who did not have hair on half his head because the rats had eaten it off when he was two days old. This was the type of student that I worked with, and it was a great learning experience for me. It was almost impossible to love some of those individuals. Because they had been abused so many times in the past, they were like porcupines--always ready to stick you, to hurt you. You had to treat them roughly just to survive.

I suppose some of my biggest gains and thrills occurred while working with those individuals. I do not know whether I was successful with the adult education program due to the fact that I could take them only so far and then they would drop out of the program. I thought they were lazy, but then I realized there is not such a thing as a lazy person. I do not think anybody is lazy. I think

everybody, from childhood on, wants to do things. They want to do things on their own. As soon as a child walks he says, "Dad, do not touch me. I want to walk on my own." I think we all want to walk on our own, but I think these individuals who have been on welfare for so long do not have any self-confidence at all. If they passed the GED exam, they knew they were going to be on their own, and the welfare check would stop. Subconsciously it scared them, so they would drop out of the GED program. If you are in the welfare system, you realize that it would be foolish to be married. If you were not married and living with someone that was working, you could remain on welfare with the children. He could continue to work and spend his paycheck on booze, and you would still have enough money to feed the family, yourself, and him. Of course, it would be against the morals of the church and Christianity to not be married; however, if you married him and he had a job, you would have been taken off of welfare immediately. So, the people that I worked with were never married. They just sort of lived together for a few years and then moved on to someone else. That was a true learning experience, probably one of my better ones.

I have really fond memories of Bonner Springs, and I feel that I



had a direct bearing on the successes in the lives of some of the people I taught. Some of these individuals came from the ghetto. They were minorities, mainly blacks, that we worked with there.

One of the problems I had in Bonner Springs that I had not anticipated was that I was a teacher, and teachers were my friends. In two years I moved to administration and had to switch friends. I could hardly take that because the teachers were still my friends, but they were not sharing their secrets about the administration like we normally did. So, I was kind of an outsider, and that did bother me.

Because of that, I left Bonner Springs and moved to Delphus, Kansas, where I became superintendent of schools and the high school principal. I spent two years there and had a good experience with a board that backed decisions we made, totally. We became quite innovative in areas such as textbooks and bells. There were 30 youngsters in class and the maximum number of textbooks from one company that we would buy would be 15, forcing teachers to get away from textbooks and start thinking a little more creatively and look at the child's needs. We did away with all bells because I could not see a need for them. I felt that children always tried to beat

that timeline. If you don't have bells, students just move from one class to the other. We had to retrain teachers, so when it was time to move, they would turn the children loose.

I went to court several times in the two years I was there. One of those times involved a banker's son, who was a senior in high school, and another senior, who was the son of a family with whom his family was feuding. The one family owned registered dogs, and the banker had this huge, mixed-breed male dog that kept jumping the fence and taking care of the registered dogs and the flawed puppies that were being born. The one family told the banker that if he did not tie up his dog and that happened again, they were going to take care of his dog. Well, it happened again. They did not kill the dog, but when they got through with it, the dog could not operate like he had operated before. I do not know how they did that, but I guess they caught him or put him to sleep while they took care of the problem. The banker really became irate and challenged the other family to a duel on Main Street, an actual gun duel on Main Street. So help me, this is a true story. The sheriff stopped that, but the sons of these two families started fighting at school. The banker's son was a big individual, and when the other boy would say

something, he would haul off and hit him. Then I would have a kid on the floor, knocked out or something. After that happened a couple times, I told both families that if it happened again, I was going to remove them for the remainder of the school year. One week before school was out, sure enough, the banker's son hit the other kid and he was there on the floor with his glasses broken. I removed them from school, but what was I going to do--allow them to graduate at the end of school? I could not do that. As I said, I had a very supportive board, so we decided that we would not allow them to graduate from high school as things stood. We decided they would have to come back, take state examinations, and make up double the time after school was out. If they passed the state examinations, then it was okay for them to graduate. Well, the bankers relations all lived in New York and were already flying out for graduation exercises. That did not help matters. I ended up in court over that deal, and we won. That was just one of the many types of court cases you get into in schools, and it is sort of foolish.

From there I accepted a job as a superintendent in Washington County. It had been six boards of education, but they unified. My first task there was to look at the schools. I recommended that

maybe they should close all six schools and go to the county seat. It is funny that I did not get tarred and feathered there, but I survived for four years and ended up in court several times over the closing of the schools. I had an outstanding board, and by the time we were through, a very united three communities. This was surprising because we ended up with two buildings in the entire three towns-- one high school and one grade school. They still operate that way today. The communities are truly united, and they united in a surprisingly short time.

I decided I wanted to become a superintendent of schools in Topeka, or Wichita, or some place like that. I went back to Kansas University to get my doctorate. I already had a family, but I just took a year off. The first semester there, I started teaching. I did not realize it, but they assigned me a Foundations of Education class. I walked into class and had 150 students. Well, it blew my mind. I did not think there was any way I could handle 150 students, especially without a grad assistant. But, I survived. It was a challenge, and I really enjoyed it. After I got my doctorate, I accepted a job here at Fort Hays because I enjoyed teaching at the college level. I have been here over 20 years now.

**MARIAN:** Well, you certainly have had an interesting teaching career. I do not know if many of us have those kinds of experiences, but I am sure that they have helped form you into the teacher that you are today. You mentioned before that you never were sorry you went into teaching, but were there ever times that you felt perhaps you had made the wrong choice?

**DR. STEHNO:** In my particular case I do not think I ever felt I made the wrong choice. I might have felt it when I was superintendent of schools. I recall one time during the summer, an former Marine came into my office and said that his daughter was not promoted, and that if I didn't promote her, he was going to lay me flat, right there in my office. I did not know his daughter. I did not know the family. I did not have the authority to promote the daughter anyway, and we had a standing policy in that district that no one would be retained unless we had parent approval, but he assured me that there was no parent approval. I tried to get hold of the principal of the school where this girl was, and the principal was on vacation. The teacher was on vacation, also. I said I could not change the grade, and he was going to lay me flat. But, I got out of that mess, and probably at that particular point, I wished I would not have been in

teaching. I survived and found out the mother had met with the teacher and decided that the child should be retained. The father had just come back from the Marines and was using his Marine tactics to try to scare me. He scared me, but he did not succeed in making me do what he wanted.

**MARIAN:** Was there any particular time, that you can put your finger on, when you knew that teaching was for you?

**DR. STEHNO:** I would say, as soon as I started. I did not know it before I started because I would not have gone into teaching had it not been for coaching. I got kicked out of high school, so I was not what you call the teacher's pet in any way, shape, or form. When I was in high school, teachers I knew had said Eddie Stehno was not at the top of their list. My relations with teachers was not that great in school. It was my fault, not the teacher's fault. I was doing too well in extra-curricular activities to get involved in school at that time. But as soon as I started teaching, it was always easy for me to explain things in a logical way, and the pats on the back I received gave me immediate the gratification. My greatest gratification has definitely been from students, not from people above me. I have always had a good relationship with students. I

felt at once that it was the profession I was meant for. If I did not feel that way, I would not be teaching, even though I really like the profession.

**MARIAN:** How many years have you been involved with education?

**DR. STEHNO:** Probably 35 years.

**MARIAN:** Thirty-five years, then obviously you made the right choice. Turning to another area, educators in our society are looked upon as leaders. What leadership qualities do you feel that you possess?

**DR. STEHNO:** I have good financial leadership qualities. Finance has always been extremely easy for me, and I work in school finance now. One of my strengths as an administrator was finance. I can always find money, and I think that I can account for money extremely well. So, I have always been a leader in that particular area. It is easy for me to get acquainted and talk with people. I think community relations skills are important. I feel that sometimes I am a little blunt and tell it like it is when maybe I should not. I guess I have always admired people who told me what they actually thought rather than beat around the bush. I think that is probably part of the farmer in me. Farmers have a tendency to be

a little more blunt and tell it like it is. I do not like to second guess others, and I do not think people have ever really had to second guess me. I have always felt that developing a proper classroom atmosphere was the most important thing I could do. If I do not have faith in someone, no matter what they say I can take it a different way. It is only if you can develop a chemistry or a faith in someone that you can form a relationship, so the first thing I work for when I deal with anyone, whether it is adults or children, is that trust or faith factor. I think without that you have nothing. I do not care how great a knowledge base you have, without a trust and a faith factor, the learning process will be hindered a great deal.

**MARIAN:** You won the Cunningham Award in 1988, and we have that right here on the desk. It reads, "Dr. Ed Stehno, Cunningham Award, Outstanding Educator 1988." And, as we can see from the award itself, it is given for outstanding work in the field of education. What is it, in the way of accomplishments, that you feel led to your receiving this particular award?

**DR. STEHNO:** Well, they have got to give it to somebody, you know. I just happened to be in town that week. I am embarrassed with awards, so I have a hard time in that particular area. I do not know



why I would receive any award in teaching. I have always felt that I could do better, and feel that way today. If I would put forth more effort, I could be a better teacher than I am, certainly more knowledgeable. I feel I could do better in the area of one-on-one relationships with students. I do not take the time that I probably should in a lot of cases involving those kinds of relationships, so I feel that I am not deserving of any award. The only reason that Cunningham Award is here is because you required me to bring it, or else you wouldn't see it.

**MARIAN:** You are a very modest individual. Apparently, the people who awarded it to you felt that you were deserving. We see another award up here on your wall.

**DR. STEHNO:** That award was given to me by the community that I thought should have tarred and feathered me. It was the district that unified six districts into one and I came along and suggested they close all the schools and go to the county seat. At the end of four years we turned that community around. I had one of the best exit parties of my life. I mean, people from all three towns turned out in masses for one big party when I was leaving, and I am sure I could have stayed the rest of my life in that community and still

have many great friends. So, that award has extra meaning.

**MARIAN:** I have a feeling you probably have other awards that you are not sharing with us. They are probably stored away.

**DR. STEHNO:** I think the best are the intangible awards you get from students. I am grading papers right now, even though I just returned from Chicago. One of the questions I asked on the last paper I graded was: "What are you going to remember about this school finance class five years from now?" A lady wrote "I love Dr. Stehno." I go, WOW, I probably never even spoke to the lady. But, it is those kinds of awards that make it all worthwhile. They are awards that no one else knows about, and that you really do not want to share with anybody else--they are just yours.

**MARIAN:** We thought perhaps your work with Time-on-Task might have been one reason for winning the Cunningham Award.

**DR. STEHNO:** I did a lot of work with Time-on-Task.

**MARIAN:** Would you like to share that with us.

**DR. STEHNO:** Well, everything is by accident with me. I am a global learner, that is, I have to look at the whole and then go to the parts. I have to watch that because of quantitative learners who need the parts and need specific directions in order to go to the

whole. I think you have a tendency to teach with your learning style and my learning style is definitely look at the whole, make mistakes, and go the parts.

Every so often we go on sabbatical or are allowed sabbatical, but you have to have a reason to go. So, you write up some research you might be doing that might qualify for a sabbatical. I did not have any research. I was going to go skiing, snow skiing. I love to snow ski. I made sure I was going to go on sabbatical second semester so I could do a lot of snow skiing, but I had to write up something and Time-on-Task was a hot topic. I just said, "Let's go do research on Time-on-Task," and wrote up two or three pages that was accepted for sabbatical. Well, before I went skiing, I thought I ought to do something, but I did not have any idea what I was going to do. To look at the global aspect of me again, I figured Time-on-Task must need a stopwatch. I must need that to be able to time students, so I bought a couple stopwatches. I had a lot of good superintendent friends out there, I just contacted some of those and went out to schools and did some experimenting.

What I would do was sit up in the front of the classroom and use two basic methods. One involved two stopwatches. I would turn

one on immediately and then look at a student for about a minute and try to determine whether he was engaged in academic endeavors or not, then move to another student. If the child was engaged in academic endeavors, I left the stopwatch on. If he was not, I shut the stopwatch off. I just focused in on one student at a time and looked at their eyes and could tell if they were on task. If it was in a math class and a student was talking to another student about language arts, I considered that on task. If they were talking about the ballgame last night, they were off task. If they were sharpening a pencil, they were off task. If they were daydreaming while the instructor was lecturing, you could watch their eyes and tell that they were off task. Then you come up with a percentage. Well, research had stated that in the United States they were on task about 25% of the time. With 1,080 hours, that was 270 hours out of the whole year our children were on task, while in Asia (and I spent a lot of time in the Asian schools, the Korean schools especially) they said they were on task 86% of the time. It is unbelievable what they are doing Asia compared to the United States with Time-on-Task. It was my original plan that summer to just hit a couple schools and then go skiing. What I discovered was that when I would

follow a group of students, like seventh graders, from one classroom to the next, with different instructors, the Time-on-Task percentages would change. They would be in one classroom, say English class, and the teacher had them on task during that one segment 80% of the time. That same group of students would move to a social science classroom, and they were on task 30% of the time.

Then I began to really bring home the fact that we ought to be paying some teachers five or six times more than others because there is a direct correlation in all research between engaged time and mastery of concept. The longer you can keep a child engaged, the better chance he has of mastering a concept. If that is the case, then it is the Time-on-Task that we need to be focusing on. And so, I ended up writing a book and a little pamphlet about Time-on-Task. One state bought a copy for every teacher, Rhode Island or one of those states back East. That was my Time-on-Task study, and I truly believe if I have 60 students and waste one minute of time, I am not wasting one minute, I am wasting one hour because I have 60 students. And who am I to have the right to waste an hour. I should not have that kind of privilege, and I think we must keep that in

mind as teachers. And yet, if they are on task 27% of the time, we are wasting a lot of valuable learning time for students and maybe some of us ought to be put in jail if we continue to do that through our lives. I went skiing very little that year. I stayed on this project the entire semester. I would be in some classrooms where that hour seemed like 50 hours, and then I would go to another classroom and the hour seemed like five minutes. It was the Time-on-Task. If you keep youngsters on task, the hour flies. If they are not on task, then time goes slowly. There is a direct correlation there. The misery we are putting some youngsters through by not keeping them on task is not right, and we just must do a better job of keeping youngsters engaged in academic endeavors. I think that is our responsibility, not the child's. We must focus in on their needs. As I look at teaching, people are pleasure-seekers. We are all pleasure-seekers.

Now how do you motivate a child? There's only one way to motivate a child. You must somehow demonstrate to him that what you are doing is going to improve his quality of life. If he sees that what he is doing will improve his quality of life either today or five years from now, it is easy to motivate him. If you cannot prove to

that child that you are improving his quality of life someplace along the line, then there is no way to motivate him because by human nature we are pleasure-seekers. That is how you keep youngsters on task, and you must be constantly creative. How can I let this child know that what we are doing is going to improve his quality of life? I think that statement "improving quality of life" is a key statement in teaching. That is how you motivate them.

**MARIAN:** Did you do any other work on Time-on-Task after that one semester? Did you go to other schools around Kansas?

**DR. STEHNO:** Well, I was in a lot of schools from Shawnee Mission to Miltonvale, Kansas, extremely small schools to extremely large schools. We followed up that study with my Time-on-Task compared to other individuals' Time-on-Task, if they were evaluating that same classroom. It is surprising how close even untrained people came when we evaluated those classrooms about the amount of Time-on-Task. I have always stated that is how teachers ought to be evaluated, their ability to keep youngsters on task. That should be a part of the evaluation instrument.

**MARIAN:** Do you feel that through the research that has been done, yours and others, we have made any changes in that area.

**DR. STEHNO:** We have made changes, but we certainly have not gone fast enough. For instance, just in the area of reading, good sound research shows that the most important factor that determines a good reader is not his reading, but his listening. The more people that read to him, the better reader he is going to be. The importance of reading to a child from birth on, and the importance of listening levels cannot be exaggerated. We do not focus in on that like we focus in on the grade reading level. To be at a fifth grade reading level, he needs to be at about a seventh grade listening level. That research we have not focused on or done anything about. If we were really interested in reading, we would have children reading comic books. There is a motivation factor to comic books, and we ought to have children reading them. There is a reading improvement factor that goes along with comic books. Remedial reading, I think, is probably the worst thing we can do for a child to really improve reading. If we are interested in remedial reading, what we ought to have that child do is start teaching reading. If he is a fifth grade student and reading at the first grade level, he ought to be teaching a first grade student how to read. There is excellent research on that. I do not know whether we have



used research like we should have, but the research is out there. I think that we have a certain accountability in some of these particular areas because the research is there.

**MARIAN:** For someone who started out going skiing, it sounds as if you have done quite a bit of work on Time-on-Task, understand it quite well, and have a lot of theories about it. I presume you hope that there is more work done in that area.

**DR. STEHNO:** Well, we have made some great changes in the way we teach math. We are not getting the job done in math. Our test results show that, and for some reason we turn youngsters off of math. It is hard to find a math teacher.

I heard a speaker the other day, who said that 25% of the parents out there are jackasses. I probably should not use this term, but it is the term he used. He said you might as well admit it, they are interested in self and materialistic things. They are not much interested in their children. They are interested in who they have as friends not their children's friends, and so on. The child that you are working with is their child and he is going to be a parent someday. If we can turn those individuals around, to really realize the value of parenting skills and turn them around in their thinking, then

they can be of help to their children. Some parents are going to be totally worthless, and you probably are not going to change them. But we can change their children. That is the concept we need to work with.

I think that if we are turning youngsters off of math, then we are doing something wrong. We cannot blame the youngster, especially when we are turning off such large numbers of children. We must blame the system. I do not know the correct way, but we must come up with new ways of teaching. We cannot continue with remedial, as we are doing, for that is more of the same. I think what we are discovering is that more learners are global learners than we anticipate, but global learners do not write books. They are willing to share their information with other people, but they do not write books. People who write books work from part to whole, exactly the opposite. The quantitative people write books; so books are written in a system of quantitative learning from part to whole. Yet we now show a higher percentage of our students being global learners, which is the whole to the part. So, we are trying to teach them part to whole when we probably should be teaching them whole to part. The reason we do not teach them that way is because the

global learners just do not write textbooks.

**DOUGLAS:** Dr. Stehno, you have undoubtedly built a philosophy of education over the years. Will you please share your philosophy with us?

**DR. STEHNO:** Everybody's philosophy of education is the same. You take a child from where he is, and you move him just as far as you possibly can. That is everybody's philosophy of education. My philosophy of education, and I think I just explained it with the other answer, is in the way you motivate youngsters. You improve their quality of life. One thing about philosophy of education, you better have some fun while you are doing it, and you better have laughter. Make sure that there is laughter in that classroom. Spontaneous laughter, then quietness, spontaneous laughter, then quietness was a sign I looked for when I was evaluating teachers. I think that is a very positive sign. That is not chaos, good learning is taking place. People are in tune to the same thing, and there is a high Time-on-Task rate when that takes place. So, I believe in having fun with about anything you do, although I also believe that learning necessarily is not all fun. Learning can be very tedious and hard work, but as long as a child knows that it is going to improve

his quality of life, he does not mind working. None of us mind working as long as it is going to improve the quality of life. That is one of the key factors that I really look for in my philosophy of education, finding things that will improve quality of life in other individuals. Motivation then is easy.

**DOUGLAS:** So you said you have been in education for about 35 years. When you first entered the profession, was that the philosophy that you had, or has your philosophy changed?

**DR. STEHNO:** I do not even know if I had a philosophy in what I did 35 years ago. I knew that I was a people person. I could never work behind a computer. I needed to be around people; I enjoyed being with people. But what my philosophy was 35 years ago, I could not tell you.

**DOUGLAS:** Do you feel your philosophy will change in the future, as time goes on?

**DR. STEHNO:** Well, it most certainly could. See, we do not understand the brain. The brain is one of the reasons I am still in education. We are in total wilderness with the brain. We understand the other parts of the body. We understand that we can take one part of one body from one individual, put it in another one and have life.

But, we do not understand how the brain functions. And so, the brain is still a mystery. As soon as we understand and grasp how a brain functions, maybe we will teach altogether differently than we are now. We know such things as: if you learn something under water, and then come to the surface, you will recite it easier and you will retain it longer than if you learned it above water. We know that if you go back under water, your thought processes improve again. Now we know such things as the fact that there is only two basic ways that long-term recall takes place, at least that we know of right now. One is the rote--you do it so many times that it is automatic, and the other is the shock treatment--there are some shocking things that have happened in life, both positive and negative, that we will remember forever. I remember the day that President Kennedy was killed. I know what I was doing. Rote allows that once you have mastered something, whether it's dribbling a basketball or playing the piano, you can be away from it for long periods of time, come back, and still know it. Long-term recall are facts and things, such as math facts, etc.. I always say that if you say two plus two is four and a child can say four, then he has learned the concept. Now, if he can use that in another situation, then he has mastered

that particular concept. He can transfer it, so, he has mastered the concept.

**DOUGLAS:** Dr. Stehno, can you tell us how education has changed since you first entered the profession?

**DR. STEHNO:** Well, when I first entered the profession, we did not have many discipline problems. I have never had discipline problems, to speak of, but there are discipline problems today, I think. Children are more hyperactive than they used to be. Teachers were respected more 35 years ago than they are now, but I do not think that is necessarily bad. Lawyers were respected more, ministers were respected more, the President of the United States was respected more 35 years ago. We would have never thought of impeaching a president at that particular time, but I think it is good that you question leadership and its role. It is in these particular areas that I think education has changed. I think here in the United States, we have had it a little too easy, economically, and we have not focused in on education as much as they have in some of the other countries.

**DOUGLAS:** In your position here at the college, you have a great impact on future administrators and future teachers, what qualities

do you want to see instilled in these people?

**DR. STEHNO:** The quality that I look for most is real power versus raw power. A raw power person wants to become an administrator or a teacher to have power over other people, and they must obey his command. We do not need those types of individuals in teaching or administration. The type of an individual that I look for is an individual who wants to share power and be thrilled when he can give power away. Power is given away when the job is learned to the point where he no longer needs that teacher. He will just say "Teacher, I already know that. I no longer need you." The only way I can feel successful as a parent with my own son or daughter is when they can tell me "Dad, I no longer need you, I can survive on my own." That is when I can be a successful parent. I think the same thing goes with teaching. It is sharing that power and giving it away. People who love to give power away and who love to train individuals so that they no longer need them, those are the types of leaders we need in education.

**DOUGLAS:** What changes do you foresee in education for the year 2000?

**DR. STEHNO:** For the year 2000 I think we have got to get away

from the right/wrong answer. Things are changing so fast, it is not knowing information, but where to find information. It is not knowing that two plus two is four, necessarily, it is being able to find that information someplace. With our vast communications systems, you can find that information, quickly. It is in the area of creativity and allowing youngsters to be more creative and in looking for end products rather than the procedures to get to the end product. Right now, the way we use our "A, B, C, D, F" system is that if you are learning a concept and are failing along the way, but at the end you have mastered the concept, you are still going to be a "C" or "D" student because of all the failures along the way. And yet, we are only after the final product, so we need to do away with the failures along the way. Those should be excellent learning experiences, and we should provide more of them. However, we should not use them for evaluation. We should evaluate them on the end product. So, a whole change of philosophy on creativity, I think, is what needs to take place.

**DOUGLAS:** Earlier, you were speaking with Mrs. Boone about travels to Korea, and noticing your bulletin board, it looks like you traveled extensively. Would you share your travels with us?



**DR. STEHNO:** Three minutes ago, when the camera broke down, I went to get the mail while you were fixing it, and I received a letter from the Third Asian-Pacific Conference on Gifted. They say, "It is with great honor you are invited as a keynote speaker to the Third Asian-Pacific Conference on Gifted being held in Seoul, Korea, August 1-4, 1994." They want me to be their keynote speaker. This just happened within the last five minutes. I will probably accept, since I have many friends in Seoul, Korea. I started traveling for selfish reasons. I wanted my children to experience travel. I would say that travel is something that no one can take away from you. People can take away your health, they can shoot you, injure you, take away your wealth, but they can never take away your memories, and that is what you have with travel. And this world is so small, the cultural memories that you have are long-lasting. If I have a favorite student in class, it will usually be a foreign student. They have an advantage in my class. I try to watch that, but I have so much I can learn and they have so much to teach me about their culture. This fascinates me, and I think the more my children, or anyone, can experience these particular cultures the better off you are. I have probably sponsored 15 tours through Europe, six or seven

through Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji Islands, Africa, and South America. I have traveled extensively, and will continue to travel extensively. I will never stop traveling as long as my health holds out. It is truly a beautiful learning experience, and it is a life-long learning experience. It is an experience that you will remember. It is the shock treatment of long-term recall, and those are your memories. Most of them are very positive and very good. Money spent on travel is money well spent.

**DOUGLAS:** You also had mentioned that in your travels you visit lots of schools. How do our educational standards compare to the foreign countries?

**DR. STEHNO:** It depends on what we are measuring. If we are measuring academic achievement, we are really behind, especially compared to a lot Asian schools, German schools, and Swiss schools. There is no doubt about it. Our test results show that and if you are in those schools you see that. You can not blame the teachers. It is the whole society of the system here in the United States. Whatever the level of importance is that we place on education, other countries just place more. A child in Korea goes to school from seven in the morning to four, and then at four he takes a break. Then

he has two hours of night school, where he goes to a private school, parents send him. It is a matter of Time-on-Task, so they place a lot more importance on it. If it is a social adjustment, it depends on what we are teaching. If we are teaching basketball skills, we are probably doing the best job in the world, however, if it is strictly academic endeavor that we are after, we are not in the ballgame with many of the other countries. But that is a whole society problem, not a school problem. That is the importance that society places upon academics in the United States versus what society places upon academics in Asia or through many countries of Europe.

**DOUGLAS:** That is all the questions we have for you. We would like to thank you for your time today, Dr. Stehno, and we appreciate it.