
BOOK REVIEWS

Colin Boylan

School of Education, Charles Sturt University,
Wagga Wagga

Andrews, H. A. (2006) **Awards and recognition for exceptional teachers: K-12 and Community College programs in the U.S.A., Canada and other countries.** Matilda Press 1019 Lakewood Drive, Ottawa, Illinois. 61350 U.S.A.. ISBN-10: 0-9787158-02; Library of Congress Control Number: 2006929104, 386 pages. Paperback, US\$ 24-95 (direct order from Matilda Press) Postage US\$ 9.00.

This book consists of 11 chapters which are subdivided into two major sections. The first three chapters focus the reader's attention on: a) why have recognition programmes; b) strategies that can be used within schools and systems to recognise exemplary teachers; and, c) the impact of recognition systems on teachers. The second section (Chapters 4-10) examines the variety of recognition systems that are available to teachers, mainly in the U.S.A., by sector and level of award - national, state level and individual school (Chapters 4-8). Additionally one chapter (Chapter 9) is devoted to Canadian recognition systems, and Chapter 10 'Other International Programs' provides the reader with a selection of awards and recognition systems from the United Kingdom, Australia, South Africa, Jamaica, Guam and Belize. The details on recognition systems within the Australian context is quite limited with only 4 award systems being mentioned, namely: the Australian Awards for University Teaching (Carrick Institute awards); Wallace McCann Award; Australian Academy of Science Teachers awards; and, Australian Teacher Education Association awards. No mention of other Australian national level awards, such as the Australia Rural Education Award, or state level award programmes (often linked to the state or territory education departments) is provided.

The final chapter, Chapter 11, summarises the positive benefits of recognising exceptional teachers. Andrews identifies 4 significant benefits, namely: 1) as a means of recognising the outstanding classroom teacher; 2) to publicise and gain general support for education; 3) to encourage and challenge teachers to achieve excellence in their teaching; and, 4) to attract high quality people into the teaching profession.

The author has set out to establish the importance that recognition systems for exemplary teachers has for both the individual teacher but also for the broader educational community. Andrews states: 'Teachers who have been receiving awards and recognition point out how *revitalizing* this system has been for them.' (p.36) Andrews also argues that these recognition systems have positive impacts on the students, and in the colleges and schools where these teachers are located.

Given that the majority of the text has a focus on recognition systems found within the American education context, the immediate value to teachers in Australia is limited. Where this book would be a useful addition would be for school leaders and administrators who wish to develop recognition systems for teachers within their school, region, or system. In particular, the text in the first three Chapters on the value of recognition systems and on developing key objectives and outcomes of recognition systems would serve as a positive template for the education leader.

Cornish, Linley. (2006). **Reaching EFA* through multi-grade teaching: Issues contexts and Practices**. Kardoorair Press Inc. PO Box 478 Armidale, NSW 2350 ISBN 0-908244-69-X, 296 pages. Paperback, \$30-00 (direct order from <http://www.kardoorair.com.au>)

This book consists of 18 chapter drawn from the Second International Multigrade Teaching Conference: Turning Biases into Benefits that was held in September 2004. Readers to Education in Rural Australia will be familiar with the research and writings of Linley Cornish as she has a long term interest in multigrade teaching. The acronym EFA from the book's title represents Education for All and this theme permeates this book. Chapter 1 *What is Multi-grade Teaching?* provides a good analytical framework that guides the reader through the variety of terminology used when describing classrooms in which children from diverse backgrounds, ages, ability levels and school years are found. In the following chapter the philosophical differences between Multi-age and Multi grade Teachings are thoroughly explored. For the pre-service teacher education students these two chapters will be extremely valuable as they become familiar with the typical arrangements that are found in most small rural and remote schools in Australia. In Chapter 3 the link to lace based education in which situated teaching and learning happens is emphasised by Pat Pridmore using the concept of context as the focus for her discussions. In the middle sections of this book, a variety of authors from many developing countries located in both the Pacific rim as well as in African and Asian communities report of practices, policies (or the lack of), and equity issue of access, participation and gender as they impact on multigrade teaching and learning. In the concluding chapter the authors summarise many of the emerging challenges in multi-grade education using three organising principles: 1) the need to develop and strengthen partnerships between all the key stakeholders engaged in providing education. It was reported that by Pridmore that 1/3 of all classes world wide are multi-grade and that in many places it is non government organisations (NGOs) that are the principle providers of education in the communities; 2) the need for the inclusion of specific pre-service teacher education courses on multigrade education as an important way forward for addressing the concern of teachers who find themselves working in multi-graded classroom. In it worthwhile to note that 75% of the 24 countries at this Conference in 2004 reported that their countries did not have any formal courses in multigrade teaching in their pre-service programmes; and, 3) there is a dearth of formal policy and support for multigrade classrooms and the teachers operating within these contexts from those countries attending the Conference. The authors conclude by stating that there needs to be policies that focus on: i) improving teacher training and

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its allied support; ii) providing flexible learning materials; iii) strategies to allow for curriculum adaptation; and, iv) flexibility in the design and use of school buildings.

This book provides an excellent contribution to the literature on multi-grade education. The book is highly recommended as an addition to the reading for pre-service teacher education students, university lecturers, policy makers within education systems and the broader educational community.