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## Letter from the Editor

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## Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

Greetings from Gardner-Webb University to wherever in the world you may be reading this letter. The growth of readership over the last year has been nothing short of astounding. More than anything else, we think the outpour of attention speaks to the dearth of opportunity to learn from practitioners who, applying the principles of disciplined inquiry, are solving one local problem at a time.

Looking to the future, we hope soon to receive contributions from emerging practitioner scholars in Organizational Leadership, those in our program here at Gardner-Webb University and those in similar programs worldwide. Another goal is to issue a call for manuscripts on a theme of interest to organizational and educational leaders. In the coming months, JOEL editors and advisors will be seeking your thoughts on what in our field most needs attention.

Although you may discover content overlap in articles in Volume 1 Issue 2, the practitioner scholarship we have published here is more mosaic than portrait. The one certain albeit unplanned commonality is that our authors represent outstanding public universities in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. We are grateful for their contribution—the authors and the universities.

We begin with a qualitative study of North Carolina public school beginning teachers' experience with district-based mentors and its impact on teacher self-efficacy, based on the work of Hobbs and Putnam of Gardner-Webb University.

From the University of Memphis, Guisino, Franceschini, and Hardman contribute a study quantifying the influence of the school environment and academic success on teacher retention in Tennessee.

Kirkman, McNees, Stickl, Banner, and Hewitt of University of North Carolina at Greensboro report a phenomenological study underscoring the importance of belonging, support, and relationships in mitigating the impact of out-of-school suspension on students now successfully matriculating through college.

Writing from Old Dominion University, Abbot's case study of a Virginia public school district describes the challenges of and benefits for district stakeholders in collaboratively designing and implementing alternative assessments.

Finally, writing from a scholarly opinion perspective, Lashley and Stickl at University of North Carolina at Greensboro argue that public school counselors, an oft-overlooked resource, are particularly qualified to assist principals with data utilization, student placement recommendations, and overall school improvement. Enjoy!