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Some Final Thoughts

The intent of this publication is to stimulate and facilitate an effective community-based educational facilities planning process. It is built upon the belief that given creative leadership, good information, and time to collaborate, citizens can and will make good decisions about their schools and communities.

The collaborative school facilities planning process embodies those qualities that John Dewey's classic *Democracy and Education* states should characterize education in a democratic society: common interests, freedom in interaction, participation, and social relationships (Dewey 1916). When new partnerships and alliances are formed and old boundaries are dissolved among school, family, jobs, and community, the results serve everyone's interest.

Every member of society has a vital stake in the healthy development of today's students and tomorrow's parents, workers, and citizens. Strategic, collaborative thinking can do a great deal to ensure the kinds of learning environments that will improve academic outcomes and strengthen communities.

Are we bound by bricks and mortar? No.

Can we discover new possibilities in old spaces? Yes.

But we must be prepared to support change...we must empower community members, teachers, and students to shape the future of education by acting as facilitators who support risk taking and encourage continuous learning.

Thirty years ago, when I first began teaching, I took great pride in having my own classroom. Today, I take even greater pride in being part of a community of learners that extends beyond my classroom walls.

—Linda Batz, Principal, Hunterdon Central Regional High School, New Jersey



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