

From the editor

As I ponder the current trends in vocational and science education, I become schizophrenic.... I'm not sure whether to be overwhelmed with optimism, or distraught with paranoia. It seems that in both camps, people are talking about us without necessarily calling our name.

Just as industrial arts education was forever changed by federal legislation in the 1970s, the Carl D. Perkins Act of 1990 promises to do the same for technology education. While it is impossible to project exactly *how* the Act will impact our profession, you can bet it won't be "business as usual" in the coming decade.

Among other initiatives, the Perkins Act seeks to encourage the integration of academic and vocational content. This would seem to bode well for technology education, since we have been working for more than a century to establish an optimal mix of the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains of learning. To the uninitiated, technology education may even appear to *be* the integration of academic and vocational curricula. In many technology education labs, it still takes more than a sidelong glance to appreciate the differing philosophies that underlie technology and vocational education. Yet, there is no clear mandate in the Act for technology education to assume a primary leadership role in this regard.

As the vocational and academic sectors grope to develop integration models, I would hope we in technology education would (finally) be recognized for our excellence in this arena. There is, of course, the danger of being subsumed in the process.

At the same time, the science education community is working around the clock to make their curricula more relevant, a task which has logically led them to consider "technology-based" activities. It is becoming increasingly difficult to differentiate between science and technology education content/methodology. The "Principles of Technology" course is a good case in point. Is it a science course or a technology course? Both, I guess, since it is being taught by both science and technology teachers. The activities described in progressive science textbooks mirror those found in progressive technology textbooks. At the risk of sounding repetitious, I would hope we in technology education would be recognized for our excellence in *this* arena as well.

At times, I think we *are* beginning to be recognized for our strengths in these areas. The recent reorganization of my State Department of Education has resulted in a new administrative position for technology education that ap-

pears to carry more clout than it used to. This was, however, an indirect result of more than two decades of strong state leadership in technology education in Virginia. And, it does not completely negate the net loss of technology education administrative positions resulting from the reorganization.

So what is to be made of the current trends in vocational and science education? Well, as usual, we have a lot of work to do to make others aware of the enormous contributions we have been making in education. As I read the reports on science and vocational education, I can't help but think we haven't given ourselves enough credit. They want technology-based activities... we've got 'em. They want an integration of academic and vocational content... check us out. We remain our own worst critics. It is time to get ourselves onto the ballot and let the public decide. °