

From the Editor

What do the Pittsburgh Steelers and the *Journal of Technology Education* have in common? The Steelers have had only three different head coaches since 1969, and *JTE* has had three editors since 1989. As some of you likely know, I am a Steelers fan. My first pet (a Labrador Retriever) was named Steeler. When my three children were born between 1999 and 2004, I was pictured in the hospital wearing the same Steelers hat. When I went on my first pheasant hunt, I was wearing an appropriately colored Steelers hat. Today, I write this editorial wearing a Steelers hat. This one is camouflage but still maintains its iconic Steelers' logo. Our profession, even with its different names, has maintained its iconic mission. Like the technology and engineering education profession, the *JTE* has changed in scope but maintains its overall mission and the vision of its founders.

Since 1989, the *JTE* has provided a forum for scholarly discussion on topics relating to technology and engineering education and has more recently provided a research-based examination of STEM education as it relates to integrated technology and engineering education. Articles have focused on technology and engineering education research, philosophy, and theory. Finally, *JTE* has published book reviews, editorials, guest articles, comprehensive literature reviews, and reactions to previously published articles. In the opening editorial in the *JTE*, Mark Sanders (1989) wrote, "We hope this inaugural issue of the *JTE* begins an ongoing discourse on issues and concerns of importance in the field of technology education" (p. 3). I believe that through the focused approach of the *JTE*, we, as a profession, have maintained the intended mission of the journal.

All of us have likely heard that history repeats itself. In their comments following Sanders' editorial in that inaugural issue, the ITEA (then International Technology Education Association) Board of Directors wrote:

We initiate this publication at a time when the state of teacher preparation institutions in the field is at one of its weakest points in history. The need for additional thought-provoking articles and issues could not be greater. Also, the expansion of one's thoughts beyond current boundaries into the sciences, engineering, liberal arts, and more are needed to communicate and promote the study of technology far beyond the narrow perspective envisioned by educators and the general public. (1989, p. 4)

Technology and engineering teacher preparation institutions in 2020 are likely at their all-time low; however, the expansion of research beyond technology education has come to fruition through the addition of engineering education and STEM education. Yes, history can repeat itself, but history also moves us toward innovation.

While completing a targeted literature review for my final “from the editor,” I discovered an editorial by Lee Smalley in the inaugural edition of the 1989 *JTE* titled “Images of Schools: 2020 Possible, Probable or Preferable?” The editorial is thought-provoking, and I would encourage all of you to read it; however, I wanted to highlight the overarching questions that Smalley used in the editorial:

- What are we going to do about the school as a helping place?
- What are we going to do about the school as a democratic place?
- What are we going to do about the teacher as director?
- What are we going to do about recognizing the importance of talent?
- What are we going to do about teaching higher order thinking skills?
- What are we going to do about including the future in schools?

I would like to see multiple editorials from professionals in technology and engineering education submitted to the *JTE* that either address these questions from 1989 or propose new questions that can guide us for the next 10 years.

Through the vision of the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association, the Council on Technology Teacher Education (now the Council on Technology and Engineering Teacher Education), Mark Sanders (Editor 1989–1997), and James LaPorte (Associate Editor 1989–1997 and Editor 1997–2010), the *Journal of Technology Education* was developed, and it has served as one of the flagship research-based journals in our profession. I have been honored to serve as the third editor of the *JTE* from 2010–2020.

When I took over as *JTE* editor in 2010, I really had just one internal mission for myself with a few subpoints. First, I wanted to make the former editors and the editorial board members proud. Second, I wanted the readers and subscribers to feel that the work they were reading was worthy of their time. Third, I wanted the authors of the manuscripts to know that I worked for them to make their manuscripts better. In a nutshell, I told myself, “Don’t screw it up! The profession is counting on you.” As I transition out of my role as editor, I know that the new editors, Dr. Mary Annette Rose and Dr. Jim Flowers from Ball State University, will carry the journal forward because they are both professionals beyond rebuke. *JTE* is in fantastic hands! I wish Drs. Rose and Flowers nothing but the best of luck in their new role, and I am excited to see not only how *JTE* history repeats itself but also the innovation that they will bring to it.

In closing, I want to thank Mark Sanders, Jim LaPorte, ITEEA, CTETE, and Amanda Fain, the technical editor for *JTE*. I would also like to thank the *JTE* editorial board members for their relentless professionalism and all of the professionals who are conducting research and submitting their work to *JTE*.

Chris Merrill

References

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