



4-1-1992

# Foreword

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### Recommended Citation

Harden, G. Daniel (1992) "Foreword," *Educational Considerations*: Vol. 19: No. 2. <https://doi.org/10.4148/0146-9282.1510>

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# Foreword

This issue of *Educational Considerations* is, for the most part, different than most. It deals with some of the broad foundational issues that effective school administrators must think about but often do not find the time to consider. The reasons are clear. After 17 years in the principal's chair I can understand how the report that the superintendent thinks is so vital seems always to take priority over the calm reflection needed to sort out honest purposes and goals. A quick, snappy newsletter is easier to fit between irate parents than Plato's "Seventh Letter".

One of the challenges of the course I teach in philosophy of education is to convince the teacher, who is perhaps only taking the class for purposes of recertification to begin with, that what Plato and Aristotle and Dewey said pertains very directly to what they are doing, or are supposed to be doing, in classrooms across Northeastern Kansas. I am usually successful, not because I am a great teacher but because of the power of the texts and the excitement generated by their ideas.

Many of those who have contributed to this issue I have known for a long time. Others are new friends. I was about 16 years old when I first picked up a copy of Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind*, first published in 1953. It was hard going for me and I can't swear that I read every word of every page, but I read most of it. It bore out Richard Weaver's book title, *Ideas Have Consequences*. The traditions and approaches to life and the civil-social order of which Russell Kirk spoke those many years ago are still central to my thinking. My wife and I were honored to be guests at Piety Hill in Mecosta, Michigan, last July. We interviewed Russell and Annette Kirk for this issue after dinner. For over thirty years I have had intermittent contact with the Wizard of Mecosta, and his kindness and helpfulness has never flagged.

But there are a lot of different views represented in this issue. I have reflected on them and concluded that there is something to irritate and agitate almost everyone, and something that will comfort almost everyone. That, it would seem, is not a bad recipe for a journal such as this. For many administrators it will be good tonic. Perhaps something to take to the seventh basketball game on Friday!

Daniel Harden