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Editors' Notes

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Editors' Notes: A BIG Thank You for All of the Support

In March 2006 we launched the first issue of the IJPBL and received overwhelming enthusiasm and support. We want to take the time to thank those people who helped get the idea of a journal devoted to PBL moving, including the staff at Purdue University Press, our board, and our very dedicated group of reviewers. In addition, we would like to extend our appreciation to the administration at Purdue University, especially George Hynd, Dean, College of Education; Jeff Gilger, Associate Dean, College of Education; and Jim Mullins, Dean, Libraries. We were also encouraged by the response we received at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) during the PBL special interest group meeting in April at the 2006 annual conference. The journal was recognized again in an email to all members—bringing more interest and additional submissions. Finally, we want to thank Sharon Gonger, Purdue Alum, who sent us a generous donation to use for start-up costs. We are truly grateful for all of the positive feedback!

Articles in this Issue

The *IJPBL* is a mentoring journal. As part of our mission, we provide one graduate student or untenured faculty member, per issue, the opportunity to work closely with a board member to refine a manuscript for submission. In this issue, Brian R. Belland, a graduate student at Purdue University, received one-on-one mentoring from Peggy A. Ertmer to write and prepare the article, *Perceptions of the value of problem-based learning among students with special needs and their teachers.* Belland, Ertmer, and Simons provide a framework for using a PBL approach with middle school students who have special needs. While much of the PBL literature focuses on gifted learners, their study looks specifically at the perceptions of those with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities, and their teachers, regarding the value of participating in a PBL unit.

The effect of a problem-centered, enculturating experience on doctoral students' self-efficacy, by Joanna C. Dunlap, reports on the use of PBL from the theoretical perspective of a community of practice. This study demonstrates how students who engage in real-world activities, reflecting the true nature of educational leadership and scholarship, prepared them to share their knowledge and expertise with others and identify themselves as contributing members of a profession.

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Finally, John R. Mergendoller, Nan L. Maxwell, and Yolanda Bellisimo, contributed *The effectiveness of problem-based instruction: a comparative study of instructional methods and student characteristics*. This article supports *IJPBL*'s mission to publish research on applications of problem-based learning in K–12 classrooms. The study compares the effectiveness of PBL and traditional instructional approaches in developing high school students' macroeconomics knowledge. Additionally, this study examines whether the PBL approach was differentially effective with students having different levels of verbal ability, interest in economics, preference for group work and problem solving efficacy.

We hope you find this issue helpful to your work in problem-based learning. Your interest in *IJPBL* is greatly appreciated, and we look forward to continuing publications of quality scholarship. If you are doing interesting research in PBL, please consider submitting manuscripts for review. Submission guidelines are posted on the website.