

# PREFACE

## STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

### ***Purpose***

As the title of this book suggests, we believe there is a heart or a core to teaching. We also believe that if teaching as a career is to bring us happiness over the long term it is important for each one of us to find what is at the heart of teaching. *Seeking the Heart of Teaching* is a book about teacher development: the process of developing the internal and external resources to support your knowledge of subject matter and teaching strategies. It provides opportunities for structured reflection on professional and personal development and offers suggestions for how to implement change.

### ***Audience***

If you are a teacher who loves to learn about yourself and wants to experience how learning more about yourself can improve student learning in your classrooms and help you become a more effective and efficient teacher, then *Seeking the Heart of Teaching* is for you. It is intended for both new and experienced teachers because no matter how long you have been teaching and no matter how old you are, there is always more to learn about teaching. Teachers who are newer to their careers may find that this book presents a number of issues to explore and pathways to consider that will be important in achieving their long-term goals as teachers. Mid-career and master teachers will find this book gives them a different perspective on the pathways they have followed and on the many different paths still open to them.

### ***Presentation***

This book is primarily written in the genre employed in professional publications, such as journal articles and books in teacher development series, but we have kept the tone friendly and informal. The main body of the text is intended for all readers. In addition, we provide footnotes and

endnotes. Footnotes are reserved for short notes and references. Endnotes are more speculative in nature and explore certain topics in greater detail. Neither the footnotes nor the endnotes need to be read to make sense of and follow the main body of the text.

We use the conventions of conceptual frameworks and figures to explain and support ideas in this book. While we find that these figures help us in thinking through and understanding the concepts, we also recognize that this may not be true for everyone. We all learn in different ways. We hope the figures and conceptual frameworks are helpful to you because the essential information is chunked and presented in a visual summary that can make it easier to remember the information presented. If you find that the figures are not useful memory aids, we also believe that it is possible to focus on the prose and understand the ideas presented.

### ***Evidence***

We offer an extensive array of references from a variety of disciplines and genres to support the hypotheses in this book. In some cases, the references are included to provide empirical support for claims or arguments. In many other cases, they are included to indicate that the hypotheses and ideas we are writing about are not unique to us and that other disciplines have come to similar conclusions from different bodies of research and a wide range of experiences. Many of the quotes, which are taken from individuals both within and outside of academia, are designed to serve the same purpose—i.e., to enable us to make a connection between teachers' professional and personal lives, which may vary widely.

### **TEACHER CHANGE**

*Seeking the Heart of Teaching* can be viewed as a book about teacher change although the types of changes explored in this book take time to implement. It is unlikely that dramatic changes will result simply from reading this book or any other book. Nevertheless, we know from our own experiences that reading has often planted the seeds of change in us and has supported the changes that occurred later in our lives. Ultimately, you must find your own ways of engaging with the concepts and suggested strategies in this book for implementing change over extended periods of time.