



Karen Seashore

January 3, hrs 9.00 – Room 112

BEYOND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITIES: THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRATIC SCHOOLS.

In most countries, the history of schooling is deeply embedded with a sense of place and local culture. Schools were seen as part of their local communities, and were extensions of family, work, and church. Over the last century and a half, public schools have evolved to match the dominant state-focused ideologies of liberalism and social democracy. The participatory democratic foundations of schooling have been diminished in favor a strong professional bureaucracies and state regulation. While these trends have strengthened the adequacy and equity of public education, much has also been lost. Current research has focused on creating community within schools, but it is also time to consider how schools relate to the communities that they work with most immediately. Four different ways of thinking about the relationship between schools and communities will be discussed. The presentation emphasizes the need to consider the role of both schools and communities in creating well-educated children who are prepared for adult roles.

Karen Seashore is Professor of Educational Policy and Administration at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Seashore has more than 30 years of experience in studying school improvement. Her work in K-12 education has focused on the problem of renewing urban schools beginning with the research on urban high school's implementation of effective schools/effective teaching programs in the mid 1980s and continuing through an eight-year association with the University of Wisconsin's Center for Effective Secondary School. In addition, Dr. Seashore has been involved with the Center for the Organization and Restructuring of Schools where she and her colleagues Sharon Kruse, Tony Bryk, and Helen Marks, developed a research program on the impact of professional community on student experiences and performance. She is also active internationally, and has worked on educational reform and leadership issues in countries ranging from Azerbaijan to Sweden. Her most recent publications focus on creating democratic schools. She has served on the executive council for the University Council for Educational Administration, and is a past-president of Division A (Educational Administration) of the American Educational Research Association. In addition, she serves on numerous editorial boards., ranging from *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* to *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*.