Cal Poly Professor Co-Edits Book on Superintendents and School Board Leadership

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- George J. Petersen, a Cal Poly education professor, has co-edited a book that examines how school leadership influences the quality of children’s education.


“The Politics of Leadership” is a scholarly work recommended as a resource for anyone interested in becoming a superintendent, those who teach future district administrators, and those who are interested in studying district leaders.

Said one reviewer, “The book invites the reader to deliberate on alternative policy strategies in the leadership of schools in these changing and turbulent times. Professors Petersen and Fusarelli have done an excellent job at gathering together a group of nationally renowned scholars that present different views of this dynamic relationship. In the end, this work contributes greatly to the conversation and understanding of how the superintendent and school board relationship ebbs and flows to influence policy, decision-making, and the education of children.”

Petersen, a resident of Los Osos, is an associate professor in the educational leadership and administration program in Cal Poly’s College of Education. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome, Italy, in 1981; a master's degree in 1991 and a doctorate in 1993 in educational policy, leadership and organizational studies, both from UC Santa Barbara.

Previously he taught in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri-Columbia and served as associate director of the University Council for Educational Administration, a consortium of universities focused on improving the preparation of educational leaders and promoting the development of professional knowledge in school improvement and administration.

As a public school teacher in California, Petersen received a 1988 Sallie Mae Outstanding Teacher Award, recognizing the top 100 teachers in the United States.

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