



# CHAPTER 1



## The Urban Superintendents Program Leadership Framework

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Quite a few years ago I came across an alarmingly true-to-life fable recounting how generations of “wise men and women” talked, debated, argued, and, ultimately, could not agree on how to solve the problems confronting the education of their children (Bushkin, 1969). One day the “wise men and women” faced their failure as they looked upon countless children grown up in a system of mis-education—their faces showing anger, frustration, and hopelessness. The failure of the not so “wise men and women” to act boldly resulted in tragic suffering across their land, in communities of every size and all demographics.

Unlike the “wise men and women” of yesteryear, we have the tools and knowledge needed to dramatically change schools so that all of our children can be guaranteed the opportunity to succeed in school and life. The Urban Superintendents Program (USP) Leadership Framework is among the tools available to equip the “wiser men and women” of our time with a comprehensive model for systemic improvement of outcomes for all learners. It is a tool that is action- and solution-oriented, elegant in its thoroughness, and strategic in design; a tool that informs comprehensive action for approaching the complex challenges of excellence and equity.



There have been many frameworks developed to inform the field of urban education over the past several decades. Many of them are well researched and thoughtfully developed and have been used with varying degrees of success. There is no shortage of frameworks for policymakers and practitioners to adopt and adapt to guide their journey toward eliminating the pernicious achievement gaps that exist in urban, suburban, and rural schools. *Every Child, Every Classroom, Every Day* provides practitioners in varied roles with a leadership framework and authentic examples of superintendents who are acting boldly to demonstrate that schools can effectively improve outcomes for all students—regardless of race or socioeconomic status. The uniqueness of the USP Leadership Framework is its voluntary ownership by a community of men and women who have shaped the framework's core values and principles, and who have embraced the framework components to guide their whole-system change so as to ensure equity and excellence for every student in their charge.

The USP Leadership Framework, as an interdependent, nested construct, provides a comprehensive approach for leading and managing system-wide efforts to improve academic outcomes; foster collaboration across all stakeholders; pursue aggressive actions to plan, implement, and sustain an aligned, coherent focus on the improvement of the instructional core; and support accountability systems that are reciprocal and consistently applied across the entire school district organization. The framework itself is the result of collaborative learning and research over the past twenty years that has engaged superintendents, policymakers, practitioners, researchers, reformers, and doctoral students. It is informed by theory, applied research, evidence-based best practices, and the literature on leadership and management.

To illustrate the framework in practice, this book includes descriptive case studies of superintendents and school districts that have positively influenced teaching and learning, leadership and management, collaborative efforts, resource allocation, politics, state and federal accountability mandates, and the supports to address school and nonschool factors affecting student performance. The case studies of superintendents and the portraits of their demanding circumstances detail approaches to overcoming challenges that have application from the boardroom to the classroom. The school districts featured in *Every Child, Every Classroom, Every Day* exemplify the context-specific application of the USP Leadership Framework as a resource for giving direction in the areas of leadership, equity, instruction, collaboration, governance, resource allocation, and accountability.

The book is not necessarily intended to be read from cover to cover. You will, however, gain a more nuanced understanding of the various components of leadership and their interconnectedness by reading





the book in its entirety. The book is designed to be a resource for superintendents, principals, central office staff, board members, aspirant leaders, and others to examine the application of the components of the USP Leadership Framework to their work. For example, sitting superintendents making decisions about reform can read the book with their senior leadership teams to learn from their contemporaries, examine and push their own work forward, and devise new plans for improvement. A principal with a handful of high-quality, effective teachers determined to scale up the intermittent success in his school can learn how collaborative leadership focused on instruction could enhance overall teaching and learning. Teachers committed to increasing family engagement in their school can examine the leadership and lessons learned from superintendents' communication and community engagement plans.

The above are only a few of the ways the book can be used. The intent of the contributors is to provide useful information that illuminates how transformation-oriented school districts and leaders have applied the framework as a means to tackle a variety of issues and challenges. By focusing on real work and authentic circumstances, this book provides access to not only the tactical and strategic thinking behind the actions of effective school district leaders but also the high-leverage strategies they selected to improve learner outcomes and increase effectiveness of district operations. The USP Leadership Framework represents a touchstone for readers interested in rethinking the comprehensiveness of their own district transformation efforts.

*Every Child, Every Classroom, Every Day* offers readers detailed explorations of superintendents who are operating within a belief system that is based on high levels of student achievement in challenging content. The rich portraits center on superintendents in districts of varying sizes, demographics, geographic regions, governance structures, and levels of financial support. Equity, instructional focus, politics, resource allocation, accountability, and community engagement are common themes that are reiterated across the district portraits. Each case study is preceded by the perspective of an expert with extensive background in the USP Leadership Framework components highlighted in the case study. The cases transparently present the unique challenges, issues, and opportunities superintendents face. You will quickly understand that there is no "one-size-fits all" strategic approach that can be easily transplanted from one place to another. Context does matter, and responses to context are important to consider in designing your district's change strategy. Each case study is thus followed by a reflection from a practicing leader, usually a sitting superintendent, who discusses how the work looks different in his or her context. Regardless of circumstances, an unequivocal commitment





to the vision of excellence and equity across a community's entire student body is nonnegotiable. These core beliefs are embedded throughout the USP Leadership Framework.

As you engage with the rich teaching cases of superintendents and school districts featured in this book, you inevitably will examine your own practice, gaining deeper insights that will challenge you to determine your role in the improvement of district effectiveness. The emphasis of the book is on the urban superintendency; however, we believe that the cases presented have relevance to superintendents in all types of districts, as well as school board members, central office staff, school-level staff and administrators, or graduate students preparing for leadership roles at the school or district level. The USP Leadership Framework is a useful construct whether you are at the emerging, early, or mid-career stage, or engaged in the entry or exit phase of a superintendency. In a field that suffers from whiplash-like exposure to ideas, solutions, fads, and regulations, the USP Leadership Framework will persist through the actions of leaders at different career stages who passionately embrace the framework's values and principles and adapt it to their own theories of change (Institute for Research and Reform in Education and Aspen Institute Roundtable for Comprehensive Community Initiatives, 2000).

## FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW

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The instructional core is the heart of the USP Leadership Framework. As Richard Elmore and others have shouted from the rooftops of public education and in their book, *Instructional Rounds in Education* (City, Elmore, Fiarman, & Teitel, 2009), changes in the effectiveness of the instructional core are the primary lever for increasing student learning and performance. The USP Leadership Framework, with the instructional core as the central focus, informs the development of comprehensive, system-level improvement designs that exist to support improvements at the student and classroom levels. Further, the framework design includes the engagement of a wide cross-section of the school, local community, and leaders at the state and federal levels, all of whom are important to efforts to influence the instructional core. Too often we get bogged down in the politics, the conflicts, and the complexity of leading school districts, and we become detached from the classroom as a central focus of the system's work. Until superintendents and other district leaders accept the instructional core as the central focus of everyone's work, little will change, and the children will continue to wait.

The four core values of the USP Leadership Framework presented in Figure 1.1 are anchored in the belief that the instructional core must be

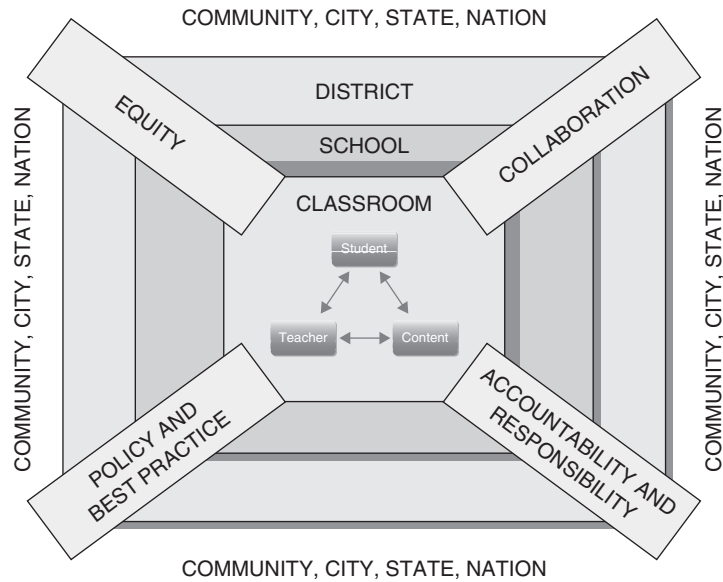


FIGURE 1.1 Urban Superintendents Program Leadership Framework

the central focus for all adults who make decisions that influence the interactions of teachers and students around academic content. School district superintendents must have sound knowledge of the instructional core to lead the system from having isolated classrooms or schools providing effective instruction to system-wide consistency in every classroom for every child. Every decision at the classroom, school, district, community, city, state, or national level must be measured on the value-added scale to enhance the quality of the instructional core and the meaningful engagement of students in schoolwork that will prepare them for positive adult roles. All other efforts amount to little more than window dressing that will have little impact on student dispositions and their acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Focusing whole-system change on the improvement of instructional effectiveness requires that superintendents have an intimate understanding of the instructional core, which comes from deep and consistent observation of teaching and learning. Superintendents need to be engaging with teachers, school-level leaders, board members, and central office staff in conversations that lead to observation and analysis based on an understanding of what constitutes high-quality classroom instruction. As a colleague recently said to me, “You can’t lead changes to improve instruction if you don’t know how good instruction looks in





real classrooms.” Without this knowledge, the superintendent and others have limited awareness of the real needs of teachers and students. When instruction is truly at the core, effective superintendents have their sights fixed on alignment across the school district. The superintendent is in the unique position to lead, direct, and manage the change process, and knowing the centrality of the instructional core must increasingly become the basis for accountability for all adults in the school system.

If the improvement of student performance and success in schools and communities is the desired end result of improvement efforts at all organizational levels, then equity, collaboration, accountability, and responsibility; responsive policy; and the deployment of best leadership practices for instructional improvement are necessary means.

## THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE USP LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK

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In the USP Leadership Framework, there are four core values and guiding principles—equity, collaboration, accountability, and policy and best practices—that direct every action a superintendent takes and underpin decision making at every level in the district to support the instructional core. Customarily, achievement-oriented leaders might follow three of the four core values and guiding principles, encouraging collaboration both to use best instructional practices and to hold people accountable for the achievement of some of the district’s students. But the radical reformers committed to the USP Leadership Framework are also profoundly committed to ensuring equity—for every child, in every classroom, every day. In fact, superintendents committed to this framework pursue equity for all by tearing down silos, infusing best practices, and holding everyone accountable for each and every child’s achievement, at times even influencing state and national policy.

### *Equity*

Equity is the heart and soul of the USP Leadership Framework. True equity ensures that all learners, regardless of race, ethnicity, language proficiency, or socioeconomic status, have access to opportunities to be engaged in high-quality instruction and learning environments that prepare them to meet or exceed academic performance expectations. Equitable schools support students’ development for full participation in society in family, community, and work settings; and they eliminate barriers to achieving equitable outcomes for all learners. Academic excellence and equity are twin goals within this framework. You can’t have





one without the other. The pursuit of equity requires the superintendent to be the anywhere-anytime advocate for the equity agenda in the school district and communities. There is no school district role that is better positioned to robustly communicate the equity vision than that of the superintendent.

Each superintendent included in this book models the beliefs and values that are fundamental to the USP Leadership Framework. Collectively they are unified in their belief in the ability of all students to be successful in rigorous academic programs, and they are intolerant of the excuses and alibis that have been used to explain the failure of a district to successfully educate each and every child. The superintendents featured in the case studies have taken on the status quo and used their positions as the bully pulpit from which to persistently place the equity vision before all stakeholders. The case studies in this book illustrate strategies superintendents have used to make equity everybody's business. Whether instructional or noninstructional, no school district employees are exempt from aligning their functions and operations with the equity vision the superintendent advocates.

Atlanta Public Schools superintendent Beverly Hall adopted the balanced scorecard as a system tool to demonstrate transparency in the district's efforts to reduce dropout rates and improve college readiness and success. Every department within Atlanta Public Schools is accountable for specific functions that are constantly monitored and reported to the board and public. Arlene Ackerman, superintendent of the School District of Philadelphia, used school visits on her first day in the district to immediately send her equity message to the community, contrasting well-resourced schools endowed with science labs, adequately stocked libraries, and rigorous instructional programs with other schools that had bathrooms with no doors on stalls, textbook shortages, peeling paint, and other indicators of inadequate conditions and opportunities for students and their teachers. Within just six months she instituted changes in resource allocation and plans to develop a weighted funding formula to further provide differential systems of support for students and their families based on student needs.

Chris Steinhauser, Long Beach Unified School District superintendent, made it clear that it was unacceptable to continue differential access to advanced placement courses that excluded nearly 80 percent of his student population from full participation in rigorous coursework at the high school level. Christine Johns, superintendent in suburban Utica Community Schools in Michigan, collaborated with less-affluent urban districts to provide access for students who were disproportionately denied the quality of education offered in her school system. Every case study and superintendent reflection presented in this book includes





discussion of equity approaches used by superintendents to scale up solutions of excellence across, and sometimes even beyond, their school districts.

### *Collaboration*

The belief that superintendents, school boards, district and school administrators, unions, and politicians acting independently of each other can mobilize the moral, political, and organizational will to achieve equity and excellence for all students is uninformed. The archaic, systemic arrangement of all too often adversarial roles acts to hinder, rather than facilitate, the change needed to accomplish important outcomes for our students.

Context matters immensely in shaping the approach to collaboration that will best address the political and governance structures, organizational culture, relationships, collective bargaining history, and influences of race and social class membership in any given place. Each case study includes a discussion of a broad spectrum of strategies to engage important stakeholders in the reform process. Each superintendent shares the context-responsive approach to build support for equity and excellence for all students. In every district discussion, the focus of collaboration is to address conditions that can influence the system's ability to guarantee opportunities for all learners. Inevitably you will also be exposed to the issues and challenges of working through thorny human resource decisions, tough labor negotiations, accountability for implementation of programs and activities identified to improve student performance, and controversial efforts to link compensation to student performance. Collaboration is desirable, but the best interests of students must always dominate the purpose of these efforts. Collaboration on power sharing for adult interests only is not a model that is likely to change access to equity and excellence for our children. Collaboration anchored in a mutual commitment to prepare students for success in their lives must be the chief goal of a partnership across stakeholders and their interests.

### *Accountability and Responsibility*

A commitment to equity requires well-defined accountability strategies in which individuals and district units at all levels are clear about performance targets and responsibilities. The design of accountability strategies must be driven by the system-wide instructional focus and must act to communicate the improvement of student performance as everyone's job, including both instructional and noninstructional personnel. We must move the focus of accountability from federal and state mandates







to internally driven accountability systems that have credibility among the people who are expected to meet goals and targets. Contributor Richard Elmore maintains that external accountability must be preceded by internal accountability, which he defines as occurring “when school personnel must share a coherent, explicit set of norms and expectations about what a good school looks like before they can use signals from the outside to improve student learning” (Elmore, 2002, paragraph 12). The reality for many school superintendents is that the further away the source of accountability is from the school, the more irrelevant it is in the classroom. Building commitment to internal accountability is enhanced by active engagement between the school-sites and central office, continuous monitoring of performance, and communications of expectations and results. The superintendents featured in this book have developed context-specific approaches to internal accountability that align with external accountability pressures. In each of the district stories presented here, school leaders have implemented reforms in which expectations, expressed as internal accountability systems, are aligned well with external state and federal requirements.

### *Policy and Best Practices*

More and more educational policies emerging at the state and federal levels are directly affecting school districts, schools, and classrooms. Districts and schools have the hard job of managing the tentacles of external policies to reduce the diffusion of focus on instructional improvement. The case studies of Chris Steinhauser in Long Beach; Rudy Crew in New York and Miami-Dade; and Deborah Jewell-Sherman in Richmond, Virginia, are examples of how superintendents can maintain a laser-like focus on the instructional core while serving the external policy and accountability expectations. Public schools will always live in an external policy context that makes it difficult for district and school leaders to meet such requirements while developing and sustaining a tightly coupled local policy approach that protects the focus on the instructional core.

Finally, *Every Child, Every Classroom, Every Day* contains many examples of best practice strategies and activities that are getting results as measured by student achievement indicators. Elmore’s reciprocal accountability at the policy and operational levels is a must to ensure the consistent presence of best practices across all classrooms. The absence of pressure to expect consistent implementation of instructional strategies for which there is strong evidence of a positive impact on student learning is unacceptable. Likewise, it is unacceptable to fail to provide a level of support commensurate with the expected changes of practice.



“All pressure + no support = no change. All support + no pressure = no change.” Reciprocal accountability to align the commitments and expectations of the school, district, and board is essential to eliminate alibis and excuses, which prevent every classroom from being a learning environment in which best practices are consistently present for all learners.

## **OVERVIEW OF *EVERY CHILD, EVERY CLASSROOM, EVERY DAY***

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When the editors went about designing the book, they brainstormed the major facets of the work of urban school leaders. Although the superintendency is much too nuanced to be distilled into a few large pieces, they wanted to highlight key areas of the work. Rather than write theoretical pieces, they decided that teaching cases would better illustrate the multifaceted nature of the work. Each case study site was chosen to illustrate particular approaches and practices. For instance, even though Beverly Hall is known for raising student achievement, adopting sound business practices, and working with state and local governments to support her education initiatives, the editors chose to highlight the community engagement portion of her work in Chapter Eight. Naturally, the teaching case only provides you with a glimpse into this complex work and is not intended to tell the entire story. You instead are encouraged to be an active participant, a member of Hall’s cabinet. How would you advise her to push forward? What would you change? Then, step out of the scenario and envision how you could take the lessons she has learned and apply them to your personal situation.

By using the case study method, this book gives you the rare opportunity to devise solutions to situations that are steeped in both theory and practice. We hope that you will take the opportunity to discuss each case with your colleagues and fashion an approach that works not only with the facts of the case but also in your context. To assist you on this journey, below is a description of each of the following chapters.

Chapters Two and Eleven offer insight into considerations and strategies of a superintendent’s entry and exit, respectively, two important periods in the tenure of a school superintendent. The discussion of entry in Chapter Two examines the challenges facing leaders entering districts in various ways—through promotion from within and from outside; in low-performing districts that are in chaos; and in districts that are high-performing for most but with clear evidence of failure when it comes to students of color, poor students, English language learners, and students with special needs. The entry strategies presented in this chapter range





from formalized approaches involving high-powered transition teams and external audits of instruction and operations to more internally driven stakeholder engagement designs that place the superintendent in a listening and learning role. Chapter Eleven focuses on the critical importance of planning for exit, discussing the implications of the various motivations for superintendents to leave school districts, including planned retirement, new job opportunities, political dynamics, or personal reasons.

Holly Weeks begins Chapter Three, *Communicating the Vision*, with a commentary about a superintendent's core truths and the tools with which she conveys her message for change. The case study shares the experience of Meria Joel Carstarphen, former superintendent of St. Paul Public Schools in Minnesota, who worked to debunk myths about long-ignored major achievement gaps. Superintendent Brian Osborne reflects on his experience of communicating his vision as a contrast to Carstarphen's experience. He offers his perspective on communicating the vision in a more affluent suburban district in which equity for all students and closing performance gaps were not part of the community's conversation or vision prior to his arrival.

In Chapter Four, *Strategic Planning*, Janice Jackson frames the importance of a unified planning strategy to align the efforts of the many stakeholders who move the school district toward improved student achievement. The case study depicts how Seattle Public Schools superintendent Maria Goodloe-Johnson employed a diverse set of systematic data collection strategies and analyses, used performance management strategies, and commissioned numerous audits examining different aspects of the school system—from operations to curriculum and instruction. The data informed a comprehensive approach to developing the "Excellence for All" plan to accomplish five major system goals. Maree Sneed, a former teacher and school district administrator and current outside counsel to urban districts across the country, shares her perspective as an educator and an attorney about how districts can plan and prepare for change to address instructional, legal, and managerial challenges through deliberate, thoughtful, strategic planning processes.

Chapter Five, *Instructional Improvement*, examines the imperative for superintendents to provide aggressive leadership that is deliberately and intensely focused on the improvement of instruction for all students. Richard Elmore has deep and extensive knowledge of research, policies, and practices, with much of his own research concentrated on the instructional core—specifically, "the essential interaction between teacher, student, and content that creates the basis of learning" (Blanding, 2009, paragraph 1). The efforts of Deborah Jewell-Sherman in Richmond Public Schools tell the story of radically transforming a low-performing





district into one that fostered unprecedented improvements in performance for students historically undereducated in failing schools. Rudy Crew, former chancellor of the 1.1 million students overseen by the New York City Department of Education, provides the reflection on Jewell-Sherman's work. Crew is nationally known for leading some of the nation's largest school districts and for forcefully addressing the problem of underperforming schools by providing differentiated supports in the New York City and Miami-Dade school systems.

Chapter Six, *School Boards and Unions*, presents the work of Andrés Alonso, chief executive officer of the Baltimore City Public Schools. Susan Moore Johnson opens the chapter by providing expert commentary on organizational change, unions, administrative practice, and management approaches needed to drive higher levels of student performance. Then the case study of Alonso illustrates the complexity of collaborating with governance and the collective bargaining units in school districts of every type and size. The case study highlights his leadership decisions and partnerships with the board of education, city and state governance officials, and the unions. Joshua Starr, superintendent of schools in Stamford, Connecticut, reflects on his efforts to manage the delicate balancing of his governance relationships with a highly politicized, nine-member elected school board, as well as with the board of finance and board of representatives.

Chapter Seven, *Realigning Resources*, discusses the disciplined alignment of the financial resources of the district to the superintendent's vision for instructional improvement. James Honan explores the work of financial management and aligning resources with organizational mission, two areas of critical importance to the success of the superintendent. In this chapter's case study, Arlene Ackerman, leading the School District of Philadelphia, demonstrates her financial acumen and ability to align resources with a vision of equity for all students. The case study captures Ackerman's short- and long-term strategies for addressing an inherited deficit while establishing a tactical focus for the re-allocation of dollars to follow the needs of students. The reflection by Christine Johns, superintendent of Utica Community Schools, portrays the financial and equity issues in an urban-suburban district eight miles north of Detroit. Utica has a reputation of being a high-performing school district, but not for all students, and Johns outlines the challenges her district faced during the recent economic downturn.

Introducing Chapter Eight, *Community Engagement*, is Karen Mapp, who calls for school systems to reframe the relationship with parents and communities in urban school districts to assemble an array of resources for raising levels of student performance. The case study of Beverly Hall in Atlanta Public Schools tells the story of the positive





benefits of superintendent-led community engagement initiatives to mobilize the school system and its diverse stakeholders around a collective responsibility to improve student achievement. Her community engagements included insiders and outsiders, parents, and CEOs; the mayor and governor; community-based organizations; and a host of social and civic groups. Superintendent of the Boston Public Schools Carol Johnson and her assistant superintendent of family and student engagement Michele Brooks collaborated to share their leadership work of building relationships across diverse cultures and populations, a process used to reconnect the entire community in new and active ways.

Scaling up instructional reforms to ensure that every child has equitable access to opportunities to be successful in a high-quality instructional program is a challenging and elusive goal for superintendents. In Chapter Nine, *Scaling Up*, scholar and practitioner Robert S. Peterkin maintains that bringing best practices to scale to achieve equity and excellence for every child is the moral responsibility entrusted to the school superintendent. He provides his perspective on the essential components of efforts to scale up high-quality instruction for every child, in every classroom, every day. The case examined in Chapter Nine details how Rudy Crew, a powerful and passionate educational leader, implemented his many-sided approach to leading for learning. His strategy ranged from dismantling corruption to litigation for fiscal adequacy to assumption of personal responsibility for the organizational leadership of the Chancellor's District, which included the most persistently failing schools in New York. Amalia Cudeiro, superintendent of the Bellevue School District in Washington, provides the reflection on scaling up as she describes her efforts to reorganize the smaller district of Bellevue schools to meet persistent performance gaps among students.

Chapter Ten, *Sustaining Improvement over Time*, focuses on work in the Long Beach Unified School District in California. The twenty years of stable leadership by Carl Cohn and his chosen successor, Chris Steinhauser, present a unique perspective on sustainability. Cohn introduces the chapter, sharing his intimate knowledge of the Long Beach district and the extreme difficulty of replicating its success in San Diego, another testament to the importance of context. Since 2002 Steinhauser has demonstrated his commitment to ensuring every child in Long Beach has access to high-quality instruction and postsecondary opportunities, continuing to improve educational outcomes for all. Pascal Forgione, the ten-year superintendent of the Austin Independent School District in Texas, reflects on Steinhauser's case using his insights into the challenge of sustainability. Sharing successes and proactive strategies for longevity, Forgione compares and contrasts his leadership decision making with that of Cohn and Steinhauser in Long Beach.





The people presented in the cases in *Every Child, Every Classroom, Every Day* might be considered “heroes” with special gifts and talents that are not transferable to the other superintendents who work hard to create the conditions of excellence and equity in their school districts. Actually, I think the featured superintendents are heroic in their courage, core beliefs, and passion to ensure that all students under their charge receive access to high-quality instruction that engages them and spurs their academic growth, but that is not the whole story. The real story rests in their use of proven, research-based strategies that keep the improvement of the instructional core as the preeminent focus of their labor as superintendents. In their body of work, equity; accountability and responsibility; collaboration; and the adaptations of evidenced best practices in leadership, management, instruction, and collaboration at all levels are what become the transferable knowledge represented in the USP Leadership Framework.

Most important, these superintendents engage in the work of leading school districts and communities with a belief in the ability of ALL children to be successful if provided with the right supports and consistent access to high-quality instruction. They bear out the wisdom of Ronald Edmonds, founder of the Effective Schools Movement: “We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us” (Edmonds, 1979, p. 23). We know what needs to happen, and we have a growing number of schools and school districts that are achieving success. Karin Chenoweth, in her book *“It’s Being Done”: Academic Success in Unexpected Schools* (2007), and Katy Haycock and her colleagues at the Education Trust (<http://www.edtrust.org/>) make the case that many schools and districts are doing what needs to be done. We hope that the knowledge, wisdom, and experiences of the scholars, practitioners, and advocates included in this book supply you with a framework that assists you as you search for policies, practices, theories, and exemplars to guide your work on behalf of the children in your school district. Children have waited too long for action, and we can no longer tolerate the cumulative losses that distribute pain and suffering across our society.

Finally, it is important to remember that the case studies written in this book are intended to be teaching cases, offering lessons of, and insight into, urban school leadership. By providing a window into the worlds of urban superintendents and the thinking behind their decisions, we hope that current and aspiring school leaders will take away ideas and lessons that will inform their own practice. These cases are not intended to serve as endorsements, sources of primary data, or illustrations of effective or ineffective handling of administrative situations. Instead, they are intended to place you in the “head, heart, and hands” of the urban superintendency.





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