Instructional Moves for Powerful Teaching in Higher Education

JEREMY T. MURPHY AND MEIRA LEVINSON

FOREWORD BY MARY DEANE SORCINELLI

“From large lecture halls to small seminars, this inspiring book can help every instructor improve their teaching.”

—JUSTIN REICH, associate professor and director of Teaching Systems Lab, MIT

Based on work conducted through the Instructional Moves project at Harvard University, Instructional Moves for Powerful Teaching in Higher Education outlines the many ways in which good college and graduate school teaching is rooted in deliberate pedagogical choices that support active learning. Jeremy T. Murphy and Meira Levinson distill good instruction to its essential components, analyzing the careful steps successful instructors take to create learning spaces that encourage all students to do ambitious work.

Profiling professors in a range of contexts and disciplines, Murphy and Levinson take readers on deep dives into individual instructors’ teaching methods in actual classrooms. Each real-world example is accompanied by a set of practical action points that can be adopted by both new and experienced instructors, communities of practice, and educational developers and coaches.

Collectively, the examples underscore how students with differing abilities, diverse identities, and disparate worldviews can all benefit from student-centered learning environments, in which collaboration is valued and students are afforded opportunities to apply what they have learned. Murphy and Levinson spotlight inclusive instructional moves such as community-building exercises, interactive lectures, and discussion facilitation that nurture a sense of belonging and encourage student engagement in both in-person and online settings. They also explore the benefits of innovative teaching formats such as flipped classrooms, simulations, and virtual learning. Instructional Moves for Powerful Teaching in Higher Education illustrates how pedagogical shifts small and large can improve college teaching powerfully.

JEREMY T. MURPHY is an assistant professor of education at the College of the Holy Cross. MEIRA LEVINSON is the Juliana W. and William Foss Thompson Professor of Education and Society at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Her books include Dilemmas of Educational Ethics.

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Growing and Sustaining Student-Centered Science Classrooms

DAVID STROUPE

“The kinds of science classrooms envisioned by this book are not only plausible and achievable, but essential for our collective future.”
—DOUG LARKIN, professor of science teacher education, Montclair State University

In Growing and Sustaining Student-Centered Science Classrooms, David Stroupe promotes powerful conversation and action around knowledge-building practices in science education. The book takes readers into inspiring classroom communities in which all students are invited and encouraged to engage in the work of science. An illuminating series of real-time classroom scenes demonstrate flexible teaching approaches and instructional pivots that Stroupe calls talk moves and shows how they foster inclusive collaboration and participation to create a more expansive, and better, version of science education.

Even as Stroupe champions student-centered science education, he acknowledges that common obstructions to knowledge sharing, or epistemic injustices, can often prevent this student-led ideal from materializing. He calls attention to four types of injustices that frequently stifle student voice and access in science learning communities: testimonial injustice, hermeneutical injustice, intrapersonal injustice, and hierarchical injustice. Recounting real-life examples of these individual and systemic injustices, Stroupe gives educators the tools to both identify and eradicate them.

This thought-provoking book sets forth ambitious tactics for educators to audit assumptions and biases in science, promote student agency, and conduct action research to document change. Using Stroupe’s accessible methods, teachers, teacher educators, and administrators can design immediate and long-term instructional practices to disrupt injustices in STEM classroom communities and support student learning.

DAVID STROUPE is an associate professor at the University of Utah and was previously the associate director of STEM Teacher Education at the CREATE for STEM Institute and the director of Science and Society at State at Michigan State University. He supports new and experienced teachers to enact ambitious and equitable teaching, and to create powerful classroom communities with students.

How a City Learned to Improve Its Schools

ANTHONY S. BRYK, SHARON GREENBERG, ALBERTBERTANI, PENNY SEBRING, STEVEN E. TOZER, AND TIMOTHY KNOWLES

“A book of monumental importance.”
—MARCELO M. SUÁREZ-OROZCO, chancellor, University of Massachusetts, Boston

How a City Learned to Improve Its Schools tells the story of the extraordinary thirty-year school reform effort that changed the landscape of public education in Chicago. Acclaimed educational researcher Anthony S. Bryk joins five coauthors directly involved in Chicago’s education reform efforts, Sharon Greenberg, Albert Bertani, Penny Sebring, Steven E. Tozer, and Timothy Knowles, to illuminate the many factors that led to this transformation of the Chicago Public Schools.

Beginning in 1987, Bryk and colleagues lay out the civic context for reform, outlining the systemic challenges such as segregation, institutional racism, and income and resource disparities that reformers grappled with as well as the social conflicts they faced. Next, they describe how fundamental changes occurred at every level of schooling: enhancing classroom instruction; organizing more engaged and effective local school communities; strengthening the preparation, recruitment, and support of teachers and school leaders; and sustaining an ambitious evidence-based campaign to keep the public informed on the progress of key reform initiatives and the challenges still ahead. The power of this capacity building is validated by unprecedented increases in benchmarks such as graduation rates and college matriculation. This riveting account introduces key actors within the schools, city government, and business community, and the partnerships they forged.

In making clear how elements such as advocacy, civic capacity, improvement research, and strong democracy contributed to large-scale progress in the system’s 600-plus schools, the book highlights the greater lessons that the Chicago story offers for system improvement overall.

ANTHONY S. BRYK served as the ninth president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching from 2008 to 2020. SHARON GREENBERG is formerly a CPS high school English teacher and presently a quality improvement advisor and a literacy and education consultant. ALBERTBERTANI is a senior fellow with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. PENNY SEBRING is a senior research associate at the University of Chicago and a cofounder of the UChicago Consortium. STEVEN E. TOZER is professor emeritus and past University Scholar at the University of Illinois-Chicago. TIMOTHY KNOWLES serves as president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
As Corbin M. Campbell reveals in this incisive work, although teaching quality is rarely reflected in college rankings such as those produced by U.S. News and World Report, this metric has implications not only for student outcomes such as subject-matter knowledge and preparation for careers but also for college prestige, educational equity, and even democracy.

Campbell draws from a multi-institutional observational study that covered more than 700 higher education courses in a range of contexts, from regional public universities to highly ranked private universities, from small liberal arts colleges to large flagship universities. She examines what each type of institution typically excels at and where they often fall short.

In mapping the terrain of teaching quality in higher education today, Campbell parses out the best practices of exemplary teaching institutions, in which evidenced-based practices such as equity-based and culturally relevant teaching support student learning, and teaching-supportive institutions, in which policies and cultures prioritize teaching and promote faculty development.

This clear-eyed work provides options for enacting real, sustainable teaching improvements by using individual, collegial, and organizational levers to shift perceptions and priorities around teaching. The actionable practices and policies suggested in Great College Teaching can be adopted by academic leaders, administrators, and faculty developers to improve teaching within a spectrum of academic contexts, across multiple disciplines, and for various course settings.

CORBIN M. CAMPBELL is associate dean of academic affairs and associate professor in the School of Education at American University. She is the recipient of a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation grant to develop a policy playbook for equity-based teaching in higher education.

In Navigating Social Justice, Martin Scanlan introduces a comprehensive social justice schema that melds organizational learning with leading for equity. Scanlan distills wisdom gleaned from the experiences of a variety of educational professionals as well as from his own more than three decades of work in equity-focused partnership with elementary schools.

Scanlan’s schema brings together five dimensions—inculcativity, communities of practice, critical formation, social ecosystems, and practical wisdom—that work together holistically to eradicate inequitable practices and policies and promote robust teaching and inclusive learning. For each dimension, the book features real-life vignettes that focus the conversation, exercises that encourage reflection, and suggested opportunities for the application of its central ideas. Each chapter also gives access to online tools, extending its utility.

The practical guidance offered in this book not only will enable academic leaders, district leaders, system administrators, and others in both the public and private education sectors as they engage in ongoing social justice work.

MARTIN SCANLAN is an associate professor in educational leadership and higher education in the Lynch School of Education and Human Development at Boston College.
The Double Bind in Physics Education
Intersectionality, Equity, and Belonging for Women of Color
MARIA ONG
FOREWORD BY SHIRLEY M. MALCOM

“Centering and relaying the experiences of women of color in physics through their lenses and voices, over the course of a twenty-five-year study, Ong masterfully illuminates barriers and navigation strategies that inform us all on how to ensure positive career trajectories for everyone.”
—GILDA BARABINO, president, Olin College

In a detailed exploration of inclusion in physics, social scientist Maria Ong makes the case for far-reaching higher education reform, noting that despite diversity efforts to recruit more women and students of color into science and mathematics programs, many leave the STEM pipeline. *The Double Bind in Physics Education* takes readers inside the issue by following ten women of color from their entrance into the undergraduate physics program at a large research university through their pursuit of various educational and career paths. Candid interviews with these women, their instructors and mentors, and their peers, conducted over twenty-five years, allow Ong to trace how pervasive challenges, such as navigating the intersectionality of race and gender discrimination, have shaped their academic opportunities and career choices.

Despite the ideals of objectivity promoted in STEM disciplines, the women profiled here encounter continued patterns of systemic oppression within their departments. In their stories, Ong identifies overt behaviors and microaggressions that harass, exclude, and otherwise disadvantage women of color and members of other minoritized groups.

Ong also shows how aids such as student support programs, peer groups, allies, and mentors, which are centered on the individual, can go only so far toward a sustainable solution. In order to provide equitable opportunities, she argues, greater work must be done to dismantle institutional norms and replace them with a culture of inclusion.

MARIA ONG is a senior research scientist at TERC. She is a member and former cochair of the Social Science Advisory Board of the National Center for Women & Information Technology and an advisor to the Arizona State University Center for Gender Equity in Science and Technology.

Hope and Healing
Black Colleges and the Future of American Democracy
JOHN SILVANUS WILSON, JR.

"Reminds us of the pivotal role that HBCUs have played in pushing the country to fully realize its democratic ideals."
—MARY SCHMIDT CAMPBELL, president emerita, Spelman College

In *Hope and Healing*, former Morehouse College president John Silvanus Wilson, Jr., looks to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to examine what it takes not only to survive as a relevant institution of higher education, but to thrive. Wilson draws on pivotal moments in the timelines of HBCUs and the work of past visionaries such as W. E. B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington to yield important perspectives on the future of higher education and the role of HBCUs within it.

Wilson documents the strengths of HBCUs, which endure even as factors such as school desegregation, enrollment shifts, and fundraising shortages have deeply affected their operation. These schools have long optimized institutional character, he shows, and he encourages their leaders to similarly optimize institutional capital. Wilson emphasizes the indispensable role of educational finance in keeping schools viable and vital to US education, discussing funding approaches such as targeted endowment strategies, large-scale capital campaigns based in STEM research, and partnerships between schools and the philanthropic community. Wilson’s asset-based framework reveals pathways for all higher education institutions to invest in their long-term futures.

Suffused with optimism, the book credits HBCUs as exemplars that consistently demonstrate how all colleges and universities can marshal their institutional resources to shape better citizens, foster civic literacy, and work toward a better tomorrow.

JOHN SILVANUS WILSON, JR., has been a career-long advocate of HBCUs. He graduated from Morehouse College in 1979 and later served as its eleventh president (2013-2017). He has also worked to advance HBCUs on the national stage by serving as the executive director of the White House Initiative on HBCUs in the Obama Administration. He now directs the Millennium Leadership Initiative for aspiring college presidents.
Critical Network Literacy

Humanizing Professional Development for Educators

KIRA J. BAKER-DOYLE

FOREWORD BY ALAN J. DALLY

“A critical contribution to teacher scholarship and practice. At once highly engaging and deeply theoretical, this book outlines how a critical network literacy framework can support the development of teacher networks in a digital age, offering concrete, actionable suggestions for nurturing critical and sustainable teacher community practices.”

—AMY STORNAIUOLO, associate professor, University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education

Although technology has increased our capacity for social networking both in the digital space and face-to-face, Kira J. Baker-Doyle contends that most professional development opportunities for educators are still fundamentally asocial. She calls for the adoption of humanizing network practices to create meaningful continuing education experiences that leverage the collective knowledge, expertise, and social capital of educators to spark educational change.

Baker-Doyle shows how the critical network literacy (CNL) framework overlays critical theory, multiliteracies theory, and social network theory in a way that encourages critical reflection and collaboration among participants. She draws from sources, including empirical studies of teacher educators and teacher activists, meta-analytical studies of social network research in education, and professional experience with collective organizing efforts, to detail the many benefits of cultivating CNL in educational spaces. Baker-Doyle provides evidence of how the framework’s practices and protocols can increase transparency, improve representation, and incorporate affirming and restorative discourse. Her work demonstrates how CNL helps create environments that honor teachers’ social identities, their social networks, and the broader social context in which they work.

This thought-provoking book is filled with exercises that reinforce social competencies, questions that prompt dialogue and understanding, and real-world examples that underscore the framework’s relevance to key educational practices. The generous guidance offered in Critical Network Literacy can be used as a launching point to promote innovation and leadership in teaching.

KIRA J. BAKER-DOYLE is an associate professor of curriculum and instruction and the director of the Center for Literacy at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is the author of Transformative Teachers.

Coaching in Communities

Pursuing Justice, Teacher Learning, and Transformation

MELISSA MOSLEY WETZEL, ERICA HOLYOKE, KERRY H. ALEXANDER, HEATHER DUNHAM, AND CLAIRE COLLINS

“In this groundbreaking book, the authors offer a powerful new approach to coaching teachers that is collaborative, inquiry-driven, and rooted in social justice. This book is essential reading for anyone seeking to create more equitable and inclusive learning environments.”

—DETRA PRICE-DENNIS, professor of teaching and learning and director of digital education and innovation in teaching and learning, The Ohio State University

In Coaching in Communities, researcher Melissa Mosley Wetzel and her coauthors distill the lessons of an eight-year study into a transformative educator training model. Coaching with CARE (critical and content-focused, appreciative, reflective, and experiential). They demonstrate how effective, contextual teacher training can be a cornerstone of educational justice, which occurs when all learners are supported to be successful in school and when schools expand notions of success to include diverse ways of life and learning.

Wetzel shows how this new framework, which draws from behavioral, cognitive, humanistic, and critical models of coaching, can be used in professional and informal learning contexts, and in dialogue with families and communities, to upend the status quo, break down the expert-novice distinction, and cultivate just forms of practice. As Wetzel notes, the work of justice is collaborative, sustained engagement in resistance to marginalization, racism, and other inequities.

Coaching in Communities presents a set of tools, including shared inquiry and coaching cycles of observation, reflection, and debriefing, and demonstrates how they work in real-life settings. With these tools, teacher education programs as well as districts, schools, and other organizations can train for change, which is one essential step in school transformation.

MELISSA MOSLEY WETZEL is professor and department chair of language and literacy studies in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Texas at Austin. ERICA HOLYOKE is an assistant professor of responsive literacy education in the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Colorado Denver. KERRY H. ALEXANDER, HEATHER DUNHAM, and CLAIRE COLLINS are doctoral candidates in language and literacy studies in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Texas at Austin.
America’s Hidden Economic Engines
How Community Colleges Can Drive Shared Prosperity
EDITED BY ROBERT B. SCHWARTZ AND RACHEL LIPSON
FOREWORD BY HARRY J. HOLZER

“In profiles of five standout institutions each focused on job readiness and career success, Schwartz and Lipson convince us that America’s community colleges are the most practical, scalable means to a highly skilled workforce, income mobility, and equitable economic growth. America’s Hidden Economic Engines should be required reading for educators, economists, and policy makers.”
—KENNETH ADAMS, president, LaGuardia Community College

In America’s Hidden Economic Engines, editors Robert B. Schwartz and Rachel Lipson spotlight community and technical colleges as institutions uniquely equipped to foster more equitable economic growth across America’s regions. As Schwartz and Lipson show, these colleges are the best-placed institutions to reverse the decades-long rise in US economic inequality by race, class, and geography.

The book’s contributors, Harvard Project on Workforce researchers, introduce detailed case studies of five institutions—Lorain County Community College in Ohio, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Northern Virginia Community College, Pima Community College in Arizona, and San Jacinto Community College in Texas—that show what is possible when governments, employers, and communities invest in their community colleges’ economic and workforce development mission.

These case studies reveal key institutional policies and practices, leadership behaviors, and organizational structures of successful collaborations between colleges and their regional partners in the public and private sector. Each case underscores how, although community colleges face distinct challenges based on local context, successful schools demonstrate a consistent focus on economic mobility and good jobs across all their programs and activities. In a concluding chapter, the editors champion community colleges as the most critical institutions for the future of US workforce development policy.

ROBERT B. SCHWARTZ is a professor emeritus of practice in educational policy and administration at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, senior advisor at the Harvard Project on Workforce, and cofounder of the Pathways to Prosperity Network.

RACHEL LIPSON is cofounder of the Project on Workforce at Harvard University and served as its inaugural director.

The Great School Rethink
FREDERICK M. HESS

“Timely, provocative, and without any of the jargon of typical books on school reform, Hess offers a lot for us to think about in this important new book.”
—PEDRO NOGUERA, Emery Stoops and Joyce King Stoops Dean, Rossier School of Education, University of Southern California

“It gives a thoughtful roadmap on where to focus and how to approach some of the biggest and most important challenges we face in public education.”
—PENNY SCHWINN, Tennessee commissioner of education

In The Great School Rethink, education policy sentinel Frederick M. Hess offers a pithy and perceptive appraisal of American schooling and finds, in the uncertain period following pandemic disruption, an ideal moment to reimagine US education. Now is the time, he asserts, to ask hard questions about how schools use time and talent, how they work with parents, what they do with digital tools, and how they meet the needs of their communities.

As Hess explains, to rethink is to acknowledge the realities of the education system while opening one’s mind to possibility. With characteristic verve and wit, Hess guides readers through his rethink process, a versatile and easily implemented approach to identifying issues and brainstorming possible responses. He encourages readers to explore what improvements might alleviate current pressures and frustrations, such as teacher shortages and burnout, declining student performance, and compromised learning time. Whether their goal is to achieve better student engagement, increase parent involvement, or implement personalized learning, readers will develop the mindset to ask the right questions, to fully understand the problem that’s being solved, and to evaluate the probable effectiveness of proposed solutions.

Brimming with challenging questions, robust exercises, and eye-opening data, this book is a must-read for education professionals, parent advocates, and anyone passionate about the future of American education.

FREDERICK M. HESS is director of education policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute. He pens Education Week’s “Rick Hess Straight Up” blog, is a senior contributor to Forbes, and has written such influential works on school improvement as Spinning Wheels and Cage-Busting Leadership.
The Open System

Redesigning Education and Reigniting Democracy

LANDON MASCAREÑAZ AND DOANNIE TRAN

"Despite decades of well-meaning reform efforts, educators remain frustrated that we have not met our promise of better and more equitable outcomes for our students. It is refreshing to read a breakthrough piece that has the potential for dramatic systemic improvement. The book brings hope supported with direction. It is a must-read for education leaders."

—GENE WILHOIT, former executive director, Council of Chief State School Officers, and founder, Center for Innovation in Education

Landon Mascareñaz and Doannie Tran propose that, even as events of this decade have exposed stress points in existing top-down, closed systems within education and other public institutions, they have also created prime opportunities to rethink and redesign those systems in ways that encourage civic participation and invigorate local democracy.

In The Open System, Mascareñaz and Tran argue for a critical revitalization of public education centered in openness, an organization design concept in which an entity receives, considers, and acts on input from the community it serves. As they demonstrate, open education policy improves information flow, increasing opportunity, bolstering public trust, and making room for cocreation and coproduction driven by community partnerships and family engagement.

Based on their groundbreaking work with educational coalitions such as the Kentucky Coalition for Advancing Education and Colorado’s Homegrown Talent Initiative, Mascareñaz and Tran introduce six key liberatory moves that can bring about open system transformation. They highlight real-life examples of the types of incremental, specific, and discrete projects that leaders can use to create openness in educational systems at the school, district, and state levels, providing a blueprint for changemaking.

LANDON MASCAREÑAZ is an educator, writer, and vice president of community partnership at the Colorado Education Initiative. He currently serves as the vice chair of the Colorado Community College and Occupational Education Board. DOANNIE TRAN is a partner at the Center for Innovation in Education. He formerly served as an assistant superintendent for the Academics and Professional Learning Department in Boston Public Schools and the Innovation Programs Division in Fulton County Schools.

Teach for Climate Justice

A Vision for Transforming Education

TOM RODERICK

"A powerful ‘how to’ guide for environmental education. It is full of practical advice on how to teach students about the urgency of our climate crisis and what they can do to address it. It will be a vital resource for educators working in this critical area."

—RANDI WEINGARTEN, president, American Federation of Teachers

In Teach for Climate Justice, accomplished educator and social and emotional learning expert Tom Roderick proposes a visionary interdisciplinary and intersectional approach to PreK–12 climate education. He argues that meaningful instruction on this urgent issue of our time must focus on climate justice—the convergence of climate change and social justice—in a way that is emotionally safe, developmentally appropriate, and ultimately empowering.

Drawing on examples of real-life educators teaching climate change, Roderick identifies eight key dimensions of climate education that will prepare students to face the challenges of the climate crisis and give them the means to take action. These dimensions include not only educating for a deep understanding of the scientific, geopolitical, and socioeconomic equity issues that surround global warming, but also cultivating appreciation for the environment, building a supportive community, and fostering active hope for the future. Roderick’s intentional layering of skills will help students develop the knowledge and sense of agency necessary to engage in civil resistance and nonviolent activism. In support of this crucial endeavor, Roderick suggests evidence-based teaching strategies, practices that promote inclusivity, and tools for social and emotional learning.

This timely and uplifting book lays out a powerful vision for teaching, learning, and curriculum development to nurture a generation of courageous, informed advocates for climate justice.

TOM RODERICK is a teacher, writer, and education activist in New York City. He retired in 2019 after 36 years as founding executive director of Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility.
The Middle of Somewhere

Rural Education Partnerships and Innovation

EDITED BY SARA L. HARTMAN AND BOB KLEIN

"Hartman and Klein have assembled a coherent set of work that comprehends and affirms the assets that rural context offers. This book has much to teach us all—not just in terms of the findings presented by the editors and the contributing chapter authors, but in terms of how to do authentically rural research that can produce actionable results that impact schools and communities."

—JERRY JOHNSON, Phoebe Moore Dail Distinguished Professor in Rural Education, East Carolina University

As editors Sara L. Hartman and Bob Klein acknowledge, rural places have long experienced systemic inequities that decrease rural students’ access to education, yet many rural schools and communities have found creative means to make up for the dearth of outside resources. The Middle of Somewhere brings to light a wide variety of partnerships that have been forged between K–12 schools, communities, and postsecondary institutions to improve educational access.

The book showcases collaborations that address three different areas of need: partnerships that prepare and support teacher candidates and educators who work in rural areas; partnerships that extend the work of rural education networks, and partnerships that promote equity, justice, and inclusion within rural populations. Using case studies of rural educational partnerships from communities across the United States, the book’s contributors share their experiences of how strong partnerships have formed both organically and through thoughtful and intentional planning, and they recommend supportive strategies for their development and sustainment.

The contributors also explore the many ways in which university–school–community partnerships incubate solutions to challenges common to rural education systems, such as access to STEM education and higher education. The programs featured here may serve as replicable models for practitioners, researchers, and policy makers who want to enrich the experiences of children in their schools and communities.

SARA L. HARTMAN is an associate professor in the Department of Teacher Education in the Gladys W. and David H. Patton College of Education at Ohio University. Her research focuses on school–community–university partnerships, particularly in examining how partnerships impact access and opportunity in rural educational settings. BOB KLEIN has worked in inclusive mathematics education for two decades, specializing in rural and Indigenous education. He is codirector of the Alliance of Indigenous Math Circles and professor of mathematics and former dean at Ohio University.