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Getting Focused by Establishing Clear Goals

The following excerpt is adapted from *Balanced Leadership for Powerful Learning: Tools for Achieving Success in Your School* by Bryan Goodwin and Greg Cameron with Heather Hein.

Getting and staying focused is a challenge for any school leader, whose days and weeks can easily be spent just ensuring the school runs smoothly, without ever focusing on student learning, improvement, or change efforts. However, a study of high-needs, high-performing, “beat-the-odds” schools conducted by McREL researchers (McREL, 2005) found that two of the key characteristics that separated these schools from their lower-performing counterparts were *academic press for achievement* (high expectations for all students) and *shared mission and goals* (a clear focus for improvement efforts and resources). In short, these top-performing schools had established and articulated clear goals for learning and then focused their energies and resources on achieving those goals.

That approach may sound obvious, but it’s easy and all too common for schools to fall into a different pattern, one that makes them feel like they’re running in many directions at once without a clear sense of purpose or direction. Consider the following example: Years ago, a team of researchers

encountered a school where the principal—in an effort to do what she thought was best for students—had been relentless in her pursuit of every new funding opportunity and program she could find. She had sent her teachers to nearly every professional conference in the city, and filled her school with computers, books, and other tools.

But in the end, none of the “stuff” did what it was supposed to do: raise student achievement. The efforts were fragmented and incoherent and did little to strengthen the core of the school. As a result, the teachers were consumed with activity, but not focusing on what matters most. Strong school leaders, in contrast, cut through the clutter by establishing challenging goals and performance targets, which they use to focus people on doing what matters most—and only what matters most (Public Impact, 2008).

In light of these studies and observations, it’s not surprising, then, that one of the responsibilities of school leaders we found strongly correlated with student achievement was to have clear goals. Figure 2.1 shows this responsibility and the related classroom and school practices.

FIGURE 2.1

Leadership Responsibility and Practices to Focus Schools on Clear Goals

Responsibility	Classroom and School Practices
<p>Focus: Establishes clear goals and keeps those goals in the forefront of the school’s attention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes high, concrete goals and expectations that all students meet them Establishes high, concrete goals for curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices within the school Establishes high, concrete goals for the general functioning of the school Continually keeps attention on established goals

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Goodwin, B., Cameron, G., & Hein, H. (2015). *Balanced Leadership for Powerful Learning: Tools for Achieving Success in Your School*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. ©2015 McREL

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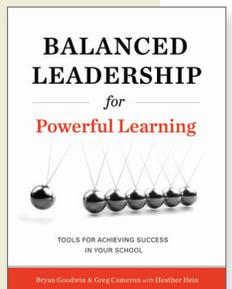
Balanced Leadership for Powerful Learning: Tools for Achieving Success in Your School

Bryan Goodwin and Greg Cameron with Heather Hein

8 1/2" x 11", 112 pages

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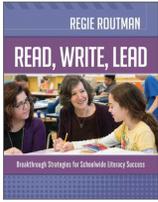
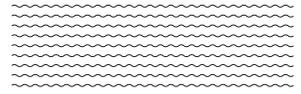
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This framework offers leaders ways to improve the leadership behaviors that have the greatest impact on the culture, climate, staff, students, and achievement within a school.

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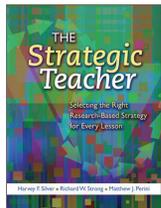


Read, Write, Lead: Breakthrough Strategies for Schoolwide Literacy Success

Regie Routman

Best-selling author Regie Routman explains how every school can meet higher expectations for literacy achievement by using high-engagement instructional practices, productive feedback in the teaching and leading process, and Professional *Literacy* Communities that enable educators to work together to create sustainable school change.

(ASCD book, 2014) 8" x 10", 354 pages

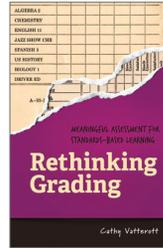


The Strategic Teacher: Selecting the Right Research-Based Strategy for Every Lesson

Harvey F. Silver, Richard W. Strong, and Matthew J. Perini

This ultimate guide to teaching strategies gives you 20 of the most reliable teaching strategies for every grade and subject, with dozens of variations and clear steps and examples for how to implement them. To help you choose the right strategy, the authors include a Strategic Dashboard that makes it easy for you to match your strategy to your instructional objectives.

(ASCD book, 2007) 8 1/2" x 11", 300 pages



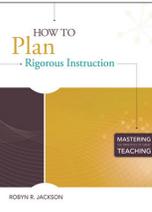
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Rethinking Grading: Meaningful Assessment for Standards-Based Learning

Cathy Vatterott

Meet that new challenge of implementing a standards-based approach to grading that ensures grades truly reflect your students' progress toward specific learning outcomes. ASCD best-selling author Cathy Vatterott offers you a new paradigm for standards-based grading with lots of concrete examples to help you decide what to grade or not grade, how to grade, and when.

(ASCD Premium, Select, and Institutional Plus Member book, Editor's Selection, July 2015) 6" x 9", 130 pages



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How to Plan Rigorous Instruction

Robyn R. Jackson

Drawing from the principles from her best-seller *Never Work Harder Than Your Students and Other Principles of Great Teaching*, Robyn R. Jackson explains how to plan more rigorous, engaging, and rewarding lessons that help your students go beyond a surface understanding of the material and see the connection between what they are doing in class and their ultimate learning goals.

(ASCD Mastering the Principles of Great Teaching Series book, 2010) 8 1/2" x 11", 124 pages

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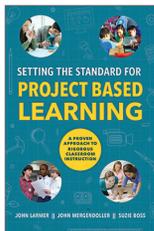
Kathy T. Glass

Learn how to equip your students with appropriate tools to comprehend complex texts, ensure they understand and apply knowledge from challenging reading assignments, and develop their abilities to become better lifelong readers. Kathy T. Glass offers a wealth of proven strategies for prereading, text-dependent questions, vocabulary, and assessment.

(ASCD book, 2015) 7 7/8" x 9 7/8", 194 pages

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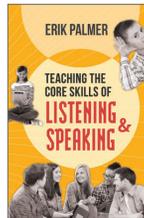
John Larmer, John Mergendoller, and Suzie Boss

Ensure students are engaged in learning, see the relevance of lessons, and develop college and career readiness by using project-based learning (PBL). Using a classroom-tested framework, this book takes you through the steps of planning, implementing, and assessing rigorous PBL that prepares students for high-stakes tests and lifelong learning.

(ASCD book copublished with Buck Institute for Education, 2015) 6" x 9", 240 pages

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Teaching the Core Skills of Listening and Speaking

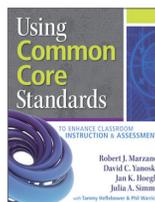
Erik Palmer

Teaching students listening and speaking skills is more important than ever given new college and career standards. Learn how you meet those expectations across the curriculum with this practical book's classroom examples and specific activities. Veteran teacher Erik Palmer helps you address language arts with strategies for teaching and assessing speaking, effective listening, asking good questions, and sound reasoning.

(ASCD book, 2014) 6" x 9", 200 pages

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Using Common Core Standards to Enhance Classroom Instruction and Assessment

Robert J. Marzano, David C. Yanoski, Jan K. Hoegh, and Julia A. Simms, with Tammy Heflebower and Phil Warrick

This book provides practical steps for instruction and assessment that are directly related to progress toward the standards. Included are hundreds of ready-to-use, research-based proficiency scales for both English language arts and mathematics for every grade level.

(Marzano Research Laboratory, 2013) 8 1/2" x 11", 304 pages

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Leading for Differentiation: Growing Teachers Who Grow Kids

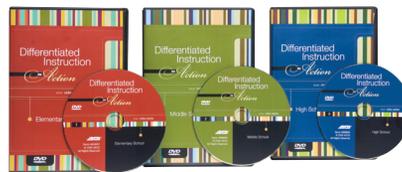
Carol Ann Tomlinson and Michael Murphy

World-renowned differentiation authority Carol Ann Tomlinson and change leadership expert Michael Murphy provide you with a tested and validated way to lead a school building or district toward differentiated instruction. Their guiding principles, tools, and strategies and leadership framework help you establish differentiation as a permanent and positive means to better student learning.

(ASCD book, 2015) 7 7/8" x 9 7/8", 176 pages

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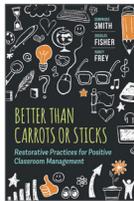
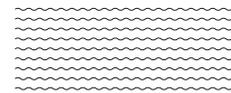
Join Carol Ann Tomlinson and classroom teachers as they bring differentiated instruction to life in this practical, easily implemented professional development program. Learn how to establish and maintain a supportive learning environment, use ongoing assessment to inform instruction, support a high-quality curriculum by identifying learning goals, and implement flexible grouping to support all learners.

(ASCD DVD, 2008) Three 25- to 30-minute DVDs

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Better Than Carrots or Sticks: Restorative Practices for Positive Classroom Management

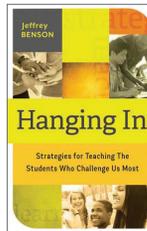
Dominique Smith, Douglas Fisher, and Nancy Frey

Authors Dominique Smith, Douglas Fisher, and Nancy Frey provide you with a proven approach to implementing restorative practices at all levels in school, from welcoming students in the morning to managing the most serious behavior problems.

(ASCD Premium Member book, August 2015) 6" x 9", 161 pages

Print:ASCD Members: **\$18.95**Nonmembers: **\$24.95**

Stock #: 116005XC1

E-Book:ASCD Members: **\$17.99**Nonmembers: **\$23.99**

Hanging In: Strategies for Teaching the Students Who Challenge Us Most

Jeffrey Benson

Through compelling examples of real-life students and the reflections of a veteran educator, learn how to teach challenging students in a way that honors the individuality of each student and his or her own capacity to find the best way forward.

(ASCD Premium, Select, and Institutional Plus Member book, Editor's Selection, January 2014) 6" x 9", 193 pages

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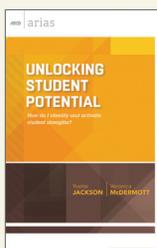
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(ASCD Arias publication, 2015) 5" x 7 3/4", 48 pages

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School Climate Change: How do I build a positive environment for learning?

Peter DeWitt and Sean Slade

Award-winning elementary school principal Peter DeWitt and whole child expert Sean Slade guide you in how to create a more positive school climate for your students and teachers. Their steps and advice help you foster a more welcoming, cooperative, safe, and inclusive school environment that can overcome the most difficult obstacles to student achievement, well-being, and success.

(ASCD Arias publication, 2014) 5" x 7 3/4", 56 pages

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Effective Teacher Interviews: How do I hire good teachers?

Jennifer L. Hindman

Ensure you get the best new teacher candidates every time with this practical advice on the teacher interview process. The author explains how to conduct hiring interviews that reliably predict a teacher's success. Sample interview questions, process checklists, and strategies for assembling your interview team are included.

(ASCD Arias publication, 2014) 5" x 7 3/4", 48 pages

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Short on Time: How do I make time to lead and learn as a principal?

William Sterrett

Take full advantage of the most important resource you have: time. Learn how to maximize instructional time, communicate in timely ways, balance your responsibilities, and run efficient meetings.

(ASCD Arias publication, 2013) 5" x 7 3/4", 48 pages

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Art Costa, Professor Emeritus, California State University, Sacramento, CA, and Bena Kallick, Institute for Habits of Mind, Westport, CT

Explore ways to teach students to be skillful thinkers who know how to collaborate and communicate and to align curriculum with those purposes in mind. Learn how to work with teachers, parents, and the community to value and teach dispositional thinking.

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Developing Instructional Leaders

Wil Parker, Bowie State University, Bowie, MD, and Wagner Marseille, Lower Merion School District, Ardmore, PA

Get proven insights on how school leaders create courageous conversations on teacher and leader behaviors and build an effective systematic approach to increase student learning.

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Designing Rich Performance Tasks to Assess What Matters Most

Jay McTighe, McTighe & Associates Consulting, Columbia, MD

Dig deep into examples of rich performance tasks that assess understanding and transfer and integrate 21st century skills with subject area content. Review a set of practical and proven frameworks, and then preview Internet resources that support effective task and rubric design.

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OPENING GENERAL SESSION

Friday, October 30, 2015

The Right-Now Principal: Becoming a 21st Century Leader

Heidi Hayes Jacobs, Curriculum Designers Inc., Rye, NY

SECOND GENERAL SESSION

Saturday, October 31, 2015

Passionate Leadership: The Five Essential Elements That Transform School Culture and Performance

Cheryl Atkinson, Principal Founder, TCA Consulting, LLC, Topeka, KS



SPECIAL EVENTS

- Making Connections Welcome Reception
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DAY ONE Session Highlights

Leveraging the Power of Teacher Rounds

Katherine C. Boles and Vivian Troen, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA

Discover how to bring the model of professional learning known as Teacher Rounds directly into the world of teacher practice.

How to Give Effective Feedback to Teachers

Robyn Jackson, Mindsteps Inc., Washington, DC

Learn how to provide the kind of feedback that matters. Learn what types of feedback motivate teachers every day and help them get better.

Yo! We're Not in Kansas Anymore! (Urban Dictionary Example of "Resilience")

Elle Allison-Napolitano, Wisdom Out, Oakland, CA

Immerse yourself in this unique visual simile that uses the *Wizard of Oz* to help explain the characteristics of leaders who are highly resilient. Discover what it takes to respond to leadership challenges with grit, grace, and, of course, courage.

Educators as Social Networked Learners

Jackie Gerstein, Boise State, Walden, American InterContinental, and Western Governors' Universities

Explore collaborative and emergent pedagogies and tools related to the use of social networks in learning environments. Get hands-on experience with social networking tools and stretch the boundaries that let you use social networking to your advantage.

DAY TWO Session Highlights

Building Capacity in New and Aspiring Leaders

Jennifer Abrams, Jennifer Abrams Consulting, Palo Alto, CA

Using research and examples from several countries, as well as many national organizations and districts, this session presents rubrics and recommendations for supporting the growth of aspiring leaders.

By the Standards: Evaluate More, Assess Less, and Grade for Learning

Chad Prather, Pearl-Cohn High School, Nashville, TN, and Justin Montenegro, Hume-Fogg Academic Magnet High School, Nashville, TN

If you've been wondering how to apply standards-based grading, this session is for you. Explore the benefits, address the criticisms, and unpack the processes so that you can effectively use it with your students.

Leading FIT Teaching™

Douglas Fisher, Health Sciences High and Middle College, San Diego, CA

Explore how the FIT Teaching strategies from ASCD—focused on building school culture and leading high-quality instruction, intervention, and assessment—ensure students learn at high levels.

Leadership Practices That Ensure Schoolwide Literacy Achievement for All

Regie Routman, ASCD Author, National Teacher and Leader, Seattle, WA

Reading is cool! Learn how to create and sustain a collaborative school culture that supports reading so that students can improve reading and writing engagement and achievement.

DAY THREE Session Highlights

Collegiate Academic Coaches: The Key to Dropout Prevention and High School Retention

Mary Charles, Loyola University, Chicago, IL

Get the details of a fascinating program at Loyola University Chicago that has paired college students, who are professionally trained as academic coaches, with at-risk high school freshmen. This coaching test has lowered dropout rates and yielded statistically significant academic results.

Function Before Tool: Effectively Integrating Technology in the Classroom

Alex Gonzalez, Health Sciences High & Middle College, San Diego, CA

Discover how new technologies—including Web 2.0, social media, apps, and cloud-based learning—provide new opportunities for purposeful teaching and learning. Master the technology that can help prepare teachers for lesson planning and classroom management.

Closing the Achievement Gap: Transforming Schools for Excellence

Tiffany Anderson, Jennings School District, Jennings, MO

Take a close look at the strategies high-performing schools use to eliminate achievement gaps, improve instruction, and promote a culture of excellence that ensures sustainable high performance for the student base.

New Narratives for School Media Centers: Literacy, Technology, and Cultural Change

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Wilma Kurvink, Wesley College, Melbourne, Australia

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