



Breaking Through: Transforming Urban School Districts

John Simmons

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Is it possible to fundamentally improve the daily workings of the urban classroom in less than seven years? According to John Simmons, it will take a revolution in the way that leaders of urban school systems think and operate, from the classroom to the boardroom. In this ambitious volume, Simmons and a stellar group of contributors, including Linda Darling-Hammond, Richard Elmore, Michael Fullan, Charlotte Danielson, Susan Moore Johnson, Adam Urbanski, Alan Odden, and Valerie Lee, bring the best current research to bear on a range of critical topics, creating a practical framework that superintendents and their teams can use to transform their big-city school systems into true learning communities. As it integrates many voices into a larger vision, this book:

- * Demonstrates convincingly how current, cutting-edge thinking about system change in business has been used to successfully transform schools and close the achievement gap among diverse students.
- * Provides an overview and assessment of the reform efforts of current large-district superintendents, including Alan Bersin, Tom Payzant, Arne Duncan, and Kaye Stripling.
- * Directs the reader towards a larger understanding of issues and priorities with three principles and four key strategies.
- * Applies current research to illuminate what has succeeded and what has not worked in cities such as Boston, San Diego, Houston, and especially Chicago.
- * Features the perspectives and experiences of notable experts who have been working in the trenches of school reform for decades.

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