Introduction to the New Edition

A new era of school accountability has intensified the need for dramatic and effective school transformation. Because of this, I prefer to use the previously mentioned term *school transformation* as opposed to *school change.* Another way to talk about this is to use the terms Marzano and associates have used: *first-order change* and *second-order change.* (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005, p. 66). For them, first-order change involves small change steps that gradually move a school or district forward. Second-order change is much more like my suggestion of the term *school transformation,* for second-order change is radical. Such change takes dramatic steps that create schools that are profoundly different from schools as they have been traditionally known.

Today there are phenomenal experiments going on in the field of education. Charter schools, among other things, are altering the school day to go from early morning to late afternoon. Public schools, for example, are trying year-round schooling. High schools are providing apprenticeship work programs alongside the traditional academic subjects. For the last fifteen years, many high schools have turned to block scheduling, lengthening the class period from 45 minutes to 75, 80, 90, or 100 minutes. Some of the above has worked in some schools. Some of the above has not brought the success sought. However, the need to figure out winning school constructs has become clear to many schools, principals, and districts.

No one innovation is going to work for all schools. Teachers vary. Students vary. Communities vary. The challenge is to discover what works in one's own particular situation using the best research resources available to guide these local decisions.

In the previous edition of this book, three crucial elements or guidelines were suggested to assist the process of school change. These three are more relevant than ever:

- Keep the focus on student learning and achievement.
- Use shared decision making among the stakeholders.
- Structure communication and interaction around visible achievements.

STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT ■

. . . the downfall of low-performing schools is not their lack of effort and motivation; rather it is poor decisions regarding what to

> work on. So the problem in low-performing schools is not getting people to work, it is getting people to do the "right work." (Marzano, et al., 2005, p. 76)

Most teachers, all throughout educational structures, deeply desire to make a difference. Many are pouring incredible energy and time into their classrooms every day. Many teachers are not seeing the results they seek. It is not at all easy to figure out what is the "right work."

However, there is a rather simple measuring stick to apply to schools and classrooms.

> In the change process educators must keep the focus on improved student performance. Through this focus, collective accountability emerges . . . . Schools should measure their success in achieving the desired results by examining the evidence that students are more engaged and are achieving higher. (Zmuda, Kuklis, & Kline, 2004, p. 177)

While the measuring stick is simple, it is not easy to figure out options when it is clear that what is going on is not working or not working well enough. This leads us to the second element.

SHARED DECISION MAKING

Only when principals and teachers sit down together in a collaborative environment can options be talked about and solutions be figured out. Needless to say, the first step in this is gathering the data and then using the data to make constructive decisions.

> The final characteristic of schools that are making dramatic strides in improving educational achievement and equity is the constructive use of data. Rather than being tools for rating, ranking, sorting, or humiliation, data displays in these schools are celebrations of teacher effectiveness. Recognizing the futility of districtwide or schoolwide averages, these schools publish the data for each class—teacher by teacher, class by class. (Reeves, 2006, pp. 89–90)

One teacher alone can get totally blocked figuring out what the next steps need to be. Teachers working together in a supportive, collaborative setting can often create wildly imaginative, effective approaches that work. This is why shared decision making is highlighted as the major vehicle for attaining desired student learning and achievement. While schools still desperately need individual teachers who stand out as shining stars of success in the classroom, whole-school transformation depends on shared decision making for there to be true staff and community buy-in. "There is simply not enough opportunity and not enough encouragement for teachers to work together, learn from each other, and improve their expertise as a community" (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996, p. 1).

The principal is absolutely crucial in allowing shared decision making to happen. The difficulty is that the traditional image of people who are in

charge is that they make the decisions and pass the decisions along. In this age of participation and engagement, more and more this approach is not working and often creates resentments and isolation.

"We need principals who develop leadership in others, thereby strengthening school leadership beyond themselves" (Fullan, 2003, p. 41).

When this is done effectively, teachers, students, parents, and the community are mobilized to ensure student achievement.

> We are beginning to obtain a glimpse of the new moral imperative of school leadership. At the school level—discussed in this chapter—the moral imperative of the principal involves leading deep cultural change that mobilizes the passion and commitment of teachers, parents, and others to improve the learning of all students, including closing the achievement gap. (Fullan, 2003, p. 41)

VISIBLE ACHIEVEMENTS ■

Incredible victories are occurring in schools. Very unwittingly, these successes are being kept secret, hidden under wraps, and unavailable to parents and the community. The result has been an atmosphere of failure both within the school and throughout the community. It is time to make successful, visible achievements the cornerstone of staff meetings, as well as the media reports on schools. "Behaviour that is helpful here includes celebrating staff and student contributions to achievement in public presentations and staff meetings . . ." (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996, p. 89).

"Communication is the lifeblood of education" (Littky, 2004, p. 53). This is true. Further clarification makes this statement even truer. Communication about visible achievements, about what is working, about what is succeeding, is the lifeblood of education. Staff meetings, teachers' lounges, newspaper articles, and TV spotlights all need to declare the visible achievements happening in our schools. Right now, the failures of our schools, our classrooms, and our students are what have been highlighted everywhere. "When great thinking and action go hand in hand, the concepts get larger and they also get more meaningful because they are grounded in concrete strategies and actions" (Fullan, 2005, p. 29).

The overarching master roles highlighted in this book of Process Leader, Skills Trainer, Resource Consultant, and Group Energizer now make even more sense than ever as they get matched with the above three elements to create the twelve roles.

What results is a compendium of 55 tools that aid in school transformation. Perhaps some of these 55 will spark even more creative tools as the journey of school transformation continues into this challenging and exciting twenty-first century.

Introduction

As school restructuring efforts are initiated across the country, many schools are calling upon facilitators to guide the change process. Schools and districts often find that the tasks involved in such momentous change are greater than their ability to manage them. In *The New Meaning of Educational Change,* Michael Fullan (1991) observes:

> As the kinds of changes introduced to schools have increased in complexity over the last decade—from curriculum- and classroom-based innovations to "restructuring" whole systems—the skills required of schools to implement them have also become more complex. The goals of change are becoming more comprehensive and require greater assistance to achieve. More frequently, schools are turning to internal and external "helpers" to fill gaps in expertise and to assist in charting and implementing courses of action. (p. 215)

Systemic change entails moving from one paradigm to another, from one approach to tasks to another, from one form of organization to another. This shift is complex and unsettling, the course often uncharted. Schools accustomed to a slower change time line may be adept at handling incremental changes but are thrown into turmoil when faced with demands for drastic restructuring. Consequently, many schools and school districts have hired outside facilitators or have designated internal facilitators to help oversee the change process.

Who plays the roles of the facilitator for change? Many people both inside and outside the school system can play these roles. School administrators, teachers, principals, and community leaders can, as called for, assume any of the many roles of the facilitator.

Most educators are not prepared for facilitating school change. Some educators are designated as facilitators and survive by a "catch-as-catch-can" method. Unfortunately, this method often results in failure and illuminates the fact that facilitators need numerous specific skills to implement successful, lasting, and beneficial changes. This book is dedicated to those assisting in the process of school change and offers a number of helpful tools and approaches.

Many recent reform efforts have been initiated from the state and district levels. These efforts have failed to account for local school needs and limitations. Top-down proposals often create anger, frustration, and resentment (Fullan, 1991). For reforms to have enduring value, local constituents,

who will implement the changes, need to understand both the need for change and the process of change. They participate in the conception, planning, and implementation of change. This requires that they have the facilitation skills needed for orchestrating and supporting the process, along with an awareness of the resources needed to make the change take hold.

A common misconception among administrators is that local stakeholders have little skill or motivation to implement local school reform. Therefore, administrators often feel they need to hire outside specialists to wring out changes from the local system. "A contrasting view of the process of reform, which is supported by empirical research on change in public and private organizations, emphasizes the role of change agents as facilitators, providers of resources, and consultants" (Astuto, Clark, Read, McGree, & Fernandez, 1994, p. 93). In other words, having facilitators work from the bottom up is just as important as having educational reform imposed from the top down. When people at the local level are trained to assume the many roles of facilitator, they can create a "home-grown" capacity for renewal (Astuto et al., 1994). The roles of the facilitator are absolutely essential to successful school-change efforts, regardless of whether they are assumed by local people or by outside consultants.

FUNCTIONS OF FACILITATORS

The vast dimensions of school change require four major functions in facilitators:

- Process leadership
- Skill training
- Resource consulting
- Group energizing

These four functions are both diverse enough and specific enough that no one person is able to assume them all. The functions may be assumed by a group of three or four, or they may be distributed among a group of ten or twelve. Regardless, all four are critical to the implementation of an effective change process.

First, the change process needs a guide, or leader, to keep everyone focused and targeted in their specific duties—the Process Leader. Second, school change requires an instructor, or trainer, to impart new skills demanded by the change process and to enable participants to practice these skills—the Skills Trainer. Third, school change calls for someone to discover how the school can connect with the available resources that support and empower the change process—the Resource Consultant. Last, school change requires tireless work from someone who, week after week, month after month, year after after, finds ingenious ways to summon up the commitment and energy needed for the change process—the Group Energizer. *(Note: For a detailed discussion of each function, see the introductions to Parts I through IV—page 13 for Process Leader, page 61 for Skills Trainer, page 111 for Resource Consultant, and page 159 for Group Energizer.)*

THREE ELEMENTS OF THE CHANGE PROCESS

There is broad agreement among writers and thinkers in the area of school change that supports three major elements as aspects of each of the four facilitator functions. These three elements are as follows:

1. focusing long-range goals and short-range tasks on *student learning and achievement;*
2. promoting *shared decision making* among the members of all concerned constituencies; and
3. keeping communication and interaction centered on *visible achievements.*

Student Learning and Achievement

The first element, focusing long-range goals and short-range tasks on student learning and achievement, may be extremely difficult to accomplish amidst the complexity of school reform. At any moment, attention can dramatically shift from student learning to staff development or to school safety. However,

> The centrality of student learning is the driving purpose of all activities . . . . Major school improvement efforts can be sustained only when the context promises student learning. Otherwise, the changes in organizational behavior and the struggle for implementation are likely to be perceived as too stressful to be worthwhile. Essentially, the mission is lost unless learning remains at the core. (Joyce, Wolf, & Calhoun, 1993, pp. 19–20)

No matter what else a school may want to accomplish, student learning is the central goal of systemic change. Change programs that do not focus on student learning are ineffective (David, 1991). In other words, creating a system that is committed to student learning is what the change process is all about.

Whatever it takes in the classroom—interactive strategies, cooperative learning techniques, multiple intelligences, problem-based learning methods, critical-thinking skills, an integrated curriculum, authentic assessments—teachers need to use tools to transform student learning. Whatever systemic support is needed for these classrooms—site-based decision making, shared decision-making teams, community and business involvement—community members need to find strategies for transforming the system. The facilitator reminds all stakeholders that genuine and tangible improvement in student learning and achievement is the bottom line of all school-change efforts.

Shared Decision Making

The second element in facilitating school change is sharing decision-making power among all stakeholders of the school-change process. Many

schools, districts, and states attempt to restructure their schools by mandating every step. This imposition of direction from above tends to freeze lower-level participants out of the process. As a principal stated, "Upon reflection, I realize my leadership style did not allow open participation. Neither was it inclusive nor mutually supportive enough for teachers to buy into the school as co-owners" (Daniels, 1990, p. 20).

Top-down, authoritarian decision-making and managing styles can intentionally or inadvertently lessen the participation and creativity needed from other interested parties in the overwhelming process of school change.

What are called for are ways to tap the wisdom and creativity of the entire staff. The issues are too huge and complex to permit responses and solutions to come from a handful when there are huge mental resources and energy to tap in the entire staff (Williams, 1993, p. 61).

Apart from the sheer complexity of implementing school change is the fact that, even though many teachers are engaged in common tasks, their individual jobs are usually lonely and isolated (Sergiovanni, 1992). Such isolation results in both duplication of effort and in failure to promote collegiality and shared decision making. District administrators have discovered that once they move toward shared decision making, building administrators become willing to experiment with shared decision making in their own schools.

> One of my joys is to see that pivotal role of principal take on new meaning, new power, and new potential. As I have learned to collaborate with principals and try a new structure to respond to the needs of that group, I see principals willing to emulate that example in their own buildings. (Ingwerson, 1990, p. 10)

As shared decision making between district administrators and building principals, between principals and teachers, and between teachers and parents becomes a reality, the overwhelming tasks surrounding school change become manageable. Teams composed of members from every group of stakeholders then have the chance to offer their input and affect the outcome. Teams that are given the opportunity to recommend *and* the power to create and implement have a chance for success. The facilitator of school change supports this shared decision making at every level.

Visible Achievements

The third element in facilitating school change is keeping all communication and interaction centered on visible achievements. It is no secret that complaints about the classroom or criticisms of the latest edicts in school policy abound in teachers' lounges across the country. Many faculty meetings are devoted to discussing the latest state mandates. Many administrator-teacher meetings focus on problem students. Written communication, when it occurs, is often sporadic, incomplete, and inaccurate.

Almost every group of educators at some point brings up the issue of communication, whether written or oral. Fullan (1991) argues, "Because change is a highly personal experience, and because school districts consist of numerous individuals and groups undergoing different (to them)

experiences, no simple communication is going to reassure or clarify the meaning of change for people" (pp. 198–99).

Effective school change initiatives require accurate, clear, concise, and timely communication. When the pace of change quickens, change implementers find a greater need than ever to know just what is going on.

> In new theories of evolution and order, information is a dynamic element, taking center stage. It is information that gives order, that prompts growth, that defines what is alive. It is both the underlying structure and the dynamic process that ensure life. (Wheatley, 1992, p. 102)

Without information, school change participants are left in a vacuum, unsure of how the process is proceeding. Accurate, timely information supports the change process and helps to modify it so that it can continue to succeed.

Successful communication focuses on visible achievements—those events and processes that directly and concretely express the positive changes in the local educational system. When communicated clearly, participants can see exactly what change took place, how it was implemented, and why it worked. Recognizing and announcing achievements generates motivation to produce more victories. Hearing about real successes and accomplishments motivates school-change participants to keep going.

Communication that focuses on success can break through the doubt and cynicism that mark many teachers' experiences. Teachers and administrators burn out not only because of long hours but also because they often experience continuous, dismal failure. Dramatic successes encourage more and more energy for the task. Focusing on visible achievements fosters trust, promotes shared decision making, increases motivation and commitment, and overcomes the misgivings.

Effective communication allows others to objectively assess progress toward school change. Many times, people are convinced they have incorporated a new practice when very little has been changed or implemented in the classroom. Sharing concrete, visible achievements allows outsiders to determine clearly whether the problem was actually solved or the proposed solution fell short of its mark.

Facilitators encourage change teams to produce and share visible achievements. Facilitators help groups create small, tangible achievements to build the momentum for tackling more complex problems.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK ■

This book proposes twelve fundamental roles for school-change facilitators (see Figure 0.1). These twelve roles emerge from combining the three elements with the four functions. For example, the process leader (function) can take on the role of architect (student learning and achievement element), carpenter (shared decision-making element), or contractor (visible achievements element). Each chapter of this book covers one role with the following format:

- Role description
- When this role is needed
- Skills that the role requires
- Practical tools with instructions for using them
- Case study describing an instance of how the role was implemented

Each chapter is designed to be read on its own. The reader may read the entire book from cover to cover or may find a chapter that meets the need of the moment. Each chapter provides its own perspective and practical tools. As a further help, the matrix on the following page can guide the reader to the chapter that is most useful at a particular moment.

Figure 0.1 The Multidimensional Role of the Facilitator in School Change

Functions / Elements	Process Leader	Skills Trainer	Resource Consultant	Group Energizer
Student Learning and Achievement	The **architect** sees the big picture. • Focusing on student learning • Expanding traditional boundaries • Considering all viewpoints • Seeking order instead of control	The **coach** devises strategies. • Choosing relevant curriculum • Creating collaborative classrooms • Expanding instructional skills and strategies • Building a supportive school environment	The **producer** organizes the project. • Battling the scarcity mind-set • Empowering resource-gathering teams • Creating situations that attract resources	The **conductor** stays true to the score. • Appraising the real situation • Thwarting attempts to retreat • Focusing on the core task
Shared Decision Making	The **carpenter** builds consensus. • Building trust • Focusing on substantial issues • Shifting to participatory decision making • Getting input from all stakeholders	The **quarterback** leads the team. • Building communities of learners • Creating stakeholder teams • Teaching team-building skills	The **director** overcomes obstacles. • Facing obstacles head-on • Addressing the true obstacle • Enabling teams to challenge obstacles • Reflecting on the process	The **concertmaster** harmonizes the environment. • Promoting flexible structures • Sharing decision-making power • Promoting teamwork • Fostering intrinsic motivation
Visible Achievements	The **contractor** steers the process. • Translating vision into action • Moving from simple victories to long-term successes • Aligning victories with targeted aims	The **sportscaster** announces the game. • Sharing knowledge • Reflecting on the process • Communicating victories • Promoting ownership	The **promoter** advertises successes. • Eliminating isolation and building alliances • Connecting schools with outside sources • Modeling collaboration • Sustaining lifelines of communication	The **critic** celebrates the performance. • Gathering data • Spotlighting accomplishments • Creating stories