

This collection of strategies, ideas, techniques, and instructional best practices in creating engaging, inviting and affirming schools for the 21st century is transforming and empowering. This work present strategies for successful educational leaders, school administrators, teachers, parents, and students.

**201+ Strategies for Successfully Transforming Today's Schools:
A Resource Guide for Educational Leaders, School
Administrators, Teachers, Parents, and Students**

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Reviews

“In a time when American public education has focused on depersonalized standardized tests and funding for all education is quickly disappearing, Dr. Gause provides a collection of practical, personal suggestions that can be implemented by anyone to make the quality of life for learners and teachers more relevant, more fun and more engaging.”

Jean K. Rosales, Ph.D.
Former professional staff, U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Competitiveness

“I found this book to be easy to read and full of nuggets of information. I have things underlined, starred, and circled with notes. The sign of a good book, by my estimation, is equal to how much you write in it.”

Sarah E. Colonna, RN, MA, UNCG ELC PhD Student

“Dr. Gause has distilled his experiences as a teacher, principal, researcher, and world traveler into a tremendously comprehensive guide for those of us navigating the challenges of educational leadership. With his focus on creating vibrant learning communities, he leads us towards a vision of schools as they can be: places of inclusion and joy, which “motivate individuals towards social transformation.” A must-read for all of us who are searching for powerful tools to help build schools of equity and trust.”

Carol Kirby, Assistant Principal
Children’s Center for the Physically Disabled
Winston-Salem, NC

“I found 201+ Strategies for Successfully Transforming Today’s Schools by Dr. C. P. Gause to be a great teaching tool for today’s society of movers and shakers. Though I teach in the Health Care arena, these techniques illustrated in the easy-to-read format can adapt to all forms of education. One main factor exists as an underlying connection between all of the diverse subjects in education: communal learning. Dr. Gause excellently signifies this throughout this text. He reminds us once more that education is not singular but a collective woven effort across the board. This work is extremely imperative in these times of distress and desolation.”

Nebra Bess
Cardiovascular Patient Educator
Novant Health
First-Year Grad, Women & Gender Studies

“The message of this book is great and powerful. There is a message for all in the public school system. This book addresses the social, academic, and intellectual arenas we must improve upon in order to prepare our students for the globalized workplace. I am enjoying this book so much, because it hits the nail on the head for the issues, I see.”

Felita Newman, Curriculum Facilitator
Dudley High School
Greensboro, NC

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C. P. Gause, PhD

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Keys for Successful School Administrators

Creating successful learning communities will require **school administrators** to do the following:

First and foremost successful school administrators along with the members of the learning communities in which they lead must develop a vision of learning that promotes success.

This process takes into account standards driven curricula, federal legislation, and/or policies that speak to educational standards. The core of this vision should be based upon one “key” foundational and cultural leadership principle: **All members of the learning community regardless of background are provided opportunities for academic success.**

Activity:

List five things you do to insure that all students in your school community are provided opportunities for success:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Be able to answer the following questions, "What do we want?" and "How are we going to get there?"

Successful educational leaders know in order to answer those questions they must engage in the following:

- Seek information from all community members
- Be reflective in the data that is gathered
- Knowledgeable regarding how to seek information
- Establish a plan that is attainable and meaningful to EVERYONE
- Be goal oriented but not data driven
- Delegate and execute roles and duties with patience and AFFIRMATION
- Engaging in Affective and Effective Listening
- Strategize for goal-accomplishment and goal-attainment
- Provide learning community members with RESOURCES
- Realize you can not please everyone; however, you can RESPECT everyone

Answer the following question in the space provided below:

What is my goal for this learning community?

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Build open and trusting relationships with your students, faculty, staff, and parent community. This is the key to developing a successful school.

Sustainable change, in a learning community, occurs when trusting relationships have been developed. People are willing to try new and innovating ideas when support from colleagues and supervisors is evident. This support comes in multiple forms and successful administrators understand how to tap into specific resources to provide the right type of support for all members of the community, individually and collectively.

Transform ordinary schools into vibrant learning communities that are creative, equitable, and “just.”

Creative learning communities ignore rules; they seek to develop procedures for encouraging desirable behavior versus establishing levels of discipline and punishment. These communities also look for innovations in providing optimal learning experiences for their stakeholders. Creative learning communities remain on the cutting edge and they do this by establishing new missions, thriving on unpredictability and broadening their scope for new horizons. They avoid the mechanization, simplification, and predictability found in custodial organizations.

List four things you can do NOW to transform your learning community:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Seek multiple methods and techniques to promote a school culture that is positive and inviting.

Culture includes both past and present perceptions; and its perceived reality is reflected in its symbols, rituals, and purpose. The school's culture is a representation of what its members collectively develop as their vision; it is their self-concept. The school's culture reflects what the stakeholders value and what they express to others as being "important around here." In order for school reform to occur educators must realize that the culture of the school and the way the school operates must be transformed inside and out, not only physically but mentally as well.

Affirm, encourage, and support all members of the learning community.

Teachers are the troops. They must be "handled with care" for the vision and mission of a successful learning community to be realized. It is the job, duty, and responsibility of the school administrator to provide all the necessary resources to insure effective instruction. Without adequate instructional tools, support, and preparation teachers will not be effective in delivering a top-notch curriculum. The little things do matter.

List four things you do daily to affirm the teaching faculty in your school community:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

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Schools that are successful are lead by transformative leaders.

Transformative leaders continually seek out opportunities for improvement. These individuals look for solutions to problems and encourage the free exchange of ideas. No one has all of the answers. Problems are part fact and part perspective. When individuals come together to discuss issues it opens the space for a “dialogic encounter.” Within the discussion people’s perceptions often change and/or become redefined.

Answer the following question:

How do you know if you are a transformative leader?

List five characteristics of a transformative leader:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Being an exceptional educational leader requires functioning as an effective school motivator, as well as an effective school administrator. This is accomplished by striving to “do things right” and by “doing the right thing.”

Organizations are socially constructed realities that exist in the minds of their collective members as well as in the concrete sets of rules and regulations that those members develop. According to those rules and roles, educators are, indeed, accountable for the dissemination of knowledge. They are also accountable for the advancement of the human spirit! It is important to make organizations effective; it is important, as well, to foster humane social conditions. Remember: we need leaders who will respond to knowledge in ways that will benefit not only the organization and its members, but the social order as well.

List seven realities of your school-community that impact your style of leadership:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

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Answer the following two questions in the space below:

1. Does a “culture of equity” exist in your school community? Why or Why not?

2. What are your beliefs regarding equity and diversity in your school community?

Create a culture of Equity.

Equity is not treating everyone “fair” or “equal.” Thinking in these terms does not take into account the individual needs of community members. Equity or to be equitable means you will provide resources and make decisions based upon what each teacher, parent, student and/or staff member needs at that moment in time. Being equitable does not mean showing favoritism to certain individuals and/or groups of people.

List ten things that could be done in your school community to create a “culture of equity.”

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Be Inclusive.

Much of school culture at all levels is designed to exclude and not include. Our meeting times, the separation of disciplines, the segregation of students, and the types of instruction presented. We separate based on gender, age, color, identity, sexual orientation and ability. Discover ways to bring EVERYONE together regardless of background, ability and/or identity.

- Change the lunch schedule and let all students eat together as a community
- Utilize instructional materials that celebrate diversity and globalization
- Establish vertical and horizontal planning teams
- Utilize community-partner resources to provide training in diversity
- Allow technology to open the doors for students to communicate across borders
- Identify difference as a strength and utilize it to empower EVERYONE

Answer the following four questions:

1. Is your school community an “inclusive” community?

2. What can you do to make your school community a more “inclusive” community?

C. P. Gause, PhD

Diversity is the key.

Create a Culture of Diversity by celebrating difference. Establish a vision and mission for the 21st century by giving your school community resources for globalization. We have the ability to communicate via the Internet across the globe at a moment's notice. Utilize the World Wide Web and all of the applications available to empower your teachers and students to engage in cross-cultural communication.

List ten "new" resources you locate on the Internet regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion that you will share with your faculty and staff on this coming week:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Create a Professional Learning Community (PLC)

Professional Learning Communities are those designed and developed for the purpose of increasing student academic achievement and success. Professional Learning Communities focus on instruction and success, not testing data. All members of the learning community should receive training on establishing, maintaining, and sustaining Professional Learning Communities, if a school decides to engage in this reform effort. The Internet is filled with many resources regarding establishing and sustaining Professional Learning Communities, take the time and search the web for PLC resources. To engage in the PLC development process you must do the following:

- Be supportive of teachers and their ideas
- Be visible and take an active role in the instructional day
- Lead by example
- Be an Instructional Leader
- Establish honest and “open” communication with EVERYONE
- Allow faculty, staff and students to grow and think critically
- Empower students to make instructional decisions
- NOT utilize Professional Learning Communities as a method to increase test scores
- Be open and responsive to change
- Have a commitment to change and seek to rupture the status-quo
- Involve parents, teachers, students and other community members in the process of developing Professional Learning Communities

Navigate and Negotiate the Political Climate

School and District-level administrators must realize education is a political experience and paradigm. The selection of teachers, the funding of schools, and the communities in which they reside are all impacted by political forces. There are political climates within the school building. Successful educational leaders are not only aware of the political structures, they know how to navigate and negotiate the political terrain with ease and success. Successful administrators have the uncanny ability to engage in the “sea of politics” without abandoning the cargo and passengers of their ship.

List five political forces that impede you from being effective:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

List three strategies you will utilize to navigate and negotiate these forces:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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Empower and Facilitate, but Do Not Judge.

Successful educational leaders facilitate the leadership and instructional processes for members of their learning community. They do not judge, nor condemn. They inspire and transform the community by doing the following:

- Provide a culture and climate where continuously learning takes place
- Facilitate the learning process
- Create relationships and a “culture of respect”
- Lead with understanding and compassion
- Not be a YES-person, but facilitates the development of SOUND decisions
- Know the various cultures and sub-cultures within the school community
- Know the students, parents, teachers, staff and other community members very well
- Understand their job requires them to be available 24-hours of the day
- Identify pockets of resistance and utilize them as metrics for success

Answer the following three questions:

1. How will you empower someone on today?

2. What aspects of your leadership you need to be improved?

3. What aspects of your leadership should you celebrate?

C. P. Gause, PhD

Things to Remember:

Instructional Best Practices for Teachers

Strategies and Techniques for Teaching Reading (Literature)

Teachers should do more of the following:

Read aloud to students daily

Schedule time for independent and group reading

Encourage students to choose their own reading materials

Expose students to multiple types of genres of literature

Encourage students to read fiction, non-fiction, science fiction and mystery books

Model and discuss your own reading practices

Place emphasis on comprehension, context and genre

Teach reading as a process:

- Use strategies that activate prior knowledge
- Help students make and test predictions
- Structure help during reading
- Provide after-reading applications

Encourage social and collaborative activities with much discussion and group by interest and book choice

Silent reading should be followed by in-depth discussions

Teach literacy skills within the context of whole and meaningful literature

The Writing Process and Writing activities should occur before and after reading activities

Use content specific text by discipline (e.g., historical novels in social studies)

Evaluate student progress by focusing on higher-order thinking skills

Teachers should do less of the following:

Emphasize whole-class reading-group activities

Selecting all reading materials for individual/groups

Rely on basal readers

Keeping own reading habits private

Emphasizing reading sub-skills (word analysis, syllabication and phonics)

Teach the reading process as a single, one-step act

Individual seat/desk work

Establish reading groups by reading ability/level

Round-robin oral reading

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Teaching skills in phonics workbooks/drills in isolation

Limiting time to engage in the writing process

Discouraging pre-conventional spelling

Maintaining an established reading time

Focusing on individual low-level sub-skills

Measuring student reading success by a test score

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