



The Future of Schools: How Communities and Staff Can Transform Their School Districts (Leading Systemic School Improvement)

By Merrelyn Emery

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Editorial Review

Review

If you think learning is only about what happens in the classroom, think again. In this wide-ranging and provocative book, Merrelyn Emery not only debunks current educational practice, but shows how to change it for the better. A must-read for those who care about their communities. (Stan Glaser, director, research, Sydney Graduate School of Management, University of Western Sydney)

Dr. Merrelyn Emery gives us all an opportunity to understand the importance and implications of sustainable change in our educational systems. Further, she encourages our participation in the discussion and in the work. With her comprehensive proposal for change, Dr. Emery brings a missing piece to the puzzle of education reform in the U.S: how to redesign. Hers is a hopeful proposition, one that has potential for curing our cynicism and restoring vitality to our schools, workplaces, and communities. (Janis Nowlan, director of Professional Studies, College of Architecture and Planning, University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Cen)

The Future of Schools fascinates and excites from cover to cover. Every chapter contains something useful, not only for the mainstream North American target audience, but for those of us engaged in the decolonization process as well. There is plenty of common ground here. I was constantly amazed at seeing the theory behind past educational activism as well as blueprints for future actions, both planned and now newly inspired. It was a joy to read the book. (Philip Deering, coadministrator, Six Nations Indian Way School, and founder, The Kahnawake Institute for Advanced Studies in Native Self-Suffici)

Since the 1970s, Emery has spent much of her career developing the field of open systems theory and its two major methods: the Search Conference and the Participative Design Workshop. In this text for school leaders, she describes how these principles and methods can be used to redesign entire school systems to improve educational outcomes. (*Reference and Research Book News*)

If you are looking for a source of inspiration and guidance to help build a desirable future for American public education, this is a book for you. Dr. Emery presents a meticulously researched yet flexible process for engaging communities in the design of their future?then helping them create the educational structures and classroom practices to realize that vision. The result is a 'best practices' manual for transforming whole school systems. The transformation outlined here avoids the revolving doors of short-sighted quick fixes and cure-all leadership changes. Instead, Dr. Emery uses her vast knowledge and experience with successful long-term systemic change to describe how our educational systems can slowly but surely move 'toward the ideals (people) hold for their children and their communities.' (Charles Buzz Blick, M.Ed., executive director, The Strategic Listening Institute)

About the Author

Merrelyn Emery researches and teaches social science, including the field of educational systems. Since 1970, she has worked on developing the field of open systems theory and its two major methods, the Search Conference and the Participative Design Workshop.

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