

First Book Reporting on Comprehensive, Large-Scale Strategies that Led Broad Prize-winning School Districts to Make Academic Gains

Now Available from Harvard Education Press

“To meet the President’s goals, we need transformational change. The islands of excellence that now exist in school districts have to become the norm. The promising solutions that you have all helped to create need to be brought to scale.” -- Sec. Arne Duncan

The first book to provide concrete examples, supported by data, of successful large-scale reform in the nation’s most improved urban districts is now out from Harvard Education Press. [*Bringing School Reform to Scale*](#) describes specific district-wide operational and instructional reform strategies that author and researcher Dr. Heather Zavadsky shows together led [*Broad Prize*](#)-winning school districts to outpace their peers in raising student achievement – not just in individual schools – but across numerous schools, district-wide.

Of particular use to state and district leaders seeking federal funds under Race to the Top or the Innovation Fund, [*Bringing School Reform to Scale*](#) describes the years of intentional, sustained efforts undertaken by Broad Prize-winning school districts in Boston, Long Beach, Calif., Garden Grove, Calif., Norfolk, Va., and Aldine in Houston to improve teaching and learning and align practices across all organizational levels of a school system, something that can be done in any district given the right knowledge and tools.

For superintendents, chief academic officers, education school professors, school board members and elected officials or advocacy organizations looking to produce large-scale, dramatic student achievement gains, this book allows a peek inside what systemic district-wide improvement looks like on the ground, warts and all, and the outcomes that are possible.

In light of anticipated ESEA reauthorization, the book also contains valuable lessons for policy-makers. Among them, Zavadsky shows: 1) the single most important contributor to the success of these districts was their efforts to put in place a clear, direct, and rigorous curriculum aligned with high standards and supported at various layers throughout the system, 2) data-driven teaching and testing empowered teachers and led to student gains, and 3) stable school district governance, in the form of mayoral control or a unified school board, was critical to success.

“This book offers an unusually detailed look inside some of our best run school districts. Heather Zavadsky offers honest assessments, highlighting not only the inspiring successes, but also the many daunting challenges that remain. Very enlightening!” - Ronald F. Ferguson, faculty co-chair and director of the Achievement Gap Initiative, Harvard University

“Bringing School Reform to Scale highlights the practices in five districts that won the prestigious Broad Prize—and shows how important fundamentals of good practices (including rigorous standards, aligned curriculum, and smart investments in human capital) can lead to great schools and successful districts.” - Mark Schneider, vice president, American Institutes for Research; former commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics



announcement

“The analysis of the five high-performing districts points to practices, beliefs, systems, and structures that have led to dramatic turnarounds. The compilation of this work provides a road map toward scalable reform.” - William R. Hite, superintendent, Prince George’s County Public Schools, Md.

About the Author: Heather Zavadsky is director of policy and communications for the Institute for Public School Initiatives for the University of Texas system. She led research teams through site visits and analysis of Broad Prize districts from 2002 to 2006.

Bringing School Reform to Scale is a volume in the new Educational Innovations series by Harvard Education Press.

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