This book is about building a better future by understanding our history.

- An overview of American education
- School as we know it: curriculum, instruction and assessment
- Teachers
- School choice
- Engaging parents and the community
- The tangled web of education governance and finance
- What if we could start from scratch?
Objectives of the Talk

- Learn how to use major concepts and tools of community based leadership and innovative regional strategies to increase learning outcomes for students, their families, and their communities

- Share one or two new ideas or strategies with members of your staff after the conference

- Help your districts build more innovative inclusive communities inside and outside of their school buildings
Public Perception of Education

- Decline in public perception of school quality
- Public trust for educators has diminished
- Public trusts teachers more than administrators
- Policy leaders want to see major changes in education with regard to governance and school choice
Local Challenges for Educators

- Dark money in school board elections
- Conflicts over gender, sex education and critical race theory and teaching of history
- Increase of book banning
Oppunities to Make a Difference in Communities

- We make a positive difference in the lives of our students and their families
- We are part of a profession that shapes other professions
- Our mission is hard but compelling
- We are about human growth and development for all adults and children
Community Based Leadership

- Community based leadership is needed to address culture wars
- Current mood of this country is more heavily focused on individualism, the “I” more than community “we”
- Upswing: How America Came Together a Century Ago and We Can Do it Again (Robert Putnam)
Education is not Linear

- Not just about the alignment of standards, content, instruction, and assessments
- Education of children is complex
- Involves multiple systems within and outside of your districts communities
- Education is a microcosm of what is occurring at the local, state and national levels
Community Relationships Essential to Effective Education

- Erikson: Developmental growth is supported by alignment and overlap of home and school realms
- Friere: Effective education derives from the needs of the student and their community
Inspiring Districts to Become Cultural Anthropologists

- Help your superintendents immerse themselves in their schools, districts, and community
- Model this behavior
- Ensure they include stakeholders’ point of views in fostering change
- Ensure they emphasize what is to be gained, not lost
- Teach them to be nonjudgmental and respect diverse groups within their community
Changing Our Perceptions

- Do not blame the families for conditions in which children come to school
- Listen with open ears and heart
- Be empathetic
- Turn judgements into collective wisdom and action
Culture within Classrooms, Schools and Districts, and Your ESC

- Edgar Schein: Culture is a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems.

- Culture can support a status quo, or present challenges and opportunities.

- Students come to the classroom with unique cultural experiences that must be understood.
What is Your ESC Culture?

- What is your ESC trying to accomplish?
- Is their clarity around your goals and priorities?
- Does your team and their team have unity around its priorities so you can create a common culture internally?
- Do you use a common language to frame your challenges and theory of action?
- Do you bring external groups with divergent points of view to build trust and identify and build areas of common ground?
Issues as Seen at the ESC, District, and School Level

- Need more than parents involvement beyond attending meetings and events
- Research shows the educators are not trained well in working with parents at high level
- Teachers lack skills and comfort with making home visits
- Educators are often judgmental about student background
- COVID changed this phenomenon in some Appalachian and urban districts
The Impact of COVID

- Increased educator presence in communities to deliver food and offer emotional support through porch meetings

- Working though internet access issues with families

- Educators developed more empathy for families in their communities
Building Parent Relationships: Issues of Power and Inclusion

- Parent perception that nobody is listening to them
- Need for two-way communication to build trust with parents
- Technologies can expand communication
- Educators need to develop the ability to hear and discuss parent concerns with parents and staff
Actions Speak Louder than Words: Model Seeing Parents as Partners

- Bring traditionally marginalized groups into your staff discussion
- Meet with marginalized groups in their places, community centers, churches and invite them into the educational service centers
- Help districts build solid relationships to shield against political manipulation
- Make the ESC a place for civil discussions on issues affecting quality education
- Develop programs to build relationships between and among parents from different parts of the ESC service area
Use the Community for Organizing for Education Reform

- Build relationships with organizations already involved with marginalized families
- Comer provides examples of bringing parents into his Planning and Management Team, which infuses principles of child and adolescent development into school reform strategies
- Include parents with teachers on professional development training
- Jason Learning and PBIS Training in Michigan
An Asset-Based Community Approach

- Tools help district superintendents understand assets in their districts
  - Health and human services, business and industry, youth development organizations, and religious instructions

- Columbus East High School
  - Example of Tigerland

- Picture of Jesus in an Ohio school
An Asset-Based Community Approach

- Have a kitchen cabinet comprised of diverse groups within your community
- Include people from community organizations that can support services that your community needs as well as parents
- Health and mental health services, youth development organizations, grass roots organizations, workforce development, religious organizations
- A diverse cabinet makeup can serve to break down tensions and improve quality of community services
Many Purposes of Public Education

- Academic achievement
- Participation in American democracy
- National defense
- Workforce development
- Transmission of cultural values
- Health and wellness
- Preparation for the future
Clarifying your ESC and Districts' Purposes

- Specific goals and strategies may not be supported by all in their community
- Not all parents want the same things for their children
- Given multiple purposes, leaders can be blinded by differing views
- Organizations suffer when they do not clarify purpose and do not understand diverse points of view in their community
Building on Your ESC Strengths

- Emphasize your strengths
- Your ESC cannot be all things to all districts you serve
- Build partnerships with other ESCs to provide cost effective services for your districts
- Partnerships and collaborations are the key to reinvention
Tools For Assessing Parents' Purpose For Schooling

- Survey your community using new technologies for quick feedback
- Portrait of a Graduate offers a way to start the conversation at the district level
- Host critical conversations at the ESC, district, and school level
- If you are large enough school district offer choices among elementary and middle schools to accommodate what parents want for their children
- Foster collaborative arrangements among districts to meet parent needs
Share the Curriculum and Work with Community on Localized Curriculum

- Encourage districts to make scope and sequence public and accessible by grade level
- Share your curriculum software with groups in your community
- Engage your community in Design and Pitch activities to solve a community wide problem
  - Design and Pitch Challenges in STEM
  - VIMS: Beyond the Water Bottle Challenge
- Design with business and workforce organizations localized curriculum which can fit into your scope and sequence
- Use local role models in your curriculum materials
Examples of Localized Curriculum
Role of Innovation at your ESC

- Reduce regional disparities by supporting evidence based innovative practices
- Promote underutilized areas for education and economic development
- Strengthen social cohesion and inclusiveness in your area
- Insure equity of innovation diffusion in your area
Fostering an Innovative ESC

- Develop an innovative unit (one person to start)
- Work with stakeholders to develop a broad based innovation policy template that can be shared with your districts to serve varying different district capacities
- Research innovative evidence based strategies around new designs and technological based innovation
Fostering an Innovative ESC

- Engagement of stakeholders in your area to assess region's assets for education and workforce innovation
  - Health and human services
  - Religious institutions
  - Multiple state, county and local governmental units
  - Potential investors
  - Community foundations
  - Youth development organizations
  - Sustainability projects or organizations rethinking sustainability
Access the Strengths of your Districts to Innovate

- What would districts want to gain?
- What resources do they need to achieve this gain?
- What is the ESC's availability and staff capacity to help them achieve this innovation?
- Where are there other supports to help?
Reimagining a New System of Schools

- Take your stakeholder’s through a planning exercise
- Find investors to implement your vision without disruption to regular school districts operation
- Use as an example Dayton Hudson store that turned into Target
- Design a research and evaluation model which is formative and summative
- Ohio Education Service Centers Association can promote and report on reimagined models of schools
Book Study on Reimagining a New System of Schools

- Appendix B discussion questions
- Resource for an action agenda in creating new models of public education
- Questions help administrators, teachers, parents, and community stakeholders to address the current system and reimagine the future of education
Questions from the Audience

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Battling for the Soul of Public Education

THE BUYING AND SELLING OF AMERICAN EDUCATION

REIMAGINING A SYSTEM OF SCHOOLS FOR ALL CHILDREN

SUSAN TAVE ZELMAN AND MARGARET ERLANDSON SORENSEN
"Beyond its concise and illuminating history of public education over the last two centuries, the authors provide a rich understanding of the manner in which policy continues to impede progress in our most disadvantaged schools, forcing us to rethink our approach to American education now and in the future."

- Christine Fowler Mack, Superintendent, Akron Public Schools

"This work clearly defines many of the challenges associated with the landscape of public education and provides many thought provoking solutions to address. It is critical that we acknowledge this work as paramount for creating the innovation and transformation that is desperately needed in public education today."

-- Dan Leffingwell, Executive Director of Special Projects and Student Supports, Former Noble Local Schools Superintendent

"This book advocates for creating a vigorous national dialogue to stop making public education a political tool and create systems that balance societal needs with those of all children and their families."

- Kirk Koennecke, CEO/ Superintendent, Indian Hill EVSD

This book can serve as a primer for policymakers and school leaders alike as we seek to create more fair, just, and good systems of education for America’s youth.

- Eric Gordon, District Superintendent of Cleveland Metro Schools

The Buying and Selling of American Education offers a timely and inspiring look at the challenges and opportunities of building a more inclusive, forward-thinking education system. This book traces the history of American education as a foundation to examining persistent weaknesses in education today. Doctors Susan Tave Zelman and Margaret Erlandson Sorensen walk you through the process of transforming the American education system, which requires meaningful reform and improvement, by using new emerging technologies and encouraging broad, systemic change.