



Change Wars

Action Guide

This study guide is a companion to the book *Change Wars*, edited by Andy Hargreaves and Michael Fullan. *Change Wars* presents the insights and expertise of some of the leading educational thinkers and authors from around the world.

This study guide is arranged by chapter, enabling readers to either work their way through the entire book or to focus on the specific topics addressed in a particular chapter. It is designed to help you benefit from and apply the ideas presented in *Change Wars*. It can be used by individuals, small groups, or an entire faculty to identify key points, raise questions for consideration, assess conditions in a particular school, and suggest steps that might be taken to promote change. You might also compare and contrast the authors' positions on education reform.

We thank you for your interest in this book, and we hope that this guide proves to be a useful tool in your efforts to inspire and implement change strategies in your school or district.

Chapter 1

The Fourth Way of Change: Towards an Age of Inspiration and Sustainability

Andy Hargreaves

1. Why was the First Way described as a “golden age of education”? Why would educators be nostalgic for this era?
2. How did innovative and traditional schools differ in their theories-in-action during the Interregnum that led to the Second Way?
3. The Second Way is described as an era of “increased coherence, certainty, and accountability, but at the price of innovation, motivation, and creativity.” Why was this so? What are some of the reforms that led to this description?
4. What three paths intertwine to define the Third Way of post-standardization, and how do each of these paths address the shortcomings of previous eras? What are some flaws of the Third Way?
5. What are the five pillars of purpose and partnership of the Fourth Way?
6. What are the three principles of professionalism of the Fourth Way?
7. What are the four catalysts of coherence of the Fourth Way?

Chapter 2

Teaching and the Change Wars: The Professionalism Hypothesis

Linda Darling-Hammond

1. What are the four approaches to change, and how do they differ?
2. What is the central problem with the bureaucratic approach? Why is it at odds with student learning?
3. How does the professional approach support student learning?
4. What are some of the drawbacks of the market approach?
5. What are some positive aspects of the democratic approach?
6. The author notes that investments in teachers and teaching matter in professionally-supported democratic schools. How do these schools support teachers and teaching? Reflect on how your school supports teaching and learning, and compare these strategies with the approach the author advocates.

Chapter 3

From System Effectiveness to System Improvement:

Reform Paradigms and Relationships

Sir Michael Barber

1. What are the benefits and drawbacks of each of the three paradigms for large-scale public service: command and control, quasi-markets, and devolution and transparency?
2. What are the three roles that must be performed by government in large public service reform?
3. The author claims that the government's relationship to the teaching profession is a central issue in reform. What are some problems that develop when the relationship is not good?
4. According to the author, what are the two main drivers of teachers' frustration in England and the United States since the 1980s? Reflect on your own experiences with these two issues.

Chapter 4

International Benchmarking as a Lever for Policy Reform

Andreas Schleicher

1. Why is international benchmarking such a valuable tool for policy reform and transformational change?
2. What are some of the pitfalls of industrial benchmarking?
3. The author identifies four dimensions for developing and employing international benchmarks as levers for educational change. What are these dimensions, and what are the main goals of each?

Chapter 5

Industrial Benchmarking: A Research Method for Education

Marc S. Tucker

1. How would you characterize the conventional approach to education research?
2. What are the key features of the benchmarking methodology described by the author?
3. How do these two approaches differ, and what are the strengths and weaknesses of each? Under what circumstances would either of these methods be superior to the other? Why?

4. Do you think it is possible and desirable to combine these methods? Why? In what circumstances?
5. What are the origins of the conventional approach to educational research? Were they borrowed from some other field of study? Which field? To what extent do you think that there is a good fit between the field they might have been borrowed from and the field of education? Why do you think so? Where do you think that fit does not work, and why do you think so?
6. Do you agree that the conventional research methods are implicitly calibrated for a replication model of education change and are of limited utility for those who are designing new systems? Why?
7. What are the weaknesses of benchmarking as a research strategy? Do you think they can be mitigated and, if so, how?

Chapter 6

The Music of Democracy: Emerging Strategies for a New Era of Post-Standardization

Dennis Shirley

1. The author begins the chapter with a discussion of recent reform legislation. What are some of the positive and negative aspects of No Child Left Behind (NCLB)?
2. How do some of your own experiences compare with the disenchantment with NCLB that the author describes?

3. The author calls for a new phase of post-standardization. What does he identify as the first step in any meaningful reform effort?
4. The author asks, “What if we asked teachers what they would prefer instead of standardized testing?” Reflect on your answers to this question.
5. A second component in the new phase of post-standardization is the concept of finding and nurturing a given school’s own signature practices. Does your school or district do this? If so, how? How does your situation compare with the author’s suggested strategies?
6. The third dimension of post-standardization is community organizing and public engagement. Can you think of any examples of movements in your community or beyond that have gone past “deep reforms with shallow roots” to inspire true reform?
7. What are some of the challenges of developing political strategies to support the three dimensions of post-standardization advocated by the author?

Chapter 7

Preparing for the New Majority: How Schools Can Respond to Immigration and Demographic Change

Pedro A. Noguera

1. How can schools provide support for students as they acculturate?
2. How can schools address the needs of transnational families?

3. What strategies might a community-school approach employ to serve immigrant students?
4. Reflect on your school's or district's approach to immigrant students. Does it serve as a source of opportunity and a pathway to a better life for your immigrant students? What work could be done toward this goal?

Chapter 8

When Politics and Emotion Meet: Educational Change in

Racially Divided Communities

Jonathan D. Jansen

1. The author shares lessons learned during his experiences in post-apartheid South Africa. Reflect on what aspects of his experiences might relate to yours in your state/province, school, or district. What lessons can be learned from the experiences of a divided society?
2. Do you or teachers in your school or district feel comfortable engaging students in productive dialogues about difficult subjects like race and representation?
3. As a leader, reflect on your ability to take both sides of a situation into consideration.
4. Do leaders in your school or district exemplify the expected standard of behavior for their students?

5. Do the professionals in your school or district make an effort to engage emotionally with students in their world? What are the benefits to this strategy both in racially divided cultures and elsewhere?

Chapter 9

Engaging Practice: School Leadership and Management From a Distributed Perspective

James P. Spillane

1. Reflect on your work as a school leader, and identify two examples that make clear the difference between *practice* and (social) *practices* as outlined in this chapter.
2. Identify an example from your work as a school leader that captures how leading and managing work together to support instruction improvement.
3. Identify an organizational routine at your school (or a school you work with) that you believe is critical to improving the school. Then outline in six or seven sentences your theory of action for the routine; that is, how it should/ought to contribute to improvement.
4. Using the same organizational routine as in question 3, describe how the routine actually works in the day-to-day life of your school. What differences do you notice between the espoused theory and the theory in use?
5. Using the same organizational routine as questions 3 and 4, identify two reasons why this organizational routine should work and two reasons why it might not work.

6. Pick one tool critical to your work as a school leader (for example, lesson plans, samples of students' work, or classroom observation protocol). Carefully consider the affordances and constrains of this tool; that is, how does the tool focus the interactions between you and your staff? (Hint: Once you select your tool, pick a different tool to contrast it with to help you highlight how the tool frames the interactions in some ways rather than in others.)

Chapter 10

Institutions, Improvement, and Practice

Richard F. Elmore

1. Do you agree or disagree with the author's skeptical view of the relationship between research and practice?
2. What is "nestedness," and what problems are associated with reform in nested systems?
3. The author makes a distinction between "change" and "improvement." What is that distinction, and what significance does it have for education reform?

Chapter 11

Level-Five Networks: Making Significant Change in Complex Organizations

Douglas Reeves

1. The author uses an example of an experiment he conducted during his speaking engagements. Do this activity as a group. Calculate the grade of the student who has received the following grades throughout the term: C, C, MA (missing assignment), D, C, B, MA, MA, B, A. Do your group's results match the author's results? Why is the outcome of this activity an example of a failed change initiative? Can you think of other initiatives that have failed with similar results?
2. The author identifies communication *from* the leader and communication *to* the leader as key elements in any change initiative. Reflect on your school or district's communication strategy. Are there networks in place for sharing creativity, ingenuity, and challenges?
3. What is the difference between a "singular charismatic leader" and an "architect of improved individual and organizational performance"? Why is the singular charismatic leader so ineffective and counterproductive?
4. What are the five levels of network effectiveness described by the author? What are the benefits and drawbacks of each?
5. Can you think of any examples of level-five networks in your school, district, or community? How do they function as level-five networks?

Chapter 12

Reform Without (Much) Rancor

Ben Levin

1. Why do most reforms in education fail to last or produce the desired results?
2. Why do reforms get adopted if they do not have the requisites for success?
3. What would a real implementation strategy for reform look like? What elements would be needed?
4. What could educators do in schools and in the broader community to develop a better understanding of the political dynamics that drive change?
5. How could effective two-way communications be established around a reform program in a way that would build commitment as well as quality in the reform? What are the barriers to doing this?

Chapter 13

Have Theory, Will Travel: A Theory of Action for System Change

Michael Fullan

1. What are the three criteria a theory must meet to be called a *theory of action*?
2. The first elements of the Theory of Action for System Change (TASC) include the need for an inspirational overall vision. How is this different from the typical vision statements created by schools and districts?
3. The author shares his opinion about the controversial topic of targets (in relation to goals). Do you agree with his opinion, or do you see different benefits or drawbacks of targets?
4. The author focuses on capacity-building as a key feature of TASC. Its most powerful form, he claims, is *indirect* or *lateral* capacity-building. How does this differ from just providing training, resources, and so on?
5. Managing the distractors is another element of TASC. How do leaders in this framework deal with distractors?
6. Give some examples of how constant evaluation and inquiry can be built into the reform. Why is this element crucial to the TASC framework?
7. Describe the various elements of two-way communication in the TASC framework. How does communication within the framework differ from traditional structures in education?