

# Preface

Students' learning journeys can be ordinary—or extraordinary—depending on how engaged they are in their education. Learners who leave their current thinking to explore new approaches experience trials and challenge themselves despite fearing the outcome and so ultimately emerge with greater wisdom.

Like Harry Potter, J. K. Rowling's fictional hero who faced battles both internal and external to learn about his own gifts and grow ever stronger, we as learners take a hero's journey by "listening for the call to adventure, accepting the challenge, conquering our fear and claiming the treasure we seek" (Winkler, 2013).

The treasure here is for you, the reader, to embark on the journey to understand how to help students become passionate learners. By picking up this book, you are seeking out your own call for adventure. You'll discover why student engagement should be at the heart of our efforts to improve teaching and learning and how engagement is a defining factor for student success. You'll embark on a mission to reverse the human tragedy of under-engaged students by developing a metric focused on student engagement.

You'll study a framework that connects awareness and understanding of teacher feedback and student mindset, achievement, and passion that can lead to improved professional practice and, ultimately, increases in student achievement. You'll learn how to put student achievement at the forefront of the professional growth and development conversation.

Use this book for professional growth and development and to find tangible engagement strategies and key phrases and questions to work with students toward true engagement and a

growth mindset. Follow the examples of engagement at the heart of school improvement planning scattered throughout the book to understand the difference student engagement makes for families, educators, and most importantly, the students we serve.

## **ABOUT THE BOOK**

The first six chapters demonstrate the framework for creating passionate learners. The last two chapters discuss high-leverage reform and how leaders support the framework for creating passionate learners.

Chapter 1 builds the argument for a focus on student engagement through a historical perspective. An alternative approach to thinking about teaching and learning will be explored, leading to next practices in the 21st century.

Chapter 2 helps develop educators' understanding of cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement and learn how to create a culture of engagement that emphasizes assessment literacy in every classrooms, building, and the district.

In Chapter 3, readers can explore the power of mindset and understand how a teacher's focus on student effort can change mindset, resulting in a renewed sense of what a child can accomplish. The classroom environment teachers create can increase students' aversion to risk and stifle growth and engagement or increase risk taking and promote growth and engagement.

Chapter 4 shows how intentional language helps develop students' internal dialogue and how teachers' word choice aids students' reflection. Teachers' positive suppositions influence students' views of themselves and translate into student confidence in their classrooms.

Chapter 5 explains the importance of self-determination and the research that benefits students when they perceive their teachers to be autonomy supportive.

Chapter 6 discusses how to set the culture and tone for engagement by defining and recognizing what it looks like and understanding the factors that dampen students' passion for learning.

Chapter 7 highlights how the Framework for Creating Passionate Learners can be used as the filter for high-leverage reform.

Chapter 8 helps building and district leaders understand how to plan and develop transformational change, leading to creating passionate learners.

The Framework for Creating Passionate Learners speaks to the book as a whole and why each chapter is part of the book. It now is up to you to take on the challenge to internalize the substance of the book to engage your students fully so that they can fully reach their potential.