
From the moment students walk into a school, the most important success factor is the teacher standing in front of the classroom.”

This quote from High-Poverty, High-Performing Schools encompasses a philosophy which should be shared by all educators. High-Poverty, High-Performing Schools serves as a blueprint for teachers and administrators who wish to improve student performance and turn the aforementioned belief into reality.

According to author Ovid K. Wong, in order for a school to be considered a “high-poverty, high-performing school,” or 2(HP), it must have at least 50 percent or more of its student population receiving free or reduced-price lunch, and it must meet the state performance requirement of at least 70 percent. He describes five U.S. schools that fit these parameters. He shares their success stories, and gives a brief synopsis of a strategy that contributed to the school’s achievement.

Wong eloquently and definitively outlines the components needed for high-poverty schools to become high performing. These components are in the areas of leadership, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Wong truly excels here, taking each of these elements and expounding on how it can be approached, analyzed, and evaluated. He devotes a chapter to each point and describes how it can be improved. The illustrations and examples of each component add to the explanations, making it easier for the reader to absorb it.

Lastly, Wong pulls everything together and describes a 2(HP) model that can be used by educators to achieve success. Although the model is theoretical, stakeholders can use it as a starting point for strategizing turnaround situations. This model should be studied and considered a resource for any educator attempting to foster concrete, substantive change and improvement in a school.

I highly recommend this book as a guide for all educators, whether they are in a high-poverty school or not. The concepts Wong discusses can help any school become or remain successful. This book can be used as a resource for anyone in the educational community.

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