



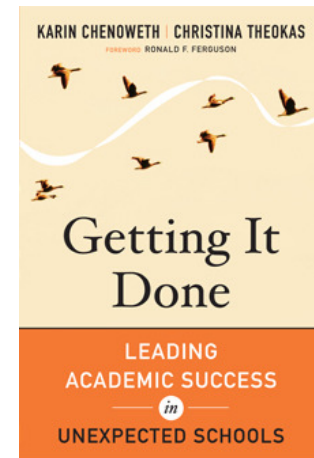
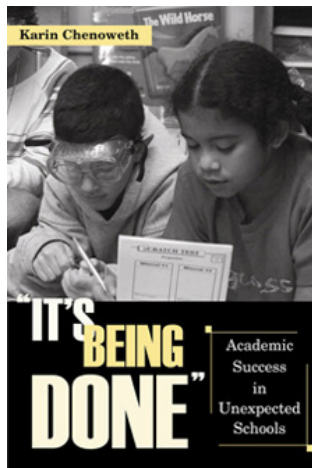
Beliefs in “Getting It Done” Schools

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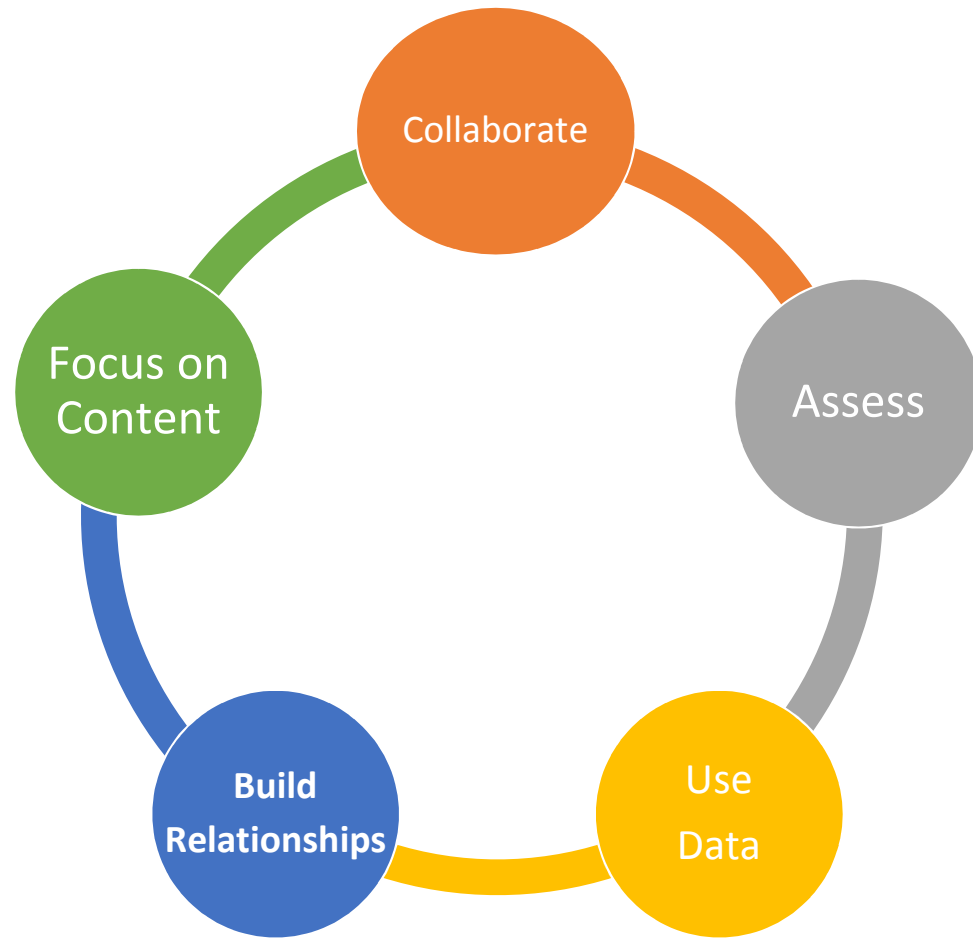
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The Education Trust and I have spent more than a decade trying to identify, honor, and learn from high-performing schools with large populations of students of color and students living in poverty.



Briefly, they have “invented the wheel” of what it takes to ensure that all children learn



Keeping the wheel from falling apart is what I call the gravitational force of leadership.



Some Facts About School Leadership

Leadership is necessary to improve schools.

Conclusion from a 6-year study in 9 states, 45 districts and 180 schools:

“To date, we have not found a single case of a school improving its student achievement record in the absence of talented leadership.”

Source: Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom. (2004). How leadership influences student learning. The Wallace Foundation.



The effect of leaders is second only to teachers.

The total (direct and indirect) effects of leadership on student learning account for about a 1/4 of total school effects.

Source: Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom. (2004). How leadership influences student learning. The Wallace Foundation.

Leadership attracts and retains teachers.

Although a wide range of working conditions matter to teachers, principal leadership is key.

So okay – leaders are important.

But what is it about leaders that is so important?

One source of information:


The Wallace Foundation®
VISIT OUR KNOWLEDGE CENTER AT
wallacefoundation.org



KARIN CHENOWETH | CHRISTINA THEOKAS

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Getting It Done

LEADING
ACADEMIC SUCCESS

in

UNEXPECTED SCHOOLS

One of the major things we found was that all the “Getting It Done” principals share common beliefs.

Belief # 1

Unexpected School leaders believe *almost all* students can learn to high levels if provided with the right instruction.



“Through my teaching experiences, I learned that my students were capable of learning just about anything I was capable of teaching.”

--Molly Bensinger-Lacy, principal
Graham Road Elementary School



"Many people say all children can learn. Well, that's true. But a parakeet can learn, too. We look for people who believe that children can excel."



-- Jeffrey Litt, founding principal and superintendent of the Icahn Charter Schools in New York City



[Ricardo Esparza](#), former principal, Granger High School

Belief # 2

Unexpected School principals believe that educators have the power to help all students achieve at high levels.



“Teachers have to believe that *they can teach* all children.”

-- Sharon Brittingham, former principal
Frankford Elementary School
Indian River School District, Delaware



[Diane Scricca](#), former principal,
Elmont Memorial High School

Belief # 3

Unexpected School principals believe the work is urgent and it is up to schools to do it.



“If we are in education, it is incumbent on us to make sure we are living up to the American Dream and the promise of education.”

--Frank Lozier, principal
Laurel Street Elementary School
Compton, California

“Teachers would often complain about the lack of parent involvement in their child’s education. I explained to them that I was not going to allow them to use that as excuse not to teach. [I would tell them] ‘This is your life’s work right now, and when those kids walk through these doors, they’re ours. We are their parents until they walk out.’”

-- Von Sheppard, principal
Dayton’s Bluff Achievement Plus Elementary School
St. Paul, Minnesota

