

LUCY CALKINS

WITH MARY EHRENWORTH AND LAURIE PESSAH

# Leading Well

BUILDING SCHOOLWIDE EXCELLENCE  
IN READING AND WRITING

Heinemann

DEDICATED TO TEACHERS™

*For the leaders of my life, Evan and Virginia Calkins,  
with thanks for showing me the great joy of  
working shoulder to shoulder with people you love  
to make a difference in the world.*



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## Build a Culture of Ongoing Learning



*M*y colleagues and I have helped tens of thousands of schools launch and sustain reading and writing workshops. In most of those schools, people tell us that the power of this work goes beyond what happens in particular classrooms. When schools undergo a schoolwide adoption of either a reading or a writing workshop, more often than not, this leads to powerful changes in the school culture. Above all, there is renewed energy for learning on the job and for shared professional study. This is both the result of adopting Units of Study *and* the means for achieving success with this curriculum.



No single chapter can teach all you need to know about the importance of establishing a learning culture, or about ways principals have nurtured that culture, but first things first. You personally need to dignify professional learning.

As a grown-up, it is not easy to learn on the job. It can be embarrassing to mess up. It's hard to go from being an accomplished teacher within a traditional classroom environment to a novice workshop teacher.

The thing you need to realize is that teachers are now being asked to teach kids skills that we didn't learn until college, if then. When I taught fifth-graders, I was regarded as a fancy, state-of-the-art teacher because I had my students go to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and to one trade book, copy down facts onto notecards, then cobble those facts together, add some clip art, and make a report with chapters and a construction paper cover and yarn binding. Now, fifth-graders are asked to take a provocative topic—"Is bottled water good for the environment?"—and to research it from several perspectives, studying the angle from which each source is written and the bias that informs that source, noticing the arguments and counterarguments, and then they are expected to determine their own position and to bring forward and even analyze the evidence that supports their opinion. This sort of expectation requires altogether new methods of teaching both reading and writing. So yes, teachers need to learn on the job.

Learning on the job is becoming even more essential, because at least in the United States, graduate schools of education are under siege. Increasingly, states are allowing preservice teachers to get their certification through online courses, or through newly minted so-called universities that induct teachers into a particular charter school's marching orders. Student teaching often amounts to watching a few videos. In some states, as many as 40% of the newly hired teachers have gotten their entire teaching certification online. You see the results: you cannot count on new hires knowing how to conduct running records, or to match students to books, or to teach kids to read for the main idea, or to structure their writing. And meanwhile, remember, expectations have become sky-high.

So yes, schools need to become places where everyone's learning curve is high. And that is not business as usual. That requires a sea change.

#### IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU'LL FIND . . .

- ▶ Ways to make time for teachers to plan together
- ▶ Tips to ensure collaborative groups go well
- ▶ Suggestions for dignifying on-the-job learning by being a learner yourself
- ▶ Ways to anticipate and dissipate resistance
- ▶ Ways to energize your staff with celebrations of success

## Create collaborative communities of practice.

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Roland Barth (2006), founder of the Principals' Center at Harvard Graduate School of Education, has said that usually relationships among teachers are like relationships among toddlers in the sandbox. One has a shovel, another has a pail. At no point do they share toys. They talk all the time but never to each other. Barth goes on to say that the single most important characteristic of an effective school is that teachers work collaboratively. He suggests there are levels of collaboration, with the lowest being parallel play or even competitiveness. Then there is the level that he describes with the term *congenial*. Teachers talk about a film they've seen, about the weather, their families, but never about their teaching. The highest level is what he refers to as *collegial* teaching, and this level is marked by teachers thinking of students as "ours," not "mine." They plan together. They share their materials and their ideas. They are in and out of each other's classrooms all the time, as are their kids. They wish each other well as teachers. Your goal is to help teachers achieve that highest level.

What a difference it makes when teachers' knowledge of good practice is shared! As Tom Sergiovanni says, "Intelligence needs to be socialized" (2004). Years ago, the annual conference for the National Conference of Teachers of English was held in New York City. TCRWP decided to work out the details so that hundreds of attendees at that conference would have the chance to visit NYC schools in which reading and writing workshops were well underway. At one school, visitors watched a teacher, Maria, convene her twenty-eight third-graders in the meeting area by saying simply, "Writers," and then scanning the room, waiting for each child to pause in what he or she was doing and to look at her. "Let's gather." Then Maria gestured for one table of children after another to stand, push in chairs, and walk to the meeting area where they sat in assigned rug spots, opening their writer's notebooks and starting to reread the previous day's writing.

Claiming her seat at the front of the meeting area, Maria began, "Writers, you have already learned strategies for supporting the claims you make in your essays." She referenced a chart, listing three such strategies, and said, "Will you show your partner places in your draft where you have done one of these strategies?" The children talked in pairs. Then Maria intervened to say, "Today I am going to teach you that essayists also angle their anecdotes to support their ideas. They pop out the part of an anecdote that especially supports their point. Let me show you." Maria demonstrated that strategy using her own writing, and then she supported her youngsters as they practiced that new strategy.

As Maria sent her writers off to work on their essays, one of the visitors whispered in awe, "How long has she been teaching?"

"Three months," I answered.



Shaking her head in disbelief, the visitor marveled, “How did she get to be so good?”

The answer, of course, lies in Maria’s community of practice. Although she is a new teacher, Maria’s methods of teaching are not new. They have, instead, gone through hundreds of drafts and benefited from the brilliance of scores of teachers. And Maria is not alone. If you establish a schoolwide approach to teaching writing, all your teachers—not just your first-year teachers like Maria—will benefit from standing on each other’s shoulders. As Tom Sergiovanni reminds us, “The greatest asset a school has is its collective IQ” (2004).

## A shared curriculum, taught at roughly the same pace, invites collaboration.

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Linda Darling Hammond has pointed out that you can have far more effective PLCs (professional learning communities) if your teachers are teaching within a shared curriculum. When teachers are all working through the same unit of study, there is so much to talk about, so much to help each other with. But you won’t tap into the power of that collaboration if teachers are only very loosely aligned. Instead, you need teachers to be teaching the same unit at roughly the same time. That way, they all approach this or that challenging session together, and they can ask, “How are you handling this?” Or, if they’re all turning to the same mentor text at the same time, they can help each other annotate it.

I think that one of the life-giving mandates you can say to your teachers is this one: “In this school, we don’t teach alone. We collaborate. The work is too challenging for any one of us to be an expert in everything, and we all get smarter and stronger when we can borrow on each other’s expertise.” That speech can provide you with the drumroll you need to ask (actually, to insist) that teachers at any one grade level agree on a calendar of units, setting shared dates for the end-of-unit celebration, five weeks after the unit begins. Make the celebration dates public so they function as all deadlines do—as lifelines that create urgency, intensity.

Teachers will need some time prior to a unit (and ideally in the midst of the unit as well) to plan together. I discussed the details of that planning in Chapter 4, “First Things First: Build an Instructional Foundation.” To support a collaborative culture around shared professional learning, it is especially important to move heaven and earth at the start of this work and at the start of this year to make time for that planning to happen.

How do you provide teachers with the planning time they need? The answer is different if you are thinking about how to do this once or twice, early in the year, or if you are thinking about how to rethink your school’s schedule so



there is more time for collaborative professional study in general, which we strongly advise. The first and easiest challenge is to simply make time for teachers to get this work off to a good start. The important thing for you to know is that if you personally and visibly go out of your way to provide teachers with time to study the new curriculum, they'll see this for what it is: a critically important signal that this work is important to you.

But making more time for teachers to plan together—and alone—is important not just at the start of the year, but always. Keep in mind that in Finland, often touted as having the best education system in the world, teachers teach around 600 hours annually—in America, that number is closer to 1,000 hours. In Finland, teachers have time every day to plan, learn, reflect, assess students' progress and prepare their own teaching. They have time not only to collaborate but also to participate in health and human wellness activities. And in America, we are so set on making sure our children “get ahead” and “achieve” that we entirely neglect to develop our teaching force.

Our American schedules might not have the same built-in time for collaborative planning, but you can still find ways to communicate to your teachers that collaborative planning is a mandatory, invaluable expectation that is part of your school's culture. And, you can help teachers structure the time they do have so that their planning is as effective and useful as possible.

### Ways to Make More Time for Teachers to Plan Together

- Volunteer to take all the kids at a particular grade level into the auditorium where you, perhaps with help from the music teacher or from some other teacher, can work with the kids. You might read aloud selections from books that celebrate writing or reading, such as *Writing Radar* by Jack Gantos (a very funny book for grades 3–8 about the power of writer's notebooks) or *Ralph Tells a Story* (a picture book for grades K–2 about a young writer). Read your own writing as well. Talk about your reading. Perhaps give book buzzes, talking up great books that the kids could read. Highlight especially accessible books, go for humor. Ask others to help you do this.
- Ask a specialist to do some version of the above, and then volunteer to be that person's teaching assistant (TA), or channel someone else to be that person's TA. Ask the librarian or the art teacher to work with several classes of kids at once (pipe cleaner animals?) or organize Social Studies Movie Day.



Move mountains so the teachers see you are personally involved in helping them have the precious time they need to talk together at the start of a unit.

- Before the school year even begins, with support from your district, you can schedule a half-day for professional study.
- Host a barbeque at your house or a brunch at the local diner, inviting interested teachers perhaps from this or that grade level (or early adapters from a particular grade level). Some school leaders do this on one of those last days of summer. Point out that the time is voluntary, but pay for the food, be part of the work, and perhaps even bake brownies yourself (or follow my model and buy them from the bakery and hide all evidence of the bakery box)!
- As early in the year as possible, consider whether upcoming pupil-free days can be devoted to literacy professional development and grade-level planning.
- Look for opportunities within your own school calendar to bring teachers together to plan. Perhaps the business portion of faculty meetings can be done through memos, and that time can be channeled toward grade-level meetings. Perhaps a pupil-free day can be devoted to literacy professional development and grade-level planning.
- Question the constraints that have already been embedded in your school's schedule. For example, if your school has two fifteen-minute recess times, consider combining them. Can you schedule a common prep period alongside lunch to create longer blocks of time? Could your school district send children home at noon one Friday a month? Could you tap community volunteers and not-for-profit groups to lead clubs one afternoon a week so that teachers have more time to plan?

Of course, you'll need to find ways to support collaborative planning that fit into your culture and your contracts. If you have gone to great lengths to give teachers more time to plan, you may also feel comfortable asking teachers to devote some of their prep times to collaborative planning. In different schools, different assumptions develop around teachers' prep time. In some schools, that time is personal time, and teachers call the realtor or run out to the dry cleaner. In other schools, some portion of prep time is designated as time for grade-level planning meetings and for collaboration with specialists. You'll want to open conversations with your teachers about what the assumptions will be in your school.

## Make sure that collaborative groups go well.

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It will be easier for you to protect times for grade-level planning if those times are extremely useful. Suggest that teachers at each grade level talk together about their experiences with grade-level planning groups that worked well—and those that didn't. This will help them harvest insights about how to make their discussions as productive and inclusive as possible. They'll probably develop a list that is a bit like this one:

### One Grade-Level Team's Agreement to Make Its Meetings Productive

- If we agreed before the meeting to bring student work, or to read something, we actually bring it, read it. We set up reminder systems when we need to.
- We arrive on time, stay the full time, and are all-in while at the meeting. That means no cell phones and no correcting student work.
- We start by either making an agenda or reviewing one that's already made. We check in on prior to-do's, rank which items on the agenda are the most important, and prioritize our time.
- One of us watches the time, moving us along through the agenda (e.g., reminding us if we only have ten minutes and two more items left).
- One of us keeps notes on a Google doc open to all.
- We avoid taking undue air time. We bring out quiet voices.
- We try to stand back from negativity and help each other do so. If the group gets into venting, someone says something like, "What positive steps forward can we take?"
- Just prior to the ending of the meeting, we list to-do's and clarify who is doing what.

## Dignify on-the-job learning.

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You are the best person to dignify on-the-job learning, but doing so takes courage. We've seen countless principals do this all-important work, and the results are breathtaking.

The more insecure you feel—and the more transparent you are about that—the better. We remember the story of Jamie, a principal in an upper-middle-class Connecticut school. Before we began work in the school, we'd heard that "Jamie



knows nothing about this.” That, of course, was far from the case, but that was the buzz.

A few weeks after the writing Units of Study were launched in Jamie’s school, he agreed to try teaching a minilesson in front of his fourth-grade teachers, asking them for feedback. The plan was that the school’s coach would set Jamie up to do this, and all the fourth-grade teachers would agree to teach the same minilesson in rotation, moving together as a group from one fourth-grade classroom to the next. Jamie chose that grade because the teachers there were already collaborative, and he felt a bit safer teaching in front of them.

The coach later told me that Jamie was sweating bullets as he prepared his minilesson. It was no easy thing for him to take his seat at the front of a class of nine-year-olds and in front of his fourth-grade teachers and to teach publicly, aiming to keep the minilesson brief. The coach assured him that there would be no down side. The worse he was, the better it would be for sending the message that theirs is a school where people take risks. Jamie knew the important thing was for him to be public about messing up, to be vulnerable in front of his teachers, to welcome feedback, and to help that group of teachers be willing to do likewise.

We didn’t hear all the details of Jamie’s minilesson, but we know that after almost twenty minutes, he abruptly ended it, aware that he’d botched things up. “Awww, this is so hard,” he said. The teachers and Jamie went into the hall and talked, with everyone supporting Jamie, laughing together about how someone had tried to signal to him at this or that point, regaling each other with reminiscences of the various turns his teaching had taken. They strategized together over how the minilesson could have been done differently and then proceeded to watch one of the teachers reteach the same (now improved) minilesson in another classroom, and again, there was debriefing, and then the group moved to a third fourth-grade classroom, and yet another teacher took a go.

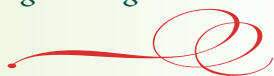
That team of teachers became a close-knit community. Often, they brought two classes together and jigsawed a minilesson, so they could support each other. Before long, Jamie had worked with teachers from other grades in similar ways, and after the school was two years into this work, we brought principals from seventy-five Connecticut schools to a study group at Jamie’s school. As part of that visit, Jamie opened every classroom in his school, encouraging visitors to watch any and all of the school’s reading and writing workshops, roaming between classrooms to see whole-school implementation.

The point is this: too often, we brace ourselves against seeming vulnerable. We armor up. We are cynical and disengaged and defensive—all versions of that armor. We wear masks. We think that showing vulnerability reveals weakness. We don’t want to let others—especially our colleagues and our leaders—know that we are sometimes not sure how to do something.

Brené Brown, author of *Daring Greatly*, points out that we protect ourselves against vulnerability, yet vulnerability is the cradle of all we most long for in life—authenticity, wholeheartedness, real relationships. She says that when we protect ourselves against vulnerability, we protect ourselves against all-in engagement and emotional connection. “To foreclose on our emotional life out of fear that the costs will be too high is to walk away from the very thing that gives purpose and meaning to living” (2015).

*To foreclose on our emotional life out of fear that the costs will be too high is to walk away from the very thing that gives purpose and meaning to living*

(Brené Brown 2015).



We think she is right. For a moment, consider the times when you have been vulnerable on the job. Perhaps those were times when you voiced an unpopular opinion, took a risk, tried something new, went public with something important to you, threw yourself heart and soul into a mission you cared about. Were those times of weakness? Probably not.

Probably those were, instead, times of strength.

The important thing for you, the principal, to keep in mind is that your people’s learning curves will never be sky-high if they don’t feel safe enough to take risks, to try something new, to admit confusion, to ask for help. When messing up on something that’s hard is not okay, when failures along the way are not okay, then you can forget about your school being a place where teachers or kids innovate and learn.

Tony Wagner, a great twenty-first-century scholar, talked to us at Teachers College about what’s needed in this world of ours. He emphasized that we need to embrace the F-word (*failure*) and cited the “Fail early and fail often” principle widely adopted by software developers.

When Roland Barth visited TCRWP years ago, he said, “In a good school, everyone’s learning curve is sky-high. So I ask you, what are you (as the principal) learning on the job?” People told each other what they were learning. Then Roland pushed another step. “Who knows about your learning?” he asked. He added that it isn’t enough to be a learner, that school leaders need to be *public* learners.

Hopefully, your talk is full of language like this:

“Yesterday I got some pointers on how I can . . .”

“Talking with you is making me realize that I need to rethink . . .”

“I’ve got that on my reading list.”

“Would one of you be willing to coach me on how you . . . ?”

“Can I try out an idea with you. If . . . is true, does it make sense that we . . . ?”

“My head is spinning. I learned so much by watching you . . .”

“One of your kids just gave me a seminar in . . .”

You not only need to be a public learner, you need to help your team be that, as well. Ask your AP to go into a classroom and ask the teacher if she would be willing to let him try conferring with the kids. Perhaps the teacher would be willing to give him some feedback. Do this in ways that not only position your fellow administrator as a learner, but that also empower a teacher whose expertise has perhaps been overlooked before. If your colleague, the AP, has a background in the upper grades, then he can certainly learn in leaps and bounds from a first-grade teacher. Channel your fellow administrator to ask for some coaching—perhaps on shared reading, or on conducting and scoring running records, or on working with a beginning reader.

My point here is that to make learning on the job something that the most powerful people in your school do all the time, it’s important that you and your team are public learners. It is a good idea to exaggerate the visibility of your stance as a learner—perhaps you and the other administrators agree to carry notebooks or iPads around with you and to take notes on techniques you learn from watching kids and their teacher. You and the others in your team will make a big impact if you snap pictures of student work or of great homemade charts as you go through your days or if you film kids when they are doing something beautiful, and tell parents and other teachers about your learning.

Then, be accustomed to asking teachers, “What are you learning?” Say to them, “Talk to me about the new risks you are taking.” Give little pep talks often about how Google asks its employees to choose goals for themselves and then is unhappy if they meet *all* those goals because the hope is they are ambitious enough that they choose goals they can’t fully meet. Your message needs to be, “Together, let’s all reach for the stars.”

## Anticipate resistance from some teachers and work to dissipate it.

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You can count on it—one teacher will roll his or her eyes at another. A teacher will act out during a grade-level professional development session. She’ll put her very large bag up on the table, shielding her from whoever is leading the discussion. Or she’ll pull out her cellphone while someone else is speaking. Your resistor’s gestures and tone will drip with contempt. You’ve seen this before.

This is on you, and you cannot remain silent. In the prologue of *Blink*, Malcolm Gladwell tells about psychologist John Gottman, who, in fifteen minutes of observing a married couple, can often infer the likelihood of whether they will stay together (2007). One telltale sign? Eye-rolling. It is one of those

seemingly small moves that indicate utter disrespect. If you see this kind of behavior, you must take it on, and the rest of your teachers need to see you doing that. You needn't address the problematic teacher publicly, in front of everyone, but if you remain silent and look the other way, you are complicit. You are condoning the behavior. You might start by saying something like, "I've got to go to another meeting but before I go, can I just remind everyone that this school needs to be a community of kindness and of respect? We need to hold ourselves to the same behaviors we teach our students. Check yourself because it is okay to disagree. It is *not* okay to be rude to each other." And perhaps for your first intervention, you can just give that one teacher the eagle eye.

But if the behavior continues, even if it is a little milder, this next time you need to address the person one-on-one. Say, with firmness, in front of the group, "May I speak with you?" and pull that person from the room. Tell the person in no uncertain terms that this behavior is not okay. You might name the specific behaviors that are unacceptable, such as arriving late, not bringing agreed-upon materials (like student work), or using her cellphone during the meeting. Then, schedule another time for the kind of conversation that might help there to be an actual reset. "I can see from your crossed arms and stone expression that you aren't happy with how things are going. Help me understand what's going on for you." Remember that for a time, you may need to tell that person that he or she will need to do the professional development (PD) in a one-to-one relationship with someone (you? the AP?) because that person's presence in the group is not helpful.

In Chapter 13, "Leading Adults Can Be Tricky: Responding to Trouble," we talk in greater depth about dealing with resistant teachers. It isn't easy. But for now, it is enough to say that you need to address the problem, so that it doesn't derail everything. Your teachers need you to be their moderator and guide, helping them stay the course when the going gets choppy.

## Celebrate early successes in ways that energize.

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Think about times when someone you respect, someone with power, has seen and celebrated your work. Chances are that when you felt seen and recognized, your energy soared. You worked harder, longer, better. You even walked through your day with a lighter step, with more grace and generosity.

David Rock, a neurologist who studies the brain to help all of us become better coaches, points out that many people go months before receiving any positive feedback at all. On top of that, we all tend to recycle any negative feedback we *do* receive, rethinking those harsh words over and over, making them even harsher. We hear, "You're late again," and we translate that into "You're



lazy.” We burn with indignation. We hear, “What was going on in your room yesterday?” and we translate that into, “You can’t control your class,” and we are filled with shame.

Shame and guilt erode the load-bearing walls of a person’s self-concept. They make a person less capable, less responsive, less energetic.

If you can only do one thing to lift the energy level in your school, make a point to compliment your teachers. On Sunday night, sit in front of your computer and grab a teacher’s name, and type that into the address line of an email. Then dive into an appreciative email. Don’t worry about deciding first on what you can say. Just write, “Dear Joe.” Then start the next sentence. Take any of these as your sentence starter:

I wonder if you have any idea how beautiful (or inspiring) it is when you . . .

I wanted to send you a quick note to tell you how much I admire . . .

I’ve been thinking back over last week and remembering that child from your room who . . . I know that’s a reflection of your beautiful teaching and I just wanted you to know that . . .

The other day, I walked into your classroom when you weren’t there and just stood there for a moment, taking in the way you . . . I wonder if you have any idea how rare and how special it is that you . . .

You will make a teacher’s day, year, life with an email like that. When complimenting someone, remember to be as specific and as detailed as possible. At TCRWP, if our office staff has just pulled off the behind-the-scenes work on a giant institute, we don’t write them and say, “Thanks for all you did. It was marvelous. You were perfect. Thanks so much.” Instead, we write something more like this, “Saturday morning, at 6:45 a.m., I saw you literally running down the hall to get something—the agenda I think it was. I couldn’t help but think, ‘Yep, that’s Lisa for you. Thank you for being the sort of leader who’ll tear through the halls of TC to not keep a teacher waiting.’” Specificity—details—matter in all writing, and a compliment is a kind of writing. You send the message: *I see you.*

You might also walk the halls of your school with a pack of Post-its in hand, jotting brief compliments to teachers as you go. Visit a classroom, leaving behind a Post-it in which you glow over a precious detail. Did a child reread and cross out her own work? Wow, how beautiful that children in this school are growing up with a revision mindset. Did a child tell you what she is learning from a character? It’s amazing when books begin to help kids grow into the people we hope they become.

You will want to show your support and celebrate your teachers by your actions, as well as by your words. What a difference it will make if you hang a child’s writing up on your bulletin board or begin a faculty meeting by reading

Jordan,  
I just read Griffin's  
essay about Gatsby.  
You've gotten that boy  
to love that book—and  
to write with passion.  
Beautiful. Todd

Molly,  
Loved the way Savaria taught  
that student-led small group!  
She taught like a pro. Hoping  
we can catch it on film next  
time and share with others!  
Dina

Caitlin,  
Holy moly. The essays  
outside your room have  
such voice. I didn't need  
the kids' names as their  
quirky personalities shine  
through.

Can I include one in my  
next newsletter? They'll  
convey so much about  
our teaching to the  
parents.  
Lara

aloud some of the things that children have told you about their reading. Take pictures of your teachers and kids, immersed in learning, and send them home in a school newsletter, showcasing these pictures as your pride and joy. Hold a meeting in a teacher's classroom and channel other teachers to take in the beautiful environment.

Name the small details that you see in ways that make them holy, that imbue them with significance. Remember the bricklayer at a cathedral who described his work not as "I'm setting bricks into cement," but as "I'm building a cathedral to the Lord."

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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**Lucy Calkins** is the Founding Director of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. In that role, Lucy's greatest accomplishment has been to develop a learning community of teacher educators whose brilliance and dedication shine through in the Units of Study books, which have become an essential part of classroom life in tens of thousands of schools around the world.

Lucy is the Robinson Professor of Children's Literature at Teachers College, Columbia University, where she co-directs the Literacy Specialist Program. She is the author, coauthor, or series editor of the *Units of Study in Opinion/Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing, Grades K–8*; *Up the Ladder: Accessing Grades 3–6 Writing Units of Study*; *Units of Study for Teaching Reading, Grades K–8*; and *Units of Study in Phonics, Grades K–2* series; as well as the lead curator of the *TCRWP Classroom Libraries, Grades K–8* (all published by Heinemann); and has authored scores of other professional books and articles.



**Mary Ehrenworth**, Senior Deputy Director of the TCRWP, works with schools and districts around the globe, and is a frequent keynote speaker at Project events and national and international conferences. Mary's interest in literacy leadership, critical literacy, interpretation, and close reading all inform the books she has authored, coauthored, or edited in the Units of Study for Reading and Writing series, as well as her many articles and other books.



**Laurie Pessah**, Senior Deputy Director at TCRWP, is responsible for staffing the Project's work with hundreds of schools around the country, working with school leaders, supporting staff developers, and leading study groups, institutes, and conference days for superintendents, principals, and assistant principals. Laurie is coauthor of a Kindergarten Writing Unit of Study as well as *A Principal's Guide to Leadership in the Teaching of Writing*.

# Leading Well

BUILDING SCHOOLWIDE EXCELLENCE IN READING AND WRITING • GRADES K–8

LUCY CALKINS WITH MARY EHRENWORTH AND LAURIE PESSAH



“I’m convinced that Howard Gardner was right when he suggested that all leaders need chances to retreat to the mountains. I hope this book gives you metaphorical mountains. I hope that *Leading Well* allows you to step back from the hurly-burly of school leadership, to see far horizons, to breathe a new kind of air, and to return home with new energy and vision. And more than that, I hope the book helps you give the teachers and children in your care their own metaphorical mountains because, in the end, good leaders create leaders.”

— LUCY CALKINS

In *Leading Well: Building Schoolwide Excellence in Reading and Writing*, Lucy Calkins draws on the transformative work that she and her colleagues at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project have done in partnership with school leaders over the last thirty years. Travel to any corner of this country, inquire about the schools that are winning acclaim for their joyous and rigorous schoolwide literacy work, and you’re apt to find yourself hearing about the results of the remarkable community of practice that has taken root around reading and writing workshop instruction.

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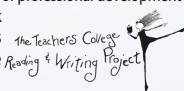
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