

CLARITY: Bringing focus and intentionality to what matters MOST.

When the book begins with an endorsement from John Hattie, and an introduction by Alma Harris, you know this is a book to read and share. Lyn Sharratt brings her practical teaching and leading expertise to *CLARITY: What Matters Most in Learning, Teaching and Leading* (Corwin, 2019) by grounding the text in the robust 14 Parameters, drawn initially from Lyn's work as a system leader in York Region District School Board (YRDSB) in Ontario, Canada (Putting FACES on the Data. (2012). Sharratt, L. & Fullan, M. CA: Corwin Press. The material explored in *CLARITY's* 368 pages, grows from her previous works, spiraling and consolidating lessons learned from her recent work both locally and internationally. Her ongoing work with so many systems in various parts of the world demonstrates the reliability and validity of the 14 Parameters approach to System and School Improvement. The 14 Parameters include:

1. Shared beliefs and understandings
2. Embedded knowledgeable others
3. Quality assessment informs instruction
4. Principal as lead learner
5. Early and ongoing intervention
6. Case management approach
7. Focused professional learning at staff meetings
8. In-school meetings – collaborative assessment of student work
9. Book rooms of levelled books and multi-modal resources
10. Allocation of system and school budgets for learning
11. Collaborative inquiry
12. Parental and community involvement
13. Cross-curricular literacy connections
14. Shared responsibility and accountability

Literacy is the centrally organizing theme, and for Lyn it is a moral imperative to increase literacy (that is, oral language, reading, writing, maths and thinking critically), to increase informed teaching and learning, to improve leading, to embed change. Lyn begins by unpacking the 14 parameters and explaining why each matters, both individually and collectively, to improving student growth AND achievement. Many of the case studies in the book identify the relevant 14 parameters that are contained in the system/school improvement plans such as Queensland Australia. Figure 1.6 illustrates a matrix of the 14 Parameters provided for schools/systems to self-analyze their

implementation and progress in terms of embedding them. It is followed by examples of action plans that reference and embed specific 14 parameters moving forward with change. The materials and examples contained are very applicable to both elementary and secondary settings. There are messages and lessons learned directed both at classroom, school and system levels. In terms of learning, teaching and leading, there are practical 'how to' resources and strategies for everyone.

This resource is divided into three components: Part One: Learning, Part Two: Teaching, and Part Three: Leading. Effective schools and school systems work together as intentional teams, using relevant data and evidence-informed strategies and approaches to improve student outcomes. The book presents these key areas with explanations, and referencing current research. The book skillfully provides case studies, authentic examples, graphics, pictures from the field, ideas to consider and even online accessible web resources, bringing CLARITY to what matters MOST. The chapters begin with 'wonderings', include data demonstrating 'impact', and end with intentional 'Deliberate Pauses' to reflect and to ensure CLARITY.

The skillful use of collaborative inquiry (parameter 11), which Lyn defines as a, "structured, collaboratively planned approach" (p.72) expands on the work contained in Sharratt and Planche's *Leading Collaborative Inquiry* (2016). Collaborative Inquiry supports a culture of learning and as Lyn elaborates in chapter three, demonstrates a positive, 'open-to-learning' inquiry stance to learning. Lyn is noted for championing, 'Putting FACES on the Data' through Data Walls and a Case Management approach. Lyn includes questions teachers and school leaders can pose to interrogate data walls to unpack who is achieving; who is underperforming; and who is needing extending and what are the data trends and patterns over time to all decide, together, what will be the next best learning move (p. 236-237). Lyn advocates a Case Management Approach to increasing ALL students' growth and achievement (parameter 6). CLARITY integrate:

1. the use of co-constructed Data Walls, and
2. the use of student work samples in Case Management Meetings visibly allowing assessment to inform instruction.

In chapter seven, the case studies include discussion of and examples from using student achievement data to impact on student outcomes. The use of data to co-construct Data Walls lends credibility to moving forward with CLARITY. As Lyn reminds us, "we all own the FACES". Lyn includes in chapter one, a strategy used successfully in YRDSB to celebrate and shine the spotlight on successful school initiatives - Learning Fairs. These allow the system to mobilize and celebrate small and big wins.

Lyn and I understand how important intentional visibility is, and how daily, focused Learning Walks and Talks matter "to ensure the growth of all students" (p.327). She elaborates on the strategy in chapter nine, which deals with precision in leadership practice stating that leaders must be consistent, insistent and persistent in expecting

quality teaching practice in every classroom – ‘an issue of excellence and equity’, Lyn and I believe, for ALL learners. *CLARITY* unpacks the six leadership dimensions; and describes how they individually and collectively apply to sustained whole-system and whole-school improvement. For each of these strategies and approaches the detail of the ‘how’ and ‘why’ sets this book apart because it provides coherent roadmaps for sustained implementation of precision-in-practice. This powerful book will inspire all teachers and leaders to self-assess what matters MOST in bringing CLAIRTY to Learning, teaching and leading. I recommend this book, for every educator, wherever they are in the world, who wants to master using a data-informed, evidence-proven Framework to drive up performance, and who believes that every child, every FACE, needs to count and be counted – though the CLARITY of precision-in-practice offered within the text.

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