

It's Not Us Against Them — Creating the Schools We Need

by Raymond J. McNulty

Ray McNulty brings his engaging presentation style to the page in this book for K-12 educators who are interested in creating schools that make sense and are effective for 21st century learners.

Drawing from three decades of experience in education, Ray shares his insights on where we are today, where we should and could be, and how to succeed in initiating and navigating the school improvement process.

The book offers an overview of the International Center's three proven tools – Rigor/Relevance Framework, Learning Criteria to Support 21st Century Learners, and Components of School Excellence – and how teachers, principals, and superintendents can use them to inform and strengthen their work.

Straightforward discussions, thought-provoking questions, observations from outside the field, and profiles of successful schools make this informative and enjoyable book a must-read for any educator who is committed to school renewal.

“My goal is to empower educators to do what I know we are capable of doing: change education for the better. Too often, we seem to be waiting for somebody else to come along and fix our schools, but we must be the agents of change. Using proven strategies and tools, we can take the lead in shaping our schools into education communities that nurture learners, so that they are ready for college, work, and life in the 21st century.”

– Raymond J. McNulty, Senior Vice President,
International Center for Leadership in Education

Order Form

Check Cash Purchase order (this form must accompany PO).

Make payable to Leadership Media.

Charge to   # _____

#B-09-RJM **\$29**

Expires _____ Signature _____

Dr. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss (circle one)

Name _____ Phone (____) _____ Fax (____) _____

Organization _____ Position _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____ e-mail _____

Satisfaction Guarantee

The International Center for Leadership in Education strives to develop relevant, high quality resources. If this purchase does not meet your needs, a refund will be provided.

**Please use only one method to place your order:
online, fax, or mail. Thank you.**

Order online at <http://store.leadered.com>

- Shipping in the continental U.S. via UPS Ground.
- Expedited shipping is available at an additional cost.
- Payment must be made in U.S. currency.

Quantity	_____
Amount of Order	\$ _____
TAX (AZ, CA, NC, WA)	\$ _____
Shipping/Handling	\$ _____
TOTAL	\$ _____

Shipping & Handling	
Purchase Amount	USA Addresses
\$1-49	\$7
\$50-99	\$12
\$100-299	\$15
\$300-599	\$17
\$600-999	\$19
\$1000-1,499	\$24
\$1,500-1,999	\$29
\$2,000	\$34
\$2,001 and up - \$34 plus appropriate amount from chart	

Referral Code
WEB

International Center for Leadership in Education

1587 Route 146 • Rexford, NY 12148
(518) 399-2776 • fax (518) 399-7607
www.LeaderEd.com • info@LeaderEd.com

21st Century Learning — “What Are We Waiting For?”

“We continue to talk about what education should look like in the 21st century, but we are already 10 years into the 21st century. What are we waiting for?”

Dr. David Freitas, Dr. Janet Buckenmeyer, and Dr. Emily Hixon

He said it!

It wasn't whispered in a private conversation between two trusted colleagues. It was right out there – in front of over 5,000 educators attending the opening keynote address by the President of the International Center for Leadership in Education at their Annual Models School Conference this summer in Orlando.

“Speaking the truth in times of universal deceit is a revolutionary act,” according to George Orwell. Was President Ray McNulty's brazen statement a “revolutionary act” or was it a sobering wake-up call? His public pronouncement of the obvious jolted many out of their self-induced professional coma. What are we waiting for?

Ray's recent book, *It's Not Us Against Them: Creating the Schools We Need*, provides the ammunition to support his call to action. “In the United States, we built a system to educate people to live in an industrial culture, and it was successful in its time. That system remains in place, which means we are now using a system that was designed to meet the needs of a world that no longer exists. The current system is no longer relevant.” We agree!

His first chapter, Sense and Nonsense, is aptly and purposefully titled. “Psychologist Carl Jung once said: ‘The pendulum of the mind oscillates between sense and nonsense, not between right and wrong.’ I think the same can be said about education. I don't think about what we do in education as being the right thing or the wrong thing, but sometimes I think we choose to do things that don't make the most sense for the learners who are in school today or for the world in which we live.”

Thinking (and honest) educators agree with Ray. For many, “We place students first” is a worn out, hollow slogan. Competing entities and constituencies unfortunately have priority over our learners in most schools.

For those who are still non-believers, let's check some current common practices against our sense/nonsense barometer. Why, for example, do we take two or three months off from school every year when credible research documents the significant deteriorating effects on our learners? While many of our students are technological phenoms, why do we fail to capitalize on this phenomenon in the teaching and learning process? Why do we wrongly proclaim full technology integration when students visit the computer lab a few times a week, or they “create” simplistic PowerPoint presentations? Why do many teachers refuse to alter their out-dated and stale pedagogical approaches even though our students live and thrive (except in school) with ubiquitous technological tools in the Digital Age. It's all nonsense!

Ray makes perfect sense when he says, “If we want to ensure that today's learners are ready for college, work, and life when they graduate, then we must tear down the proverbial walls that keep students' in-school lives separate from their lives outside of school. Our world is brimming with technology, and the job of education is to prepare to live in that world. We can't do that

fully if we don't embrace technology and help students fully realize the power of technology and how they can apply it.”

Spouting is easy. Instead Ray, in the next two chapters – Bridges, Not Walls and Behaving Our Way Out, offers practical advice to move forward. One of the most important and essential elements to “Behave Our Way Out” (Chapter Three) is the Rigor/Relevance Framework™ as detailed below. It “represents a philosophy about education and how it can best be delivered. The Framework is a powerful tool that helps educators understand, plan, implement, and evaluate curriculum and instruction. Learners achieve their fullest potential when academic rigor is high and combined with an equally high level of relevance.” A full explanation of the Framework, created in 1996 by the International Center for Leadership in Education, and how to effectively apply it in schools is included in the book.

The Framework has been successfully implemented in multiple schools across our nation yielding significant learner achievements. In fact, the Center's 2010 Model Schools Conference featured over 25 of these exemplary schools. Several are also featured in this book.

Ray rightfully places teachers and principals at the center of the transformations he espouses. The Supreme Art of the Teacher (Chapter Four) and Principles for Principals (Chapter Five) focus on these daunting, yet attainable, responsibilities. Super Intentions (Are Not Enough) (Chapter Six) and Action Not Position (Chapter Seven) provide proven techniques to facilitate the necessary changes. The final chapter, Not Just a Pretty Face: Lessons from Model Schools, offers authentic stories from elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools that have successfully implemented the Rigor/Relevance Framework. Their achievements are impressive.

Ray's extensive prior experiences as a teacher, principal, and superintendent inform his perspectives. He also served as Vermont's education commissioner, as a senior fellow at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and as past president of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

It's Not Us Against Them convincingly argues the dire need for systemic change, presents the ways to achieve it, and then celebrates those who dared to change for the better through uplifting stories. Few books take you full circle from conception to successful results. This book does it!

“The future belongs to learners who can take knowledge and adapt it to the changing world. Our task is to educate our children for the unknown. Yet we're so busy tinkering and trying to improve what is already in place that we aren't really receptive to the idea that we can create a different system, one that combines successful elements from the past with innovative new strategies. We continue to talk about what education should look like in the 21st century, but we are already 10 years into the 21st century. What are we waiting for?” Raymond J. McNulty