



# On Common Ground: The Power of Professional Learning Communities

*Roland Barth, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, Barbara Eason-Watkins, Michael Fullan, Lawrence Lezotte, Douglas Reeves, Jonathon Saphier, Mike Schmoker, Dennis Sparks, Rick Stiggins*

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On Common Ground is the first book in the Leading Edge series. The Leading Edge is the undefined space where leaders venture to impact change it is the place where transformation begins. The Leading Edge series unites education authorities from around the globe and asks them to confront the important issues that affect teachers and administrators the issues that profoundly impact student success. The experts contributing to this anthology do not prescribe one method to transact change. They embrace the mission, trusting that teachers and administrators the true change leaders will venture to the Leading Edge to embrace the challenges and opportunities that will guarantee the success of their students. On Common Ground provides a valuable tool for educators who are doing the hard work of improving their schools. This resource offers teachers and administrators a coherent conceptual framework and specific, practical strategies for moving forward with their improvement efforts. Any listing of North America s leading authorities on school improvement would include the authors in this book. These authors agree on many of the best strategies for raising student achievement and support the premise that students would be better served if educators: Embrace learning rather than teaching as their school s mission Work collaboratively to help all students learn Use formative assessments and a focus on results to foster continuous improvement Assume individual responsibility to take steps to create such schools Although they stand on this common ground, clear differences emerge regarding their perspectives on the most effective strategy for making professional learning communities the norm in North America. The differences, however, focus on the means rather than the end. These educational leaders have found common ground in expressing their belief in both the desirability and the power of professional learning communities.

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