

# **Stars in the Schoolhouse: Teaching Practices and Approaches that Make a Difference**

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**Series in Education**



**VERNON PRESS**

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[www.vernonpress.com](http://www.vernonpress.com)

*In the Americas:*  
Vernon Press  
1000 N West Street,  
Suite 1200, Wilmington,  
Delaware 19801  
United States

*In the rest of the world:*  
Vernon Press  
C/Sancti Espiritu 17,  
Malaga, 29006  
Spain

Series in Education

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018941129

ISBN: 978-1-62273-404-7

Cover design by Vernon Press, using elements selected by Kjpargeter / Freepik

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# Acknowledgement

In life, you are blessed to find a handful of special people who, in one or more ways, makes you better. Mrs. Suzanne Clark (Sue), is such a person. Her kindness, generosity of spirit, and passion for the written word made her editorial assistance in this tome especially valuable. We will be forever grateful that you have agreed to stay on as our senior editor.



# Preface

Every day in every classroom, educators work diligently to raise student achievement levels using myriad strategies and skills. Teaching is a continuous series of difficult, yet rewarding, tasks and every educator who has walked into a classroom full of students has already spent a great deal of time developing his or her craft, studying practices that engage students, and each has also carefully planned every aspect of the learning environment. It comes as no surprise then, that before any of this can happen, educators should be given the tools by which to support students. *Stars in the Schoolhouse: Teaching Practices and Approaches that Make a Difference* describes this very concept, in full detail, for all to understand.

The book covers a series of important topics from inclusive classrooms and research-based strategies to curriculum design and lesson planning, as well as instructional practices surrounding technology-based applications. In an effort to show the teaching continuum, there are chapters that delve into preservice educator needs and what colleges are doing to support them, professional development for the new and veteran teacher, as well as a look at the lifecycle of teachers and what to expect when a life in education is chosen. Written for regular and special education teachers, school administrators, guidance counselors, parents, higher education faculty, and preservice teachers, *Stars in the Schoolhouse: Teaching Practices and Approaches that Make a Difference* is for all those interested in learning how to use a variety of educator strategies to drive instruction.

The motivation for writing this book comes from several concerns:

- *Our belief that 21<sup>st</sup> century students are capable of learning in new and different ways and it is up to educators to implement effective practices that promote this type of learning.*
- *Our concern that educators who do not update their teaching style will fall behind and take their students with them; thus, increasing the academic gap that currently exists in irreparable ways;*
- *Our knowledge that even the less discussed, and more difficult to teach, content areas have strategies that, when taught to educators and implemented with students, offer both new and different perspectives in the teaching and learning cycle;*

- *Our awareness that everyone learns differently, and for this reason, it is necessary for educators to learn a variety of new strategies and skills related to each content area;*
- *Our interest in enhancing learning with new technologies meant to increase the ways in which our students learn as well as individualized instructional plans; and,*
- *Our years of experience as educators, administrators, guidance counselors, and parents that have given us a bevy of strategies, skills, and educational theories from which to pull, that allows us to see the limitless opportunities available to educators and students alike.*

Educators often come to teaching believing it is their calling. Their goal may be to help others, to see children light up when they understand a new concept, or to make a difference. Somewhere along the way, a teacher may find s/he is tired, lost, or frustrated due to things beyond their control. This same teacher, however, can make a difference despite the frustrations, simply by continuing to learn, infusing the teaching practice with new initiatives, finding new strategies and practices that reach even the most difficult students, and challenging the system in ways that are in the best interest of students.

A 2014 study asked teachers to comment on the Common Core regarding its impact on students (Primary Sources, 2014). Interestingly, of the teachers who responded, 86% requested aligned materials to help them teach more effectively, 84% reported needing professional development to understand the changes in strategies, and 78% stated they needed more planning and/or collaboration time (Primary Sources, 2013). These statistics suggest that while educators are willing to change their practices and strategies to benefit student outcomes, they may not be savvy enough to do it on their own. For these reasons, school districts must provide professional development opportunities to new and veteran educators as a way to improve their instructional practices in the moment with actionable feedback.

Post-secondary institutions, for their share, need to look at preservice programs and engage educators-to-be in more rigorous studies that connect them to the classrooms they will eventually be teaching. It is essential that these same preservice programs ensure that our next generation teachers are ready to take on the challenges that the future classroom holds for them. Understanding the needs of the preservice teacher, post-secondary schools have made some recent advancements, including longer practicums and more intensive technology components. These are just a few of the necessary changes needed to help advance the role of the novice educator.

Noting that some content areas are less often discussed and more difficult to teach than others, this book pays special attention to both writing and

math. By all accounts, writing is a difficult task to learn, made more cumbersome by the intricacies that naturally exist within the English language, not to mention the craft itself. Educators who have well-developed techniques for teaching writing better understand how to help students and can then lead them on the path to success both in writing specifically and academics in general. For these reasons, it is important to showcase a writing plan that attends to these needs and offers support to teachers.

According to recent research (Loeb, 2017), math teachers have a greater effect on students in relation to math exams than any other subject, yet many students struggle with the mere thought of mathematics. Educators who teach mathematics understand that mathematical thinking is a language unto itself, and teaching students first to understand the language then the concepts will ensure student success. This is seen very clearly in the Common Core standards, where students are expected to link the process and the thinking in both verbal and written expression (Common Core State Initiatives, 2018). To ensure that educators are able to forge ahead to facilitate math discussions and subsequent written responses, this tome offers assistance in understanding the complexities inherent to mathematics, helping to make the subject easier to teach.

As technology continues to be a growing force in education, teachers must learn to integrate it into the classroom in more expansive ways. Using the SAMR model (substitution, augmentation, modification, and redefinition) helps educators think about ways in which to move student learning from a substitution model to a redefinition model (Walsh, 2016). Educators must also design lessons that have great value and differentiation to encompass all learners. Using a model of instruction such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which incorporates technology and learning sciences, educators are able to engage all learners in the why, what, and how of the educational process that leads to mastery (CAST, 2018). While both SAMR and UDL can be used independently of each other, in combination, they prove to be a powerful weapon; enhancing student engagement and academic achievement.

Written by a team of educators representing preschool to the academy, who are deeply passionate about bridging the gap between research and the teaching practice, this tome adds further clarity to existing literature surrounding best practice in the field of education. Providing myriad effective instructional practices to enhance and support positive student outcomes, readers will find the information timely, valuable, and easy to implement. This tome is practitioner-oriented and, as such, it seeks to offer possible solutions to existing problems and practical suggestions that teachers can use immediately. Finally, a note of thanks to the dedicated teachers who work tirelessly and enthusiastically for the benefit of all students.

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## Chapter 1

# **Curriculum Design: Principles, Methods, & Strategies**

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Curricula is the plan for learning or the course of study taught within a school and is considered to be the heart of all formal education systems. Curriculum design is actually a process which can be used to refer to the totality of the learning experiences of an individual throughout his or her school career. Although the term is very broad and encompasses a variety of different aspects, curriculum design as discussed in this chapter, will be referred to as a planned, purposeful, and systematic process to create meaningful improvements in the educational system (Bilbao, Lucido, Iringan, & Javier, 2008).

Curriculum design ultimately is based upon the needs of society, and since the needs of society are evolving, the curriculum design process will also be ever-evolving (William, 2013). An in-depth discussion of the many aspects of curriculum design is beyond the scope of this chapter; however, the focus here is to provide general educators and other stakeholders with a description of how to develop an effective and relevant curriculum for the 21st century. Important considerations for curriculum design in the 21st century include ensuring the curriculum is accessible to all students, which can be achieved by incorporating Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, and integration of skills necessary for successful participation in the 21st century workforce as well as to provide a framework for understanding the principles, processes, and strategies for curriculum design (Schweitzer, 2017a; CAST, 2018).

### **Purpose of Curriculum Design**

The goal of any curriculum design process should be to provide meaningful improvements in the educational system in order to better meet the needs of its learners and a given society (William, 2013; Schweitzer, 2017a). Society is

continuously changing and, as a result, curriculum development must constantly be revised and improved upon in order to keep up with the demands of a growing and changing society. To ensure economic growth of a given state or country, the curriculum must provide the current and future workforce with the necessary knowledge and skills to help it meet its economic goals and ensure economic growth. In addition to understanding the need for and developing a curriculum to benefit society at the macro level, curricula designers at the micro level (mainly teachers and other local stakeholders) also play an important role in the curriculum design process and should be knowledgeable of how to develop, revise, and implement curricula (William, 2013). Input from all stakeholders, therefore, is necessary to ensure validation and maximized efficiency in educational systems.

### **Integration of Universal Design for Learning in Curriculum Design**

An abundance of research and literature exists regarding the use of universal design in educational environments (CAST, 2018; Rose & Meyer, 2002). Although an in-depth discussion of UDL is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is worth noting that to meet the differing needs of learners in our increasingly diverse society, it is essential to consider ways in which to provide access to the curriculum for all students. Universal design for learning is a framework for guiding the development of instructional practices to accommodate individual learning differences and is based upon the idea that individuals learn in unique ways (CAST, 2018). UDL followed a movement that advocated to make all environments and products usable for all individuals. It is based upon specific principles and seeks to improve access to the curriculum by removing barriers and obstacles to learning (CAST, 2018). When considering learning differences of individual students or individual groups of students, instructional practices should provide equal access to the curriculum by providing multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement for all learners (CAST, 2018).

### **Principles of Curriculum Design**

Although the principles of curriculum design have evolved since the 1950s, these early principles continue to influence curriculum design presently (William, 2013). Tyler (2013) first wrote about the specifics of design in 1949, and although the tome has been updated several times, the questions remain as salient as ever. A rationale for curriculum development that should guide the curriculum development process includes “1. What educational purposes should schools seek to attain? 2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? 3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized? 4. How can we determine whether these

purposes are being attained?" (Tyler, 2013, p.1). These four questions are the basis for the process of curriculum design as well as providing a framework for the discussion surrounding the principles of curriculum design.

According to Hansen (1995), five principles should guide the curriculum design process. A conceptual framework is the first principle to consider and although many curriculum design theorists base their arguments and assumptions on a given theory or theories (e.g., behaviorism), Hansen (1995) argues that curriculum design is an applied science in which, "prospective teachers have to become their own educational architects rather than relying on higher authority prescriptions for what and how to teach" (n.p.). It is necessary, therefore, for teachers to possess or develop their own conceptual framework in regard to teaching and learning theory and in which they can design learning activities for their own students. Although these learning activities are often subject to a prescribed set of guidelines (e.g., state standards), teachers must be able to develop, revise, and implement curricula (Hansen, 1995). Teaching materials and resources are other areas that are not often dictated by external factors and, as a result, teachers must conceptualize the way in which teaching materials and resources are developed to create coherence within the curriculum and motivate students to engage in learning (Meyers & Nulty, 2009). Having a well-developed conceptual framework will provide coherence and validation to the curriculum.

The second principle that should guide the curriculum design process is "conceptualizing attitudes and beliefs about learning" (Hansen, 1995, n.p.). In order for teachers to develop and understand contexts for instructional processes, they must conceptualize their own attitudes and beliefs about student learning. More importantly, the attitudes and beliefs that teachers hold influence their own classroom practices as well as influence the teacher change processes (Richardson, 1996).

Most attitudes and beliefs regarding student learning are influenced by one of three orientations to include 1) the transmission orientation which supports the transferal of facts and skills to students, 2) the transaction orientation in which the student engages in dialogue with the curriculum and is capable of problem solving, and 3) the transformational orientation which focuses on personal and societal change through interdependence (Miller, 1996; Johnson, 2015). This last orientation supports the idea that students should be able to learn what they want to learn. It is important to consider that conceptualization regarding attitudes and beliefs about learning is difficult to put into practice; however, understanding one's own views and the views of others can make the curriculum design process easier (Miller, 1996).

According to Hansen (1995), the third principle that should guide the curriculum design process is to provide “an epistemological rationale” (n.p.). Curriculum designers should provide a well-constructed and well worded rationale as this creates a clear sense of purpose and direction for the curriculum (Meyers & Nulty, 2009). Providing an epistemological rationale for the curricula allows teachers to create an authentic curriculum in which students not only gain academic knowledge in “knowing that...” (Hansen, 1995, n.p.), but also how to apply knowledge and problem solving skills by “knowing how...” (Hansen, 1995, n.p.). All curriculum should provide students with experiential learning experiences that combine experience, perception, cognition, and behavior. If students are to be successful as citizens and in the workplace, they must be provided with educational experiences that provide them with authentic, real life situations in which they are able to use the knowledge and practice the skills they have learned (CAST, 2018).

The fourth principle for guiding the curriculum design process is the actual “curriculum development/planning process” (Hansen, 1995). Although this process will be discussed in depth in a later section, it is essential that teachers be familiar with planning, learning theory, and assessment. Engaging in the curriculum design process from scratch would most likely be an insurmountable task for any one individual teacher; however, teachers must possess knowledge of the curriculum design process in order to design instructional programs effectively (Hansen, 1996). Teachers can utilize curricula formulated at the national, state, or even local levels and adapt them to meet the needs of their own students (Johnson, 2015). By way of example, many schools have implemented a “bring your own device,” or other 1 to 1 initiative in which each student is assigned his or her own technology device (e.g., tablets, smartphones, etc.). In order to maximize instruction, the most effective teachers have considered the use of this technology as a part of the curriculum design as well as ways in which to incorporate and utilize this technology in instruction. On the other hand, teachers in schools that have not implemented a 1 to 1 initiative would have to consider other means in which to engage students without steady access to technology.

The last principle that should guide the curriculum design process is to consider “the political realities of curriculum development” (Hansen, 1995, n.p.). According to several pundits, curriculum development is a political process, and teachers should take this into consideration when developing or revising curricula (Phillips & Hawthorne, 1978; Goodson, 1991). Political influences in education and curriculum development, such as the implementation of technology, has drawn criticism from some in the field.

According to Au and Hollar (2016), the business sector craves access to the more than \$700 billion-dollar education market. In addition to venture capi-

talists and start-ups cashing in on the privatization of public education, international companies, such as Pearson, control certain aspects of the education industry (Newton, 2016). Another example of how education is a big business is that many schools now offer computer science courses for students as a part of the curriculum. It stands to reason that this is a good shift in the educational system as programming jobs provide good income to those who acquire programming skills; however, some argue that flooding the workforce with programmers will actually drive the wages down- that adding programming to the P-12 curriculum is more about providing a source of cheap labor for the tech industry (Tarnoff, 2017). As Silicon Valley becomes more and more powerful, it can advocate for changes that will benefit large corporations financially rather than the actual population.

### **The Curriculum Design Process**

Curriculum development is a dynamic process in that any given curricula will always be a work in progress (Null, 2017). It is important for teachers to consider that when engaged in the curriculum development process there are trade-offs between benefits, costs, constraints, and risks (Glatthorn, Boschee, Whitehead, & Boschee, 2016). When developing or revising a curriculum, it is also important to take into consideration any external factors that will influence the process. The vast majority of states currently mandate the use of the Common Core Standards for English/language arts and mathematics to indicate what students should know by grade level, yet they do not provide teachers with strategies of how, or in which order, to teach the content. The common core standards also do not provide teachers with a timeline of when to teach a given standard nor how long to spend on each standard (Sapers, 2015). These decisions are at the liberty of individual teachers, schools, and/or school systems. Another consideration that teachers must realize is that not all curriculum designs are successful and although it is unlikely that a curriculum design is an all-out failure, content development is a process that requires continuous refinement (Alsubaie, 2016).

Although the process of curriculum design varies, basic components commonly identified in the literature consist of identifying needs, developing goals, selecting strategies and implementing the plan, and evaluation (Null, 2017; Glatthorn et al., 2016). One of the first steps in any curriculum design process is to identify the needs of the learners within individual schools and/or systems, as these activities serve as the basis for the curriculum development that ultimately should meet the needs of students (Null, 2016). In order to help identify needs, a needs analysis is a necessary prerequisite to curriculum design as it provides the relevance and validity for the design activities (Glatthorn, 2016). Since state and/or local needs are often taken into

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# List of Acronyms

AIM	A mnemonic, or strategy, used to guide students to complete a task in a specific order. Each letter stands for a different part of the task.
BOPPPS	Bridge-in, Outcome, Pre-Assessment, Participatory Learning, Post Assessment, and Summary: A lesson model blended from several educational theories and originally used to improve the teaching skills of professors.
CBGO	Computer-Based Graphic Organizer: A virtual graphic organizer with embedded strategies that supports a variety of writing genres available on any computer.
CCE	College and Career Readiness: A term used in the Common Core to mean that students must know content and demonstrate they can solve problems. They must work collaboratively and competitively as well as develop communication skills that allow them to be a productive member of society.
CCK	Common Content Knowledge: The knowledge held by the average mathematically literate citizen.
CCSS	Common Core State Standards: Math and English language arts standards that have been designed to be of high quality, are aligned both vertically and horizontally between grades, and outline the learning to be mastered at each grade level.
DARE	A mnemonic, or strategy, used to guide students to complete a task in a specific order. Each letter stands for a different part of the task.
ELA	English Language Arts: The umbrella of learning that includes reading, writing, listening and speaking.
ELL	English Language Learner: Anyone who is not fluent in English and typically requires assistance or modified instruction in academic courses.
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act: The 2015 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that defines all educational requirements from the federal government.
IDEIA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act: An updated version of IDEA that is comprised of a four-part

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	piece of legislation and guarantees equal education to all students with disabilities.
IDEAS	A mnemonic, or strategy, used to guide students to complete a task in a specific order. Each letter stands for a different part of the task.
IT	Information Technology: The use of physical devices, such as computers, and processes that allow the creation, storage, and exchange of virtual data.
LD	Learning Disability: Neurologically-based processing problems that affect the ability to learn basic skills. Students with LD are often as smart or smarter than typical peers.
LMS	Learning Management System: A software application that use used to plan, implement and assess learning processes.
MBGO	Mobile-based Graphic Organizer: A virtual graphic organizer with embedded strategies that supports a variety of writing genres available on any mobile device.
MKT	Mathematical Knowledge for Teaching: The combination of mathematical pedagogy and content.
MOOC	Massive Online Open Course: Free virtual courses open to anyone simply by signing up and logging on.
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress: The largest continuous sampling of academic testing in the United States
NCLB	No Child Left Behind: The 2001 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that defines all educational requirements from the federal government.
SAMR	Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition: A change in virtual pedagogy that encourages educators to produce meaningful technology-based experiences for students.
SCK	Specialized Content Knowledge: The information a math content specialist at the elementary level must know in order to teach.
SRSD	Self-Regulated Strategy Development: Thoughts and actions writers use to improve their skills and motivation as well as enhance the quality of their writing.
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math: An interdisciplinary model of teaching real world lesson and academic

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	concepts, while students explore and make connections to the world around them.
STOP	A mnemonic, or strategy, used to guide students to complete a task in a specific order. Each letter stands for a different part of the task.
TBGO	Technology-based Graphic Organizers: A virtual graphic organizer with embedded strategies that supports a variety of writing genres.
TPACK	Technology, Pedagogy, and Content Knowledge: A framework used by many teacher preparation programs.
P-12	Preschool-12: The range from primary, elementary, middle, and secondary schools.
PACKAGE	A professional development opportunity in which educators can immediately practice new strategies, skills, and techniques.
PBL	Project-based Learning: Students investigate and respond to an authentic and engaging complex question, problem, or challenge for an extended period of time and must present their findings publicly.
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge: Combining pedagogy and content in an organized fashion that is adapted for, and presented to, all learners.
PD	Professional Development: The updating of skills and knowledge as well as acquiring new techniques, in terms of this tome, specifically to educators and the craft of teaching
PIE	A model of instruction that focuses on perception, interpretation, and expression.
PLAN	A mnemonic, or strategy, used to guide students to complete a task in a specific order. Each letter stands for a different part of the task.
PLC	Professional Learning Communities: groups of educators who work collaboratively to improve their teaching techniques as well as the academic performance of their students.
POW	A mnemonic, or strategy, used to guide students to complete a task in a specific order. Each letter stands for a different part of the task.

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TEDS-M	Teacher Education and Development Study in Mathematics: A study conducted over a four-year period in 15 countries that found it is important for math educators to take courses in both math pedagogy as well as math content.
TIDE2	A mnemonic, or strategy, used to guide students to complete a task in a specific order. Each letter stands for a different part of the task.
TPEG	Teacher Peer Excellence Groups: A form of PLCs modeled after those in Shanghai schools.
TREE	A mnemonic, or strategy, used to guide students to complete a task in a specific order. Each letter stands for a different part of the task.
UDL	Universal Design for Learning: A framework that focuses on the why, how, and what of how people learn. All teaching then becomes differentiate to individual student needs.
WBGO	Web-based Graphic Organizer: A virtual graphic organizer with embedded strategies that supports a variety of writing genres available from any web application.
WRITE	A mnemonic, or strategy, used to guide students to complete a task in a specific order. Each letter stands for a different part of the task.
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development: Developed by Vygotsky (1896-1934), ZPD describes the difference between what a student can do alone and what they can do with help.

# About the Primary Authors

## **Nicholas D. Young, PhD, EdD**

Dr. Nicholas D. Young has worked in diverse educational roles for more than 29 years, serving as a principal, special education director, graduate professor, graduate program director, graduate dean, and longtime superintendent of schools. He was named the Massachusetts Superintendent of the Year, and he completed a distinguished Fulbright program focused on the Japanese educational system through the collegiate level. Dr. Young is the recipient of numerous other honors and recognitions including the General Douglas MacArthur Award for distinguished civilian and military leadership and the Vice Admiral John T. Hayward Award for exemplary scholarship. He holds several graduate degrees including a PhD in educational administration and an EdD in educational psychology.

Dr. Young has served in the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserves combined for over 34 years; and he graduated with distinction from the U.S. Air War College, the U.S. Army War College, and the U.S. Navy War College. After completing a series of senior leadership assignments in the U.S. Army Reserves as the commanding officer of the 287<sup>th</sup> Medical Company (DS), the 405<sup>th</sup> Area Support Company (DS), the 405<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Hospital, and the 399<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Hospital, he transitioned to his current military position as a faculty instructor at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, PA. He currently holds the rank of Colonel.

Dr. Young is also a regular presenter at state, national, and international conferences; and he has written many books, book chapters, and/or articles on various topics in education, counseling, and psychology. Some of his most recent books include *Captivating Classrooms: Student Engagement at the Heart of School Improvement* (in-press); *Guardian of the Next Generation: Igniting the Passion for Quality Teaching* (in-press); *From Head to Heart: High Quality Teaching Practices in the Spotlight* (in-press); *Dog Tags to Diploma: Understanding and Addressing the Educational Needs of Veterans, Servicemembers, and their Families* (in-press); *From Cradle to Classroom: A Guide to Special Education for Young Children* (in-press); *Achieving Results: Maximizing Success in the Schoolhouse* (in-press); *Making the Grade: Promoting Positive Outcomes for Students with Learning Disabilities* (in-press); *Paving the Pathway for Educational Success: Effective Classroom Interventions for Students with Learning Disabilities* (in-press); *Wrestling with Writing: Effective Strategies for Struggling Students* (2018); *Floundering to Fluent: Reaching and*

*Teaching the Struggling Student* (2018); *Emotions and Education: Promoting Positive Mental Health in Students with Learning* (2018); *From Lecture Hall to Laptop: Opportunities, Challenges, and the Continuing Evolution of Virtual Learning in Higher Education* (2017); *The Power of the Professoriate: Demands, Challenges, and Opportunities in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Higher Education* (2017); *To Campus with Confidence: Supporting a Successful Transition to College for Students with Learning Disabilities* (2017); *Educational Entrepreneurship: Promoting Public-Private Partnerships for the 21st Century* (2015); *Beyond the Bedtime Story: Promoting Reading Development during the Middle School Years* (2015); *Betwixt and Between: Understanding and Meeting the Social and Emotional Developmental Needs of Students During the Middle School Transition Years* (2014); *Learning Style Perspectives: Impact Upon the Classroom* (3rd ed., 2014); and *Collapsing Educational Boundaries from Preschool to PhD: Building Bridges Across the Educational Spectrum* (2013); *Transforming Special Education Practices: A Primer for School Administrators and Policy Makers* (2012); and *Powerful Partners in Student Success: Schools, Families and Communities* (2012). He also co-authored several children's books to include the popular series *I am Full of Possibilities*. Dr. Young may be contacted directly at nyoung1191@aol.com.

### **Elizabeth Jean, EdD**

Dr. Elizabeth Jean has served as an elementary school educator and administrator in various rural and urban settings in Massachusetts for more than 20 years. As a building administrator, she has fostered partnerships with various local businesses and higher education institutions. Further, she is currently a graduate adjunct professor at Endicott College and previously taught at Our Lady of the Elms College. In terms of formal education, Dr. Jean received a BS in education from Springfield College; a MEd in education with a concentration in reading from Our Lady of the Elms; and an EdD in curriculum, teaching, learning, and leadership from Northeastern University.

Dr. Jean has co-authored *From Head to Heart: High Quality Teaching Practices in the Spotlight* (in-press); *From Cradle to Classroom: A Guide to Special Education for Young Children* (in-press); *Dog Tags to Diploma: Understanding and Addressing the Educational Needs of Veterans, Servicemembers and their Families* (in-press); *From Lecture Hall to Laptop: Opportunities, Challenges and the Continuing Evolution of Virtual Learning in Higher Education* (2017). She has also written book chapters on such topics as emotional well-being for students with learning disabilities, parental supports for students with learning disabilities, home-school partnerships, virtual education, public and private partnerships in public education, professorial pursuits, tech-

nology partnerships between P-12 and higher education, developing a strategic mindset for LD students, the importance of skill and will in developing reading habits for young children, and middle school reading interventions to name a few. Additionally, she has co-authored and illustrated several children's books to include *Yes, Mama* (2018), *The Adventures of Scotty the Skunk: What's that Smell?*, (2014), and the *I am Full of Possibilities* Series for Learning Disabilities Worldwide. She may be contacted at elizabethjean1221@gmail.com.

### **Teresa Allissa Citro, PhD**

Dr. Citro is the Chief Executive Officer, Learning Disabilities Worldwide, Inc. and the Founder and President of Thread of Hope, Inc., She is a graduate of Tufts New England Medical School and Northeastern University, Boston. Dr. Citro has co-edited several books on a wide range of topics in special education and she co-authored a popular children's series *I Am Full of Possibilities*. Furthermore, Dr. Citro is the co-editor of two peer review journals including *Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal and Insights on Learning Disabilities from Prevailing Theories to Validated Practices*. She is the mother of two young children and resides in Boston, Massachusetts.