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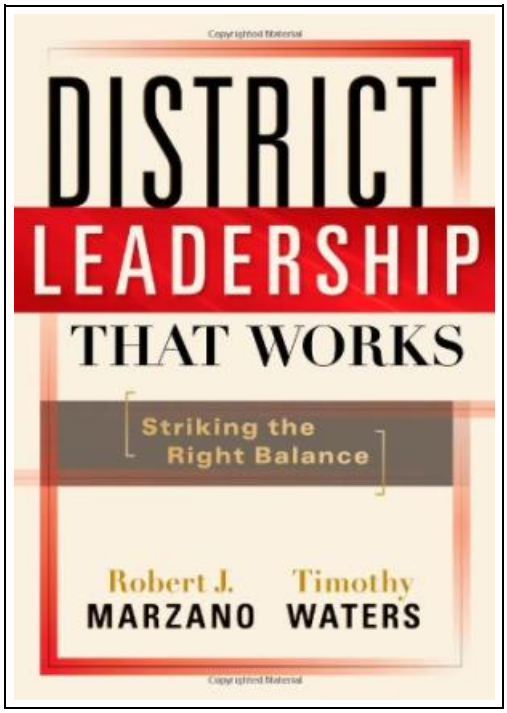

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DISTRICT LEADERSHIP THAT WORKS: STRIKING THE RIGHT BALANCE

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Solution Tree. Paperback. Condition: New. 168 pages. Dimensions: 10.2in. x 7.3in. x 0.7in.District Leadership That Works begins by expunging the myth that district leadership and high-level school administrators are useless and deter educational progress. Rather, it shows how district leaders can unite a school district through establishing common goals that will improve overall student achievement, while maintaining teachers stylistic freedom. The authors introduce the concept of a top-down power mechanism called defined autonomy. Rather than decentralizing authority, defined autonomy puts the focus on district-defined non-negotiable goals and a system of accountability supported by assessment tools. With district-defined goals and assessment tools, schools can successfully address student achievement and respond more quickly and effectively to student failure. The authors then delve into setting and monitoring non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction, both at the district and school levels. When setting goals for achievement, they suggest, leaders must look past typical standardized testing and create formative assessment tools that add more variables to measurement. Leaders should focus on programs that monitor the progress of failing students and on processes for taking action. Regarding non-negotiable goals for instruction, the authors suggest that focusing only on teacher certification and subject-matter expertise is insufficient for school improvement; rather, goals should be set and actions monitored for improving teachers instructional skills as well. Attainment of these skills can then be measured by the progress of student achievement using assessment tools. District Leadership That Works goes on to assure educators that district leadership is not a unilateral decision-making process; rather, leadership involves schools, teacher unions, students, and community members in collaborative goal-setting. Leaders must also ensure that the school board is accountable for appropriately allocating resources to support these goals; school board decisions regarding expenditures and resource allocation directly impact student achievement levels. Defined autonomy does not...

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