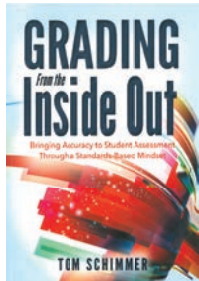


**Grading from the Inside Out: Bringing Accuracy to Student Assessment through a Standards-Based Mindset.** Tom Schimmer. Solution Tree, 2016, 216 pp.

Standards-based grading (SBG) is a hot topic in education today. As schools transition to using a growth mindset in grading and assessment, many educators have found that we also need flexibility in our grading systems. This may sound simple, yet to implement this, we need a paradigm shift. In *Grading from the Inside Out*, Tom Schimmer gives principals the tools to undertake SBG.

This interesting read explains the research behind SBG and gives real examples of how the ideas work



in schools. Schimmer challenges principals to keep an open mind as they read. Teaching and learning are much different today, he writes, so it's time that we make a shift in grading too.

Each example includes the school and the school leader's Twitter handle, so readers can contact them. Every chapter also includes a "How to Bring Parents On Board" section with real examples of how to engage parents. This can be helpful, since it can be difficult for parents when we make shifts in education.

I particularly enjoyed the chapter on why and how to repurpose homework. Schimmer emphasizes that homework should be used for practice not grades. When bringing parents on board, educators should focus on the purpose of homework rather than the amount and the importance of parental support. This way, "teachers can explore and implement a variety

of ways that make homework more meaningful," he writes.

This book can be used as a schoolwide or a small group book study. Schimmer's questions at the end of each chapter challenge readers to decide on immediate takeaways and how to implement them. Readers can then relate the information to their own school situation.

As a country, we have begun to transform both teaching and learning. Now, it's time to change our traditional grading system to one that matches standards-based instruction. Both teachers and administrators could use this book to debunk myths about SBG and implement a grading system that promotes student improvement and confidence. I'm excited to use some of these practices in my school this fall.

*Reviewed by Jenny Nauman,  
principal of Shields Elementary School  
in Lewes, Delaware.*

**Schools That Deliver.** John Edwards and Bill Martin. Corwin, 2016, 241 pp.

This is a time for change in schools across America. The widely held belief that the work of transformative change can be undertaken by school leaders takes center stage in *Schools That Deliver*. John Edwards and Bill Martin use the text to encourage principals to deliver real change in the school systems.

*Schools That Deliver* will appeal to any school leader interested in deeply examining the effort it takes to bring about change in schools. In the text, Edwards and Martin focus on six central areas for delivery: alignment,



the real work, leadership, authentic action, core values and culture, and community. The book is arranged by assigning each of those areas to a chapter, then unpacking what each of those areas really means in schools.

*Schools That Deliver* is not an easy read. Within the first chapter alone, readers will experience theories that lead to a need for shared vision. The authors then also walk the reader through a series of steps for creating a shared vision. However, the steps are detailed and could be followed with ease of understanding. The second chapter uses 11 "provocations" to assist the school leader in examining the priorities for the work that must be done. The third chapter provides eight leadership challenges to assist a school leader in focusing his or her leadership efforts.

Chapter four takes school leaders through a thoughtful process to

determine how, where, and if a gap exists between our beliefs and our actions. The fifth chapter takes the idea of the shared vision and asks a school leader to examine the core values of his or her campus. The final chapter broadens the scope of the work to include the community around the school.

As a school principal, I found *Schools That Deliver* to be a profoundly deep and challenging text. It is systematic enough to appeal to principals who like to follow a plan, and it provides a high level of detail and intellectual stimulation for principals looking to work at that level. The book is 241 pages of text reminiscent of a graduate-level class and provides many thought-provoking opportunities throughout.

*Reviewed by Kristin Liewehr Bishop,  
principal of Davis Elementary School in  
Plano, Texas.*