

Review by Armchair Interviews

Contributed by Webmaster
Friday, 25 July 2008
Last Updated Friday, 25 July 2008

Facing the Future Together: Forming Successful School-Business Partnerships

Reviewed by Steven King, MBA

For over three decades, Jim Leatherwood has navigated the tumultuous waters of education, either as a teacher, administrator, or counselor. Each position gave him a unique vantage point to understand the world of education. After retiring from his deanship of Occupational Education, Leatherwood searched for a tool that would help businesses and educators work together as partners. Finding none, he decided to pen *Facing the Future Together*.

As a business educator, I am constantly searching for material that helps high school students understand the relevancy of business principles. No serious educator should be without this book that beautifully illustrates the fact that education is the business of business.

Leatherwood has separated this work into three parts, 1) *Getting Started*, 2) *For Business Only*, and 3) *The Partnership in Action*. To hook educators, Leatherwood leaves no stone unturned. During his tenure in education he helped forge many successful school-business partnerships. There is a chief reason why these partnerships are so successful: businesses and educators are mutually interested in student achievement. The "Getting Started" section covers everything from how to find a partner down to how to make the partnership more meaningful by having a partnership ceremony commencement.

Educationally minded businessmen that have perhaps never thought of such a liaison will enjoy the second section aimed at them. What is the message? Don't wait for a school to contact you—you could make the difference in a local school by initiating such as partnership.

Section three contains Web references, activities, and example letters to navigate the reality of school-business partnerships. Leatherwood's tome has taken the guesswork out of maintaining such partnerships, even including applicable topics to help maintain a newsletter to keep stakeholders informed of partnership developments.

"In times of change, learners inherit the Earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists." This quote by the late Eric Hoffer, an American social writer, paints the reality of education divorced from school-business partnerships. Students will graduate and will not be adequately prepared to navigate the "real world."

Businessmen and educators—you have a choice to make. "Face the future together," then maybe, students will meld with a world for which they have already been partially prepared.

Armchair Interviews says: A very important book for businesses and schools to see their vital partnership role in educating future generations.