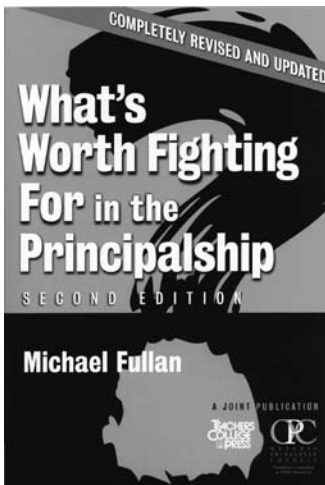


Reviewed by **Nelly Kelders**
Member Services Director



What's Worth Fighting For in the Principalship Second Edition

Michael Fullan

As promised, Michael Fullan has completely revised and updated his book *What's Worth Fighting for in the Principalship (WWFFP)* which was published 20 years ago. As with his previous book, this edition can be read in a few hours. It is less than 70 pages in length but full of actionable guidelines. Fullan notes in his preface that the difference between this book and his first is that everything he discusses is based on actual examples not abstract or unattainable ideas. He also sights the good news and the bad news for principals. The good news is the recognition of principals by politicians and policymakers as key to student learning. The bad news is the principal is being overloaded by the demands of the job.

In his first chapter Fullan talks about the "Vise Principal". He acknowledges that principals have been inundated with powerful changes making their lives more difficult. Fullan reviews eight themes that he says have increased expectations dramatically yet at the same time act as "vise-like clamps" that keep the principal from moving ahead. The rest of the book deals with four interrelated learning webs and the actions that come with them.

Fullan's webs serve to demonstrate the importance of relationships in school communities. The most effective leaders, he says, are those who are successful in inspiring others to use their natural abilities and energies to make good decisions and to do better things. The most difficult challenge is of course to change cultures. We all like what is familiar to us and being taken out of our comfort zone can be intimidating. This however, is what is worth fighting for in the school. Modeling the priorities that are deemed important is essential if change is to occur and so the principal must be immersed as an instructional leader.

The final chapter in the book offers core guidelines for principals to use in the fight to create new cultures of learning in their school communities. Specific actions are noted including de-privatization, modeling instructional leadership, building capacity, growing other leaders, diverting the distractors and being system leaders.

Finally, he notes six guidelines for the system that complement the work of the principal at the school level.

Fullan has packed a lot of information and recommendations into a very precise format. WWFFP is worth reading and re-reading as there is much to ponder, that will challenge us to action.

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