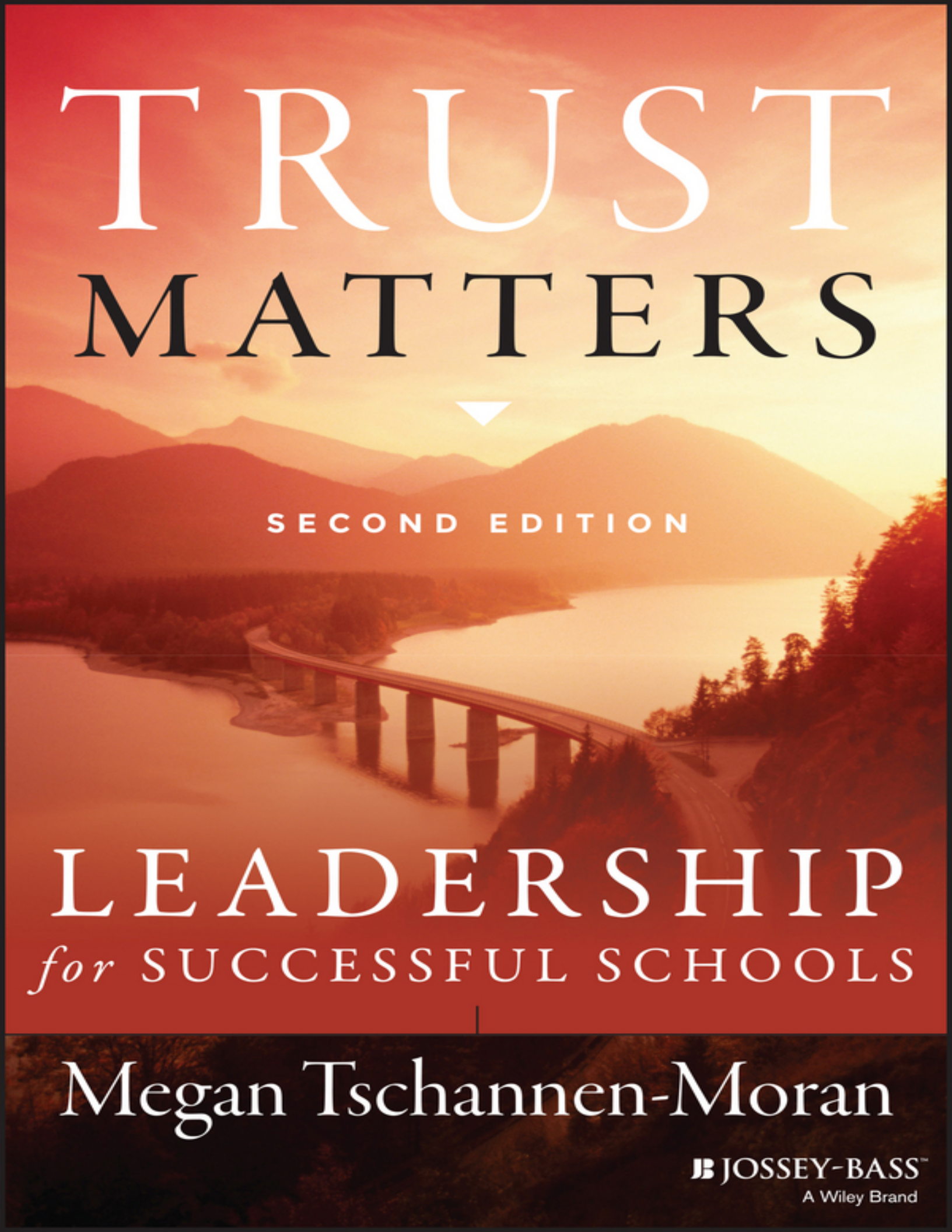
TRUST
MATTERS
SECOND EDITION
LEADERSHIP
for SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS
Megan Tschannen-Moran
JOSSEY-BASS
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More Praise for *Trust Matters*

"It has been awhile since I read the first edition of *Trust Matters*, but I remember the influence that Megan Tschannen-Moran's skillful blend of story and analysis had upon my thinking and its subsequent contribution to my own work. This second edition is even better! Like the first, it is insightful, peppered with wisdom, born of experience, and shaped by intellectual endeavor. Much of this book focuses on the key roles of school leaders in responding to issues of betrayal, repair of broken trust, and the need to build bridges with parents and community in contexts of unprecedented levels of governmental and public scrutiny; and underpinning the messages, prompts for reflection at the end of each chapter give the same powerful message that trust and trustworthiness are key components in teachers' and schools' capacities to enhance student learning and achievement. For its humanity, closeness to practice, and evidence-based improvement messages, this book is a must-read for all educators."

—Christopher Day, professor of education, University of Nottingham

For Bob, Bryn, and Evan from whom I have learned the most important lessons about Trust and for Michelle, Andrés, Jennie, Erika, and Theo who have enriched those lessons with beautiful demonstrations of the Power of Love

Trust Matters

Leadership for Successful Schools

SECOND EDITION

MEGAN TSCHANNEN-MORAN

JOSSEY-BASS™
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PREFACE

Once upon a record-breaking cold Chicago morning, my husband, Bob, then a young inner-city pastor, got a call from a church member with a disability saying that she would like to go to church. Being kind-hearted, with an indomitable spirit, Bob was determined to get her to church despite the obstacles. He had to borrow a car, start it, and warm it up in subzero temperatures. With persistence, he was able to get the car started and running. Presently, however, the engine light came on and the smell of smoke ignited an alarming realization: the oil was frozen in the oil pan. Without lubrication, the engine had overheated and died—resulting in a costly repair to replace the engine.

This incident has much to teach us about trying to run a school without trust. Trust serves as a lubricant of organizational functioning; without it, schools are likely to experience the overheated friction of conflict as well as a lack of progress toward their admirable goals. There is no way to lead schools successfully without building, establishing, and maintaining trust within and across the many and varied constituencies they serve. With trust, schools are much more likely to benefit from the collaborative and productive efforts of their faculty and staff, which in turn help generate the results for students that educators yearn for.

Schools once enjoyed the implicit trust of their community and school leaders felt they could take for granted the trust of both their internal and external constituencies. School leadership was, by and large, a high-status, low-stress job. Now, too often, it is the reverse. We live in an era in which all of our social institutions and their leaders have come

under unprecedented scrutiny. As a result, trust has become increasingly difficult for leaders to earn and maintain in our complex and rapidly changing world. This trend away from trust poses a special challenge for school leaders because trust is so vital for schools in fulfilling their fundamental mission of teaching students to be engaged and productive citizens. Understanding the nature and meaning of trust in schools has, therefore, taken on added urgency and importance. School leaders need to appreciate and cultivate the dynamics of trust to reap its benefits for greater student achievement as well as for improved organizational adaptability and productivity.

Without trust, schools are unlikely to be successful in their efforts to improve and to realize their core purpose. I have written this book to offer school leaders practical, hands-on advice on not only how to establish and maintain trust but also how to repair trust if and when it has been damaged. To illustrate how the dynamics of trust play out in schools, I have integrated into this book the case studies of three principals: one who succeeded in cultivating the trust of her faculty, and two who, although well intentioned, were unsuccessful in harnessing the vital resource of trust, and whose schools therefore suffered impaired effectiveness. Through these case studies, I hope to show the role school leaders play in fostering high-trust relationships among teachers, students, and parents. Although the names used in these stories are pseudonyms, the case studies themselves are based on real principals and interviews with teachers who worked in their schools. Each of the three principals led an elementary school with a population of primarily low-income and minority students; the three schools were within a few miles of one another in the same urban school district. But the similarities ended there. The approaches they took to school leadership—and, subsequently, the relationships they built with their faculty

and staff members—were very different. These cases provide vivid examples of the ways in which even well-meaning school leaders can end up engendering the distrust of their faculty and the high cost that is inevitably paid when that occurs: morale plummets, productivity declines, and schools lose good people.

Chapter 1 explores why trust matters in schools. This chapter introduces the three principals. Gloria Davies was an overzealous reformer who alienated her faculty and was engaged in an intense power struggle. Fred Martin, the "keep-the-peace principal," lost the faith of his faculty by avoiding conflict. The culture of distrust that resulted had a negative impact on his school's effectiveness. Gloria's and Fred's stories evidence, respectively, the "fight" and "flight" responses to conflict. These two cases are contrasted with the story of Brenda Thompson, a "high-support, high-challenge principal" who, through caring and hard work, earned the trust of her faculty. Whereas Gloria took too much responsibility for the task of school improvement and Fred took too little, Brenda successfully balanced a concern for the task of improving school performance with the concern for cultivating positive relationships within her school. As chapter 1 illustrates, because changes in the social and political environments of schools have transformed the context for building trust in schools, school leaders need to be more attentive and exercise wisdom when it comes to issues of trust.

Although people generally have an intuitive understanding of what is meant by trust and have some basis on which they make trust judgments of others, trying to articulate a precise definition of trust is not easy. Chapter 2, in which I draw on my own experience as a school principal as well as a solid literature review, provides a comprehensive definition of trust: it is the willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is

benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and *competent*. Each of these facets is illustrated with stories of Brenda's leadership, which touch on both her leadership style and how that style played out among her faculty. Brenda demonstrated proficiency in all five facets of trust. She extended care to her faculty, was respected as a person of high integrity and commitment, avoided hidden agendas, worked hard, and distinguished herself as an educational leader. These attributes enabled Brenda to evoke an extra measure of effort from her teachers. As a result, in part, of Brenda's trustworthy leadership, the students of Brookside Elementary achieved better-than-expected performance in both tangible and intangible ways. Their achievement scores improved significantly, and the building as a whole enjoyed increased engagement and success.

Trust is a complex and dynamic process. Chapter 3 explores factors that influence the development of trust. The dynamics of initiating trust include such elements as institutional supports for fostering trust and the role that reputation plays. Personal factors such as one's disposition to trust, values and attitudes, as well as moods and emotions are also explored. Authentic trust is the goal of this development process.

Chapter 4 explores the dynamics of betrayal—including what happens to provoke betrayal in a previously trusting relationship. This is illustrated by the story of Fred, a well-meaning and affable principal. Fred's unwillingness to make hard decisions or to hold teachers accountable left his faculty feeling unprotected, vulnerable, and betrayed. This principal's steadfast avoidance of conflict allowed a pervasive climate of distrust to emerge. The costs to the school of a culture of distrust included constricted communication, limited access to faculty insights through shared decision making, and reduced organizational citizenship and commitment.

Chapter 5 examines revenge and the range of victims' responses to betrayal. This chapter tells the story of Gloria, who was determined to make positive change when she took charge of an underperforming school. Her methods, however, were seen as manipulative and unfair; they broke trust with the faculty. These tactics left teachers feeling alienated and distrustful, leading to resentment, power struggles, and sabotage. Gloria's leadership resulted in a school impaired by a culture of control. It is hard to imagine her ultimately being successful in realizing those hopes.

Chapter 6 explores the leader's role in fostering high-quality relationships among teachers in a school. This chapter also examines some of the positive outcomes of trusting school environments, such as greater collaboration and a robust sense of collective efficacy that can fuel stronger motivation and persistence. Chapter 7 examines the dynamics of building trust with students, noting how barriers to trust can be met and overcome even in a challenging and diverse urban environment. Trust hits schools' bottom line: student achievement. This chapter reports research that demonstrates this link. Alternative ways of thinking about student and teacher misbehavior that stem from attachment theory are also explored. Chapter 8 discusses the challenges and rewards in building bridges of trust with families. How the facets of trust play out in these complex and often emotion-laden relationships are investigated, as are the consequences of trust in terms of family engagement.

Chapter 9 focuses on the hard work of trust repair and gives practical advice for repairing trust when it has been damaged in schools. Contemplating the high cost of broken trust and the arduous process of rebuilding trust once it has been damaged may enhance school leaders' commitment to building and maintaining strong bonds of

trust in the first place. Trust is rebuilt through the “four A’s of absolution”: Admit it, Apologize, Ask for forgiveness, and Amend your ways. Trust restoration is also facilitated by constructive attitudes and actions, clear boundaries, communication of promises and credible threats, and strategies for conflict resolution.

The final chapter focuses on the behaviors that make school leaders trustworthy. Trust plays an important role in principals’ functions of visioning, modeling, coaching, managing, and mediating. The advice in this chapter aims to help school leaders harness the powerful resource of trust in their day-to-day work so as to make their school more productive.

In addition to the ten chapters, this book contains two useful appendixes. The first appendix presents three trust measures for school leaders and scholars interested in assessing the level of trust in a school: the Student Trust in Faculty Scale, the Parent Trust in School Scale, and the Faculty Trust in Clients Scale. These surveys are accompanied by scoring directions and norms so that practitioners can compare the level of trust in their own school with that in other schools. The first appendix concludes with suggestions for how school leaders might constructively approach the reporting of these survey results. The second appendix provides additional resources for exploring three areas of thought that may be unfamiliar to readers: attachment theory, appreciative inquiry, and nonviolent communication in education.

There is no simple recipe for fostering trust. Building trust is a complex process requiring reflection and attention to context. The section titled “Putting It into Action” at the end of chapters 2 through 10 provide practical advice for putting the chapter’s ideas to work in your school. Further, the key points of each chapter are summarized in a

bulleted list for easy reference. Finally, each chapter concludes with a section titled “Questions for Reflection and Discussion” that invites you to explore how the chapter’s ideas might be applied to trust development in your own setting, and might prove helpful if you are using this book as part of a class, professional development series, or collaborative study group.

The positive response to the first edition of *Trust Matters* has been one of the most gratifying aspects of my professional life. The most rewarding feedback has come when people have told me that reading *Trust Matters* gave them the language and structure to have conversations that they desperately needed to have in their school but hadn’t known how to have. It has also been rewarding to have my fellow professors of educational leadership share with me their graduates’ feedback that *Trust Matters* was among the most impactful and memorable content in their leadership preparation program. And it has been exciting to see the dramatic growth of new research on trust in schools, by both seasoned and young scholars alike. We are certainly noticing trust in every aspect of our society, and particularly in education. I cannot take credit for this uptick in interest in research on trust, but I am pleased to be part of the conversation.

I have learned so much from the success of the first edition of *Trust Matters*—not least the power of story. I did not set out to find three prototypical school leaders who would fit into a two-dimensional theory of leadership, with leaders falling either high or low on the task and relationship dimensions. It wasn’t until I was well into the analysis of the data that I realized I had in my three principal representatives of three quadrants of the model: a high-task, low-relationship principal (Gloria); a low-task, high-relationship principal (Fred); and a high-task, high-relationship principal (Brenda). The stories of these three

principals provided a vivid backdrop on which to explore the multifaceted model of trust that is at the heart of this book. As exciting as that was, I still did not realize what classic leadership styles those three leaders represented until I began to travel around the country and around the world giving lectures on the content of this book. Person after person would tell me, “I recognize Fred, I worked for someone just like him!” Or, “I had the good fortune to work for a Brenda.” The stories of these three principals began to take on symbolic significance and a life of their own. I remember one afternoon when one of my educational leadership interns sat weeping in my office, exclaiming, “I’m just so afraid I’m going to be a Gloria!” It is my hope that this book has helped her and will help others avoid the pitfalls of trying to reform schools without trust.

This book taps into insights from both theory and research across a variety of fields to argue that school leaders need to attend to establishing and maintaining trusting relationships in their school. It provides practical advice on how to repair damaged trust and helps school leaders learn how to overcome low trust within their school and community so as to establish effective working relationships. My hope is that this work will serve to ignite greater interest in learning more about the dimensions and dynamics of trustworthy leadership, so that school leaders acquire the knowledge and skill to better cultivate trust as a vital resource for school success.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am blessed to have been surrounded by wonderful and trustworthy people throughout my life and during the time I have been at work on this book—people who were benevolent, honest, open, reliable, and competent. First among these is my husband, Bob. He is my oldest and dearest friend, and always a wise and helpful coach. He has sustained me with encouraging words, insightful ideas, mugs of tea, technical assistance, and a ready hug when the going got tough. It is exciting to see him using this material in his work with educators through the Center for School Transformation (www.schooltransformation.com).

I owe a special thanks to all of the contributors who shared their stories of life in school with me. I also want to thank my students at the College of William & Mary who have engaged in dialogue with me around the ideas and issues in this book and helped to clarify my thinking with their questions and comments.

In many ways, this book began thirty-five years ago in my journey as the founder and leader of an alternative elementary school in a low-income neighborhood of Chicago. I am indebted to those who joined me on that journey. Taken by the vision of a more wholesome, humane, and effective educational environment for the children of our neighborhood, we created a refreshing oasis in an all-too-tough and dangerous corner of the city. For fourteen years, the culture of trust at the school sustained us, often in the face of great adversity. Trust was crucial to the success we had in accomplishing our mission to “unleash the power of education early in the lives of disadvantaged students in order to break the cycle of poverty.” The desire

to share the lessons learned in that context was the impetus for writing this book.

I would not have been as fully able to articulate what made our little school so successful had it not been for the guidance of some important teachers along the way, including, Wayne K. Hoy, his wife, Anita Woolfolk Hoy, and Cynthia Uline. My colleagues at the College of William & Mary have also been wonderful examples of trustworthy leaders.

I want to thank Kate Gagnon, Tracy Gallagher, and all of the people at Jossey-Bass who have helped bring this second edition to fruition. I also benefited from a terrific team of reviewers who pushed me to make this a better book with feedback that was constructive, specific, and helpful.

Finally, my acknowledgments would not be complete without special thanks to the people who are most dear to me and who have supported me in my work on this book. In addition to my husband, my children, Bryn and Evan, and now their spouses, Andrés and Michelle, have been faithful cheerleaders and encouragers throughout the years this book has been in progress. I am also grateful for the steadfast caring and ready ear of my sister, Maura and her husband Dave Rawn. Further, I am deeply indebted to my father-in-law, Bob Tschannen, for his love and generosity, and I am sustained by the memory of both my mother, Barbara Longacre Belarde, and my mother-in-law, June Tschannen, each of whom taught me lessons of trust in her own unique way. My wish is that everyone should be as richly blessed by trustworthy companions as I have been on life's journey.

Megan Tschannen-Moran
February 2014

CHAPTER 1
A MATTER OF TRUST

I don't ask for much, I only want trust,

And you know it don't come easy.

—RINGO STARR © STARTLING MUSIC LTD

Sometimes even principals with the best of intentions don't get it right. Sometimes they are unable to lead their school into becoming the kind of productive working community that they imagined and hoped for. When these well-intentioned principals fail to earn the trust of their faculty and their larger school community, their vision is doomed to frustration and failure. Consider the stories of Gloria and Fred, two principals each leading a school in the same urban district.

MEANING WELL

When Gloria Davies learned that she had been assigned to Lincoln School, one of the lowest-performing elementary schools in her district, she was determined to turn that school around. She believed that the primarily low-income students at Lincoln, many of whom lived in a nearby housing project, deserved a better education than they were getting. She wanted to implement a new, more powerful, and rigorous curriculum, especially in reading. She wanted to get teachers fired up to make the changes that were required to turn the school around. And she planned to fire any teachers who failed to get fired up on behalf of their students. This is what she believed she owed to the students. Gloria often asserted, "I don't work for the teachers, I work for the students and their families."

Midway through her third year at Lincoln, however, the school had failed to make the gains she had hoped for. Gloria was mired in an intense power struggle with the faculty at Lincoln. She had been frustrated by union rules and procedures that had limited her authority. Faculty members had filed numerous grievances against her for what they perceived as manipulative and heavy-handed tactics. Building council meetings, a mechanism for shared decision making mandated by the district, had been reduced to a war of the rule books, each side quoting chapter and verse from the district contract or the union guidelines to bolster its position. Although Gloria had been successful in removing one untenured teacher, her attempts to remove veteran teachers had been met with resistance and rebellion that went well beyond the targeted teachers. Morale was perilously low, and student achievement scores had remained stubbornly poor. To protect herself, Gloria often confined herself to her office and was rarely seen around the school, except to make unscheduled observations of teachers she was trying to remove. Sadly, Gloria's dreams of turning around this failing school had not materialized, in large part because her methods had cost her the trust of her faculty and led to resentment, power struggles, and sabotage.

Fred Martin, principal of Fremont Elementary, a few miles from Lincoln, was a friendly man with a warm smile and an easygoing disposition. He was generally well liked by the teachers, students, and parents in his community, and he was sympathetic to the difficult circumstances that many of his low-income students faced. He was equally sympathetic to the stresses inherent in teaching in an urban context. Fred considered himself a progressive principal, and he delegated many important and controversial decisions to the building council. He viewed his low-key role with the council as one of empowering teachers as decision makers

in the school. He saw himself as fair minded and could usually see both sides of a conflict. Consequently, he was reluctant to make a decision that would be perceived as favoring one side or another. He was disappointed that his students had done so poorly on the state assessments but felt that policymakers should be made to understand the challenges that he and his teachers faced.

Fred's discomfort with and avoidance of conflict had not made for an absence of strife at Fremont. On the contrary, without direct efforts to address conflict productively, discord and disagreements had escalated. Teachers felt angry and unsupported by Fred when they sent misbehaving students to him for discipline and perceived him as giving those students little more than a fatherly chat. Teachers in conflict with one another were left to their own devices to resolve their differences. When they went to Fred, he wanted to avoid taking sides and so avoided making any kind of judgment at all. Instead he referred them to the building council or told them simply that they were going to need to work things out. As a result, long-standing grudges between teachers had simmered for years. Bitterness between the teachers and the teacher's aides, many of whom were parents hired from the neighborhood, had become an entrenched part of the school culture. Teachers perceived the aides as being lazy and unwilling to do the job they were hired to do, whereas the aides found the teachers unwelcoming, demanding, and rude. In the meantime, student achievement had failed to significantly improve, despite the increasing pressure of state and district accountability measures.

Though well intentioned, neither Gloria nor Fred had been successful at shaping a constructive school environment. What was missing in both circumstances was trust. Because these principals were not regarded as trustworthy by their teachers, neither had positive results to show for

his or her efforts. On the one hand, Gloria, the overzealous reformer, had been too impatient for change to foster the kinds of relationships she would have needed to enroll her faculty in the effort to make the inspiring vision she had for the school a reality. Her heavy-handed tactics were seen as betrayals by her teachers. Fred, on the other hand, in trying to keep the peace by avoiding conflict, lost the trust of his faculty through benign neglect. His attempts to keep everybody happy resulted in general malaise and a perpetual undercurrent of unresolved tension in the school. Although teachers liked Fred and felt they could count on his sympathetic concern, they could not count on him to take action on their behalf because of his fear of making anyone angry. His teachers were left feeling vulnerable and unprotected.

The stories of these two principals demonstrate contrasting approaches in how principals respond to resistance to change among their faculty—they either overly assert their authority or they withdraw from the fray. Both responses damage trust, and both hamper a principal's ability to lead. Gloria focused too narrowly on the task of school improvement and neglected the relationships that she needed for cultivating a shared vision and fostering the collective effort required for improved outcomes. Although she was correct in thinking that her primary responsibility was to educate her students and not to promote the comfort and ease of her teachers, she failed to grasp that principals necessarily get their work done through other people. Fred, in contrast, focused too much on relationships at the expense of the task. But because the task involved protecting the well-being of members of the school community, Fred's avoidance of conflict had damaged the very relationships he sought to enhance. By withdrawing, Fred failed to offer the leadership, structure,

and support needed to provide the students in his care with a quality education.

Both Fred and Gloria can been seen as having demonstrated problems of responsibility (Martin, 2002). Gloria took too much responsibility for the change initiative in her school and so prevented teachers from getting on board with and taking ownership of the process. In vigorously asserting her authority, Gloria made her point all too well that teachers were not in charge and did not have a say in the decisions that vitally affected their work life. Her actions had violated the sense of care that teachers expected from their principal, causing them to question her integrity. Their trust in her had been damaged. Fred, in contrast, took on too little responsibility, handing decisions over to teachers that they did not have the expertise to make. He did not support them adequately through mentoring and training to acquire the skills to contribute to the decision making necessary to run the school. He did not demonstrate the competence and reliability necessary to build trust. So although he was generally well liked, he was not seen as trustworthy by his faculty and the wider school community.

The problems these two principals evidence are not unusual. New principals, like Gloria, often feel the need to enter a school setting and create change. Inexperienced principals tend to be unsure of their authority; as a result, a common mistake among novice school leaders is to be overly forceful in establishing their authority within the school. Barth (1981) observed, “Most people I know who are beginning principals enter their new roles as advocates, friends, helpers, supporters, often former colleagues of teachers. By December of their first year they have become adversaries, requirers, forcers, judges, and setters of limits” (p. 148). This approach can be counterproductive when trying to develop a high-trust

school. Building trust requires patience and planning, but novice principals tend to have an impatient “get it done yesterday” attitude.

Fred, however, apparently lacked important leadership skills, such as the ability to resolve conflict, and had had insufficient professional development and training to hone these skills. Perhaps he also lacked the courage and the stamina to face the sometimes uncomfortable aspects of school leadership and especially school change. In the face of resistance, he withdrew. Although empowering teachers to participate in real decision making within the school can be an effective means of reaching higher-quality decisions, Fred failed to provide the leadership and training to help his teachers be successful at shared leadership. The teachers and students in his school needed more than a sympathetic ear to help resolve their conflicts. They needed someone who could structure a process that would lead to productive solutions.

DOING WELL

Although these two scenarios are not uncommon, principals need not follow either path. Brenda Thompson was principal of Brookside Elementary, a school serving a student body similar to those at Lincoln and Fremont, in the same urban district. Through trustworthy leadership, Brenda earned the confidence of her faculty. By balancing a strong sense of care for her school’s students and teachers with high performance expectations, Brenda fostered a school-wide culture of trust. Responsibility for school improvement was shared. By working hard herself, Brenda set an example and was able to command an extra measure of effort from her teachers. These efforts were rewarded with above-average performance from Brookside students on measures of student achievement.

Brenda's care for her faculty and students was evidenced in her accessibility. Brenda was rarely in her office during the school day, preferring to spend her time in the hallways, classrooms, and cafeteria. She spent lunch recess on the playground. She was available to assist teachers and students as they engaged in problem solving around the difficulties they faced. She was a trusted adviser who listened well, offering thoughtful and useful suggestions that demonstrated her expertise as an educator. She didn't blame teachers or make them feel incompetent for having a problem or not knowing what to do. Further, her caring extended beyond the walls of the school; teachers, students, and parents sought her out for help with their lives outside of school as well. Brenda's tone of caring was echoed in faculty members' care for one another and for their students. The impetus for school improvement stemmed from this caring atmosphere: caring fueled the enormous effort needed to sustain a positive school environment in this challenging context.

Brenda understood that the work of schools happens primarily through relationships, so she invested time and resources in nurturing those relationships. There were a number of annual traditions that fostered good rapport, not just among faculty members but among students and their families as well. The academic year would begin with an ice cream social at which students and their families could meet teachers and support staff in an informal and fun setting before buckling down to the serious work of school. Another important community-building tradition at the school was an annual fall sleepover called Camp Night, when students and their parents, in mixed grade-level groups, participated in enjoyable, hands-on learning experiences; had a meal provided by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA); and slept at the school. Brenda also made use of a local high-ropes course twice a year for a

challenging team-building experience with the third through fifth graders and their teachers—and parents were also invited along for the fun. Brenda joined right in, wearing jeans and hiking boots—which, for the students, were an amusing contrast to her typical heels and professional dress. Brenda structured time for the faculty to work together and share ideas and resources, providing common planning time on most days. The school was not free of conflict, but the strong sense of community supported the constructive resolution of the inevitable differences.

We can learn much about the vital role of trustworthy school leadership from the stories of these three principals. They are real principals, and the voices of the teachers throughout the book are taken from actual interviews. The short vignettes scattered throughout the chapters come from encounters with teachers and parents as well as exchanges with my students over the years I have been teaching and writing on this topic.

Principals and other school leaders need to earn the trust of the stakeholders in their school community if they are to be successful. They need to understand how trust is built and how it is lost. Getting smarter about trust will help school leaders foster more successful schools.

TRUST AND SCHOOLS

When we turn a nostalgic eye toward schools in an earlier era, it seems that there was once a time when a school enjoyed the implicit trust of its communities. School leaders were highly respected and largely unquestioned members of the community. Teachers were regarded as having valuable professional knowledge about how children learn and what is best for them. When a child was punished at school, parents accepted and reinforced the judgment of

school officials. If those days ever really did exist, they are not what many who work in schools are currently experiencing.

It is important that a school leader not take the general distrust of schools too personally. That distrust is part of a larger pattern in society, shaped by economic, political, and social forces. We now live in an era when all of our social institutions are under unprecedented scrutiny. We are barraged by a steady stream of media attention to scandals, revealing how business leaders, politicians, church leaders, nonprofit executives, and school leaders have acted out of self-interest rather than in the interests of the constituents whom they purport to serve. These revelations erode the trust we once had in these institutions and their leaders and undermine their basic legitimacy.

The philosopher Annette Baier (1994) observed that we tend to notice trust as we notice air, only when it becomes scarce or polluted. These days, trust in our society does indeed seem to have been damaged and is in scarce supply. As changing economic realities and changing expectations in society make life less predictable, and as new ways to disseminate information increase both the availability of and desire for negative information, we begin to *notice* trust much more. In the midst of the media blitz of bad news, trust has emerged as a favorite theme of advertisers in promoting everything from investment firms to hair salons. Many of us seem to be longing for the days when trust came more easily.

Changing Expectations

New economic realities and increasing social problems have led to mounting pressures on schools. Economically, the move toward a more global economy has increased

competition and forced society's expectations of school outcomes to change. This economic shift has diminished the proportion of low-skilled jobs in developed countries. Our economy is dependent on there being a more highly skilled workforce and a larger proportion of individuals who have earned a high school diploma. Graduates must not only be proficient in basic skills but also be able to reason and solve complex problems. They must be able to work well in teams, as the problems they are likely to encounter in the workplace will be too complex for an individual working alone to solve. Schools are expected to provide a stronger workforce that will allow their nations to remain economically competitive in a global marketplace. At the same time, economic disparities are growing and the problems faced by low-income populations are growing. Although to some extent the criticism of schools in the popular media has been overblown, and our schools are doing a much better job than is frequently reported, pressure is being brought to bear on schools to adapt to a changing world (Berliner & Biddle, 1995).

Aspirations for Equity

In our society, the value of equity has taken on ever greater prominence. Citizens take seriously the expectation of equal opportunities and the right of all to achieve economic security. As people gain access to more information, they also become more conscious of growing income inequalities, as well as of the disparities in opportunities and outcomes available to people from differing social strata.

With growing awareness, those who are less powerful also wish to feel less vulnerable to the professionals whose greater power vitally affects them. Professionals of all sorts possess increasingly powerful knowledge that influences both individual and public welfare (Barber, 1983). With