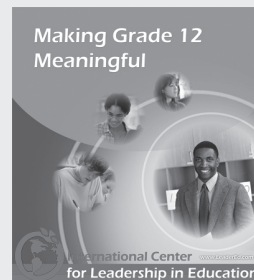


# Making Grade 12 Meaningful

*Making Grade 12 Meaningful* is a comprehensive resource for planning a strong 12<sup>th</sup> grade program. The kit provides a rationale for high school reform as it addresses why grade 12 is so critical, yet less than meaningful, for so many students.

The chapters parallel the school leadership's decision-making process of planning, designing, implementing, administering, and assessing a transformative grade 12 initiative. Embedded in this process are ways to increase rigor, infuse relevance, and build relationships into the existing curriculum and instructional practices.

Successful programs and strategies from model schools across the country contribute to this rich resource to create a balance of theory and effective practice. The kit shows how providing 12<sup>th</sup> graders with a capstone year will not only help to assure their successful transition to the world beyond high school, but also yield a host of benefits to a high school's culture and climate.



## Resource Kit

#K-08-TWE  
\$295

## Table of Contents

**Chapter 1: Redesigning the American High School** examines the various challenges that confront American high schools today as identified by the major reform movements and offers a rationale for why high schools must change. Key components for high school redesign are introduced as well as the characteristics of successful schools.

**Chapter 2: Rationale for 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Focus — Story of a “Wasteland”** offers an in-depth review of the numerous reasons that contribute to making the 12<sup>th</sup> grade a lost year in many high schools. The failure to meet the needs of seniors has proved to have a profound impact on them as they struggle to transition to the world beyond high school.

**Chapter 3: A Developmental Profile of 12<sup>th</sup> Graders** identifies the developmental characteristics of 12<sup>th</sup> graders and establishes six key premises about who they are and what they need educationally in order to flourish in the final year of high school. Seniors are: (1) in transition, (2) capable, (3) in need of new experiences, (4) ready to apply learning to the real world, (5) eager to have a voice in what they learn, and (6) in need of adult interaction and mentoring.

**Chapter 4: Getting Started — Creating a Mandate** provides schools with a process for establishing a grassroots mandate for recasting the 12<sup>th</sup> grade experience. An exploration committee is charged to assess the current status of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade program, create buy-in for change, and develop a plan of action.

**Chapter 5: Making It Happen — Implementing Change** outlines the steps a school can take to begin planning and implementing new initiatives that respond to the areas of need identified by the exploration committee's work. A steering committee is charged to articulate a mission statement, research and design program(s), and set goals for new initiatives.

**Chapter 6: Infusing Relevance Through Personalization** discusses the value of personalization in promoting engagement in the senior year. A powerful vehicle for infusing relevance in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade is to personalize the learning by providing opportunities for self-exploration: career interests, personal goals, learning styles, individual interests, core beliefs, etc.

**Chapter 7: Building Relationships Through Personalization** emphasizes the efficacy of creating a personalized learning environment by implementing advisement programs and/or other small learning communities that can provide needed mentoring and guidance for 12<sup>th</sup> graders in this critical year of transition. A process for creating an advisory program for seniors is described in detail.

**Chapter 8: Personal Skill Development** makes the case that beyond rigorous academics, 12<sup>th</sup> graders need to develop personal skills. A student-directed guidance plan is featured in which 12<sup>th</sup> graders identify topics of interest that are then addressed during the year. The program culminates with a Senior Institute, a day of workshops, speakers, and activities.

**Chapter 9: Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum and Instruction** offers numerous strategies for bringing rigor and relevance to the curriculum. Models for advanced study, small learning communities, independent study, and alternative methods for assessment, such as portfolios and presentations of learning, are included in this chapter.

**Chapter 10: Learning in Real-World Settings** explores the need for 12<sup>th</sup> graders to immerse themselves in the dynamic world of experiential learning where they can pursue topics of personal interest and interact with adult mentors. Models for senior project experiences are examined. A variety of strategies for structuring project-based learning are included.

**Chapter 11: Engagement Through Service Learning** illustrates how service learning experiences can foster engagement among 12<sup>th</sup> graders as students both give back to the community and enrich their academic learning. The components of an effective service learning program are defined and models of best practices are shared.

**Chapter 12: Engagement Through Leadership** demonstrates how 12<sup>th</sup> graders must be given opportunities for substantive leadership roles within the school and beyond. Seniors are ready to assume mentoring roles to younger students and should have access to quality leadership training. The Senior Instructional Leadership Corps and other model programs are described in detail.

**Chapter 13: Professional Development** discusses the importance of supporting 12<sup>th</sup> grade programs with strong professional development. Giving teachers the opportunity to hone their instructional skills is one of the best ways to increase student learning. Other key characteristics of effective professional development are discussed, and topics for professional development are identified.

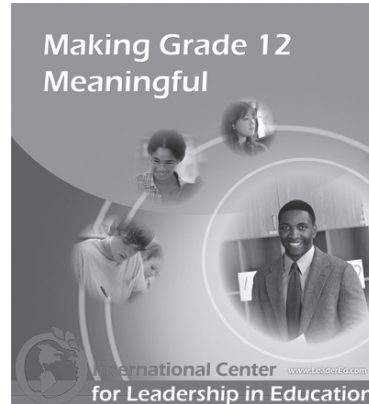
**Chapter 14: Program Assessment** emphasizes the importance of regular assessment of new programs and student progress. Schools need to collect and analyze data from a variety of sources that go beyond the traditional local and state instruments. Deliberate efforts must be made to use the data to improve programs in a timely fashion to assure enduring reform and greater student achievement.

# Making Grade 12 Meaningful Order Form

## Making Grade 12 Meaningful

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