

SCHOOL LEADERS' QUICK GUIDE

# PLANNING FOR A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



WE *are* TEACHERS

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# Dear Educators,

Great schools don't just happen. It takes a lot of smart planning and decision-making along the way. As a school administrator or educator, you know that excellence (and teacher and student engagement and well-being) can rest on things as large as architecture and sustainable design and as small as a sturdy pencil sharpener that actually works. In your position, you may very well be responsible for influencing both.

If your school's infrastructure, equipment and supplies are not contributing mightily to your school's success, now may be the time to give your planning and purchasing strategies a boost with creative new ideas.

By raising funds locally, devising new strategies for keeping departments on the same team when it comes to budgeting, and supplying teachers with the tools they actually crave for their classrooms (to name just a few of the topics included in these pages), you can enjoy the deep satisfaction of leading your schools to run more smoothly and produce greater educational attainment for students.

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# CREATING THE SCHOOL YOU WANT: SMART PLANNING



If you're lucky enough to be opening a brand-new school building or renovating an older one, you'll probably find that this process can be just as exciting as it is overwhelming. As an administrator, you may not be an expert in developing detailed architectural plans or physically constructing a building, but you are an expert in educating students. Since your students' interests are at the center of everything you do, by sharing your vision with the designers of your new space and being actively engaged in the many layers of decisions, you can be a major player in the creation of a positive learning environ-

ment for your students.

Here's a snapshot of three school transformations plus advice from principals about advocating for kids in the process.

### **Rebuilding From the Ground Up**

During the four years it took to plan, demolish and rebuild Wyncote Elementary School in Pennsylvania, Crystal Clark, the school's principal for 12 years, said she was thoughtful about decisions—from layout and technology to furniture and decor—to make sure everyone was considering what was best for the students. In the fall of 2015, Wyncote opened a new



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80,000-square-foot building, replacing the old structure, which was built in 1940 and in need of updates.

“We wanted a space to make us competitive in the 21st century, with all the technology and curriculum needs,” said Clark. “We didn’t have room in the infrastructure for the things we needed to do and to be fully inclusive of students with varying needs.”

The new school features an elevator and lift for students with physical disabilities. Chalkboards are gone. Now every room has smart technology and an interactive display unit.

Even though some people pushed for a three-story building to preserve more outside green space, Clark felt safety was paramount and quick evacuation of young children would be easier in a two-story school. There are now four stairwells in the two-level building instead of one, and the upper grades are upstairs while the lower grades are on the first floor.

Clark mentioned to the architects that she liked the look of a house with columns across the street from the school. They took that idea and incorporated columns inside the building to set apart areas for small-team learning communities by grade in the new building.

When Clark was presented with swatches of gray and burgundy, she suggested blue and gold to match the colors of the high school and build community spirit.

To furnish the classrooms, Clark invited teachers and staff to be part of a furniture committee that combed through catalogs and visited furniture warehouses. Instead of four-legged desks and chairs, the school went with ergonomically designed L-shaped furniture that was more comfortable and flexible. No more need for tennis balls on the bottom of chair legs to keep

the noise down.

Excitement grew through the process as Clark shared photos with the community at various stages of construction. While the old building had its charm, it was also dark and drab, said Clark. Now, everyone is priding in the new facility. “When you walk in, it’s such a grand kind of feeling. I think students are really getting themselves ready to learn.”

### The 1970s Are Over

Built in 1973, Kaiser Elementary was an Open Concept School—a popular model at that time. In 2012, Denver voters passed a bond to fund renovations, including plans to enclose classrooms and build real walls at Kaiser. Principal Elinor Roller attended practically every planning meeting beginning in the fall of 2014 and leading up to the 10-week renovation that took

greater collaboration, which teachers loved, it also created issues with acoustics. The walls have helped contain the noise and allow kids to work in groups and move around without disturbing other classes, she said.

As the architects designed the new space, Roller pushed for interior doors between the same-grade-level classrooms so there could continue to be back-and-forth. She also envisioned secured common learning spaces outside of classrooms where small groups can gather.

Lighting enhances learning, but the new configuration at Kaiser meant there weren’t many windows in the classrooms. The answer, said Roller: Install solar cubes in the roof to give natural, defused light.

Coat racks were moved from the hallway to inside the classroom so students could grab materials from their backpacks

told them. New casework was ordered, but with different layouts to accommodate the tools that teachers are more apt to use. With little effort, the school increased its storage by 50 percent, she said.

To furnish the classroom, Roller worked with teachers’ preferences to purchase a combination of chairs, desks and tables. To add some color—as well as a “fun and funky” touch to the common areas—the school bought bright vinyl beanbag chairs.

In the old building, teachers could post students’ work easily on the movable walls. In the newly renovated building, Roller ordered yards of tack strip to install in the hallways and classrooms for displays.

As designers referred to the size of rooms, Roller and her staff physically measured the layout to know how the space would work. That led them to realize she wanted to deviate from the first set of plans proposed: She wanted fewer, larger classrooms rather than more numerous smaller ones. Her advice to fellow administrators: “Don’t be intimidated. We aren’t trained in construction, but we know about kids and learning.”

### Inventing the Future

Construction is just beginning at a new school building that will serve the broad needs of students, from babies through doctorate level. Portland Public Schools in Oregon is partnering with Concordia University to construct a new facility for Faubion Elementary School, located just steps from the campus of the private university. With \$33 million from the district and \$15 million pledged from Concordia, the public-private collaboration is underway with a target date for the new facility to open in 2017.

When principal LaShawn Lee first started at Faubion eight years ago, she saw potential in inviting the graduate



PHOTO CREDIT: KAISER ELEMENTARY, DENVER CO

“We aren’t trained in construction, but we know about kids and learning.”

place last summer.

“We had a whole community process where we talked about our priorities for the building—the musts, the ‘like to haves’ and what would be fun if we could afford it,” said Roller, who has been the school’s leader for eight years.

While the old layout led to

without having to leave the supervision of the teacher.

The contractors were about to replace the cabinets with an updated version of the original ones from the ’70s, but Roller noted there was no longer need for so many drawers for paper. “We don’t teach that way anymore and store paper,” Roller

CREATING THE SCHOOL YOU WANT: **SMART PLANNING**

students from Concordia to work in her classrooms. The school is among the poorest in the district, with about 80 percent of its students living in poverty, 20 percent homeless and 20 percent who are English-language learners. After bringing in college students to be reading buddies, play games with children at recess and student-teach, the school began to flourish.

new building can accommodate 850 kids and 340 graduate students. Rather than keeping Concordia students separate from the younger students, she pushed to have the spaces intertwined so her students could observe and envision themselves as college students.

Lee advocated for lots of light, open space, healthy ventilation and an efficient intercom system. She wants



**“The days of sitting behind a desk are a thing of the past”**

Enrichment and arts programs were added. Enrollment grew from 200 to 530 in four years.

Principal Lee envisioned a school that was the “heartbeat of the community,” with activities and services to benefit the whole child and their families—and in this case including higher education. Leveraging their resources together, the district and college will share space in the new facility, generally with kids attending during the day and doctorate education students entering after 5 p.m., since many of them are professional educators during the day. The school will offer wraparound services, such as a health-and-wellness center (complete with a dental chair) and food pantry.

With construction design, Lee describes how she and the parents have their “fingerprints all over the blueprints.” The

furniture that is movable so that students can form groups and collaborate. “The days of sitting behind a desk are a thing of the past,” said Lee, who hopes the school will have standing and adjustable desks.

Parents suggested a private shower be located near the nurse’s office to serve the homeless students. At the mini-grocery store, where some families buy food and others obtain it with assistance, the community asked for one door rather than two so it wouldn’t be obvious who was getting free groceries.

The community also asked for one main school door for everyone to enter rather than two. Those seemingly little things help unite the school and foster a sense of dignity among the diverse population, said Lee. “You have to make sure your voice is heard.” ■



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# 10 SURPRISING FUNDING STRATEGIES FOR YOUR SCHOOL



ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES

Schools have tight budgets, and administrators are looking for creative ways to bring in funding from outside sources. While nickel-and-dime fundraising, such as bake sales, candy sales and car washes, may work for the PTO to bring in a little extra cash, many schools and districts are becoming more serious about raising outside money for bigger-scale initiatives, says Stanley Levenson, author of *The Essential Fundraising Guide for K-12 Schools*. Here are some smart strategies to consider as you look for big-bucks funding for your school:

## 1 Think local.

Schools often assume the big money is at the federal level, but that kind of money is often set and earmarked in advance. When you have your own ini-

**“The big dollars are in your own backyard. You just have to find them.”**

tiative, think local. Instead, let people in your community know what you need and how they can help. “The big dollars are in your own backyard. You just have to find them,” says Joe Mizereck, a former teacher and founder of GrantAlert.com. “The closer you can get to your home base—individuals, corporations and foundations in your community who probably have

kids going to your school—that’s where you need to focus your attention. They know who you are.”

## 2 Establish a foundation.

Colleges and universities have long used this avenue to raise money, and increasingly K-12 schools of all sizes are also trying this approach with success, says Levenson. Creating a foundation for your school takes some time and strategic planning in the beginning, but the long-term payoff can be big.

## 3 Honor your donors.

While some donors prefer to be anonymous, there are many who like the idea of seeing their names in lights. “Naming rights are good for tapping into an individual, a corporation or a foundation

for a quick infusion of cash to a school or district,” suggests Levenson, who cautions against giving naming rights forever. “Depending on how much money is offered, it is recommended that 10 to 15 years would be sufficient, and then new negotiations take place.”

## 4 Court those with connections.

Every parent, grandparent or alumni is a potential major donor to a school or district. Levenson advises involving these people in the activities of your school, leadership opportunities, and asking for their input. “Remember, the small donor of today can become the big donor of tomorrow,” says Levenson.

## 5 Team up with your community.

Depending on what grant you are seeking, look to the community for partners in your application. Ask a nonprofit or the chamber of commerce to jointly commit to a project to leverage support. “More and more, you are dealing with problems that are really complex and require complex solutions,” says Mizereck. “If you can show a collaborative effort, you will probably be more warmly welcomed in your consideration for a grant. Grantmakers understand you can’t do it alone. They are looking for people who get it and are reaching out.”

## 6 Get to know your local foundations.

Businesses, organizations and individuals have formed hundreds of foundations across the country. They are set up to serve the needs of their local communities, and some award mini-grants to teachers, notes Levenson. Before applying for a large grant for which the com-

## 10 SURPRISING FUNDING STRATEGIES FOR YOUR SCHOOL



“The biggest challenge for a lot of the opportunities that come is the time frame ... you’ve got to be ready.”

petition is stiff, consider ones under \$5,000. “It’s helpful to start small and graduate to bigger grant opportunities as you gain experience and success,” says Levenson.

### **7 Search for online grant opportunities.**

It can be overwhelming to sort through all the grant opportunities and know where to put your limited energy. Have your staff check out GrantsAlert.com, which provides free information on grants along with details about eligibility and deadlines. “Teachers are becoming savvy and smart about their search methods and their ability to put their finger on timely and accurate information,” says Mizereck. “There is an attitude of ‘Let’s roll our sleeves up and do what we can to keep things going strong.’”

### **8 Crowd source.**

List a project on Kickstarter or DonorsChoose.org and make your pitch for a particular project or item needed at your school. Encourage students and parents to promote the fundraising through social media. Ask them to share the request with friends and followers. Include photos and videos to promote the campaign.

### **9 Do your homework.**

Before you start looking for outside funding, collect basic information about your school such as the percentage of kids on free or reduced lunch. “The biggest challenge for a lot of the opportunities that come is the time frame ... you’ve got to be ready,” says Mizereck, noting that the application period may be as short as 30 days. “Know your program, know your school, know your community

and your numbers—data is so very important.”

### **10 Look for the right match.**

“Don’t chase dollars,” advises Mizereck. “It’s about finding a program that matches what you need.” If you can develop a good relationship with a funder that shares a common interest, they may stick with you for several years and renew their commitment. Mizereck advocates quality over quantity. Administrators and teachers can build loyalty with a handful of donors that they listen to and who are really invested in the school’s mission. Also, it’s important to be genuine, focused and passionate in your message, in order to find a partner that will be engaged and with whom you can work together to make a difference. ■

## Fundraising Tips

### **Tell good, true stories.**

Many potential donors will be inspired to give only when they care how your story ends. Your cause is worthy when your story’s characters (students, teachers, the community) really matter to your listeners.

### **Thank donors promptly and often**

Whether they are private donors or people who work for agencies or foundations a good thank-you includes gratitude, accountability and evidence that their gifts are going to good use.

### **Enlist your donors as fundraisers or ambassadors.**

People who have already put their money where their mouth is make the most compelling spokespeople for your cause. Plus, by advocating for you to others, your donors reinforce their own passion and commitment. (Teachers are their own best students.)

### **Remember that you are doing your donors a favor.**

Really? Yes. If you are giving someone the chance to make the kind of difference they are interested in making, then reaching out for their support is actually a positive thing for both of you—a proverbial win-win. And fundraising is much more fun with that attitude.

# HOW 3 DISTRICTS STAY ON BUDGET AND GIVE KIDS WHAT THEY NEED



**W**e wanted to find out what works when it comes to providing our classrooms with the things they need to succeed while still keeping finances on track, so we turned to some top administrators from three districts across the country for their advice. They shared their biggest challenges, best practices and successful strategies.



**MARCIE ABRAMSON**  
Director of Procurement  
Berkeley County SD,  
Moncks Corner, SC  
34,000 students

## What's the primary challenge with procurement?

"The biggest issue for procurement is to have that balance between satisfying all the required laws and regulations and providing the best solution. We are trying to get training out there so they

have the procurement process in the forefront of their minds when they go to spend their dollars. At our summer leadership meeting with principals, I taught a breakout session on procurement. We do bookkeeper training. Our maintenance and facility staff have a safety meeting and I was invited to present at that. I give them an overview of my requirements so they have a better understanding of the 'why.' I tell them all the time: 'I promise, I don't make these rules ... it's what the law requires when you are spending this much money; this is what I have to do.'"

## What's the best approach when there really isn't enough funding?

"We attacked that when we went through the recession. Our goal was not to affect the classroom. We looked for ways to make sure we did everything we could so nothing was taken away from the classroom, even though our per pupil expenditures had been significantly decreased."

"We partnered with other school districts and developed cooperative purchasing for commonly used commodities so we could leverage a stronger buying power. We were able to

get better pricing on furniture, P.E. and athletic equipment, instructional supplies, science supplies, and playground equipment. Also, we evaluated our copier leases. We got rid of machines or replaced them with faster or more efficient machines. It's something you take for granted, but it was a huge cost saving. Finally, we optimized our procurement card program. By moving more spending to the card, it helped reduce paperwork, streamlined the process and improved our rebate incentives."

## What do you wish someone had told you early on?

"Procurement works under finance. For a long time, I had the mind-set that I didn't set the budget so if someone went over budget, I'd tell them they need to find more money or they can't do it. Over the years, I recognized that I'm really a vital piece of the budget process and I stay informed."

## What is the biggest challenge you face now?

"We are seeing an unprecedented economic growth, and that means our enrollment is increasing quickly. We are working

fervently to develop a strategic plan to keep up with the demands we know are coming. It will involve construction and trying to develop strategic sourcing to have the improvements in place."

## Your best professional advice?

"Take advantage of education and training through your state and national association. I work with my peers in a group that meets quarterly to share ideas and learn from one another. Out of that group, I've developed relationships and found some strong mentors with experience and knowledge who have helped me."

## How has the way you worked with school administrators changed over the years?

"I take the opportunity to work one-on-one. For example, when we were hiring architects and contractors to build a new school, it was an opportunity to work with board members and administrators. I laid a foundation and was able to build on that. When you deal with people, be positive so they continue to keep you involved."

## HOW 3 DISTRICTS STAY ON BUDGET



**JOHN GAHAN:**  
Assistant Superintendent and CFO,  
Pewaukee SD, WI  
2,800 students

### What strategies have you used to stretch your district's dollars?

"We made a commitment to infrastructure within our district. By doing several improvements, we have been able to reduce our operating costs and free up more resources to meet student needs. In our combined high school-middle school we've taken out the old mechanical boiler system and gone to heat-recovery units. We dropped our consumption of energy by 25 percent. Also, we use data to track the types of repairs and fixes we need to make and then allocate the staff appropriately to reduce time to complete those tickets. For example, through data tracking we found our custodial staff spends a great deal of time unjamming lockers. We changed to locks for each individual locker and greatly reduced staff demands."

### What do you do about competition between divisions?

"Using the data from student achievement, our administrative team can develop a budget with priorities by building. Then we tie them to the strategic plan and, as a group, we can work together to figure out where we do or don't have the resources to meet all the needs. We then target the resources for the greatest impact. You have eliminated those silos."

### What do you wish someone had told you early on?

"Having administrators who are going to be executing the strategic plan at the table to collaborate about the best way to allocate resources is invaluable. Start by giving them the big picture of resources, identify strategic areas of where they need to target them, and then work as a team to make the two match."

### What are your top tips for new superintendents?

"Communication is always the key. In the finance area, there are a lot of formulas and complex calculations that determine the amount of resources. Being able to talk in layman's terms, so everyone can understand it, is one of the skills that I think is critical to success. We have created FAQ pages on our website. We track the calls that we get to determine the questions with the highest frequency and then put the answers out there."

### Has the way you work with building leaders changed over time?

"The level of collaboration needed has changed. Twenty-five years ago, it was more about focusing on the numbers and making budgets balance. Now you have to become more of a practitioner of the entire process. I have a much greater perspective about what is happening in the classroom and how services are delivered. Our entire senior leadership team participates in what we call 'learning walks' in our buildings once a week. The principal gives us a focus and says 'Here's what's happening in these 10 classrooms today. Let's go out and see what this looks like.' So we spend about a half hour in the classroom and then we debrief with the principal and give feedback. It's given me a much better perspective about what's happening and what challenges are faced every day."



**KRISTY D. VARDA:**  
Purchasing Supervisor  
Frederick County Public Schools  
Winchester, VA  
13,000 students

### What is the hardest challenge you face in your job?

"Breaking through the mentality that 'This is the way it's always been done.' As technology improves, we are becoming much more transparent, so it's tantamount that all the T's are crossed so we can ensure the public we are doing the right thing. We are implementing a new financial-management system that will change the way a lot of our businesses processes happen. I plan to create a procurement manual that goes out to end users and lists specifically, 'If this is the situation, then go to this memorandum.' It will explain step-by-step what to do."

### What are your favorite strategies for stretching district dollars?

"Recently, when one contract was up for renewal for office supplies, I had the current vendors send lists of the top 100 items we ordered and reached out to two other cooperatives for pricing and was able to save some money. On another contract for instructional supplies, I reached out to the local procurement community and with discounts and rebates saved our district about \$20,000 a year. With custodial supplies, rather than getting quotes for buying one item at a time, I worked with departments to place orders for larger volume discounts

for overall savings. It's looking at the big picture for comprehensive savings versus that individual item."

### Is there competition between different divisions for resources?

"Absolutely. In the middle of budget season, there is a battle for funding—particularly when you are building new schools. The biggest thing that needs to happen is, when you get an email from one person about something that affects another department, include the other department in the communication. And every time they take them off the email, add them back to it. Make sure everyone who is affected stays in the loop."

### If you could travel back in time, what advice would you give yourself?

"Communication between departments needs to be established early and ongoing. You need to have the support of the whole senior management team. You can't have one superintendent doing what they want and another dealing with the aftermath. They all have to be on the same page. They all need to work together and those department heads need to talk to one another."

### What are your top tips for someone who is new to a position like yours?

"The key is to stay positive. You can't let yourself get discouraged. Come in with realistic expectations. Be flexible as much as you can, and still stay in compliance. Sometimes taking a hard line isn't necessarily the right way to do it. It can really backfire. Sometimes you need to find a workaround to get back to where you want to be—it might be in the best interest of everyone to keep the relationship peaceful and productive as well." ■

# THE NEW SCHOOL SUPPLY LIST: 21 CLASSROOM ESSENTIALS



**K**now which supplies teachers really want for their classrooms? Hint: It's not chalk and reams of paper anymore! We asked teachers to share their most-wanted school supplies, favorite brands and the essentials they can't live without, and here's what they said:

## 1 Ticonderoga #2 Pencils

All hail the yellow, constantly disappearing, always needed, essential writing tool. No matter the classroom's pencil policy, teachers and students will go through boxes of these. WeAreTeachers members profess that the Ticonderoga #2's are the ones that last the longest and hold up best in the sharpener. In the wise words of Marybeth F., "Stay away from dollar-store pencils!"



## 2 Pencil sharpener - electric

Speaking of sharpeners, teachers seem to be sharply divided on the electric vs. manual debate. Jane D. says, "I cannot tell you how many electric pencil sharpeners I have blown through. I have paid as much as \$120 for one. It wasn't the best one either! The X-Acto School Pro Heavy-Duty electric sharpener is the best one I have found ... not expensive!"



## 3 Pencil sharpener - manual

April M. is team manual pencil sharpener. "I haven't been pleased with electric pencil sharpeners in the past. Get a heavy duty crank one!" This Bostitch model is affordable and teachers say it holds up to heavy use.

## 4 Cap erasers

Extend the life of those precious pencils by giving your teachers a mass supply of serviceable pink cap erasers. Of course, all pencil privileges are revoked for any student who uses a cap as missile device or tiny drinking cup.

## 5 Date stamp

"But I turned it on time, I swear!" Help teachers preclude due-date debates with older students (and, ahem, their parents) with a handy date stamp to track assignment deliveries.

## 6 Bulletin board-friendly staple remover

Jody H. recommends, "You want a good staple remover. Put your name on it and hide it!" This long version works for stapled papers and bulletin boards alike, and answers our S.O.N. (Save Our Nails) call. Also, it costs less than two bucks.



## 7 Electric stapler

Your offices or teacher workrooms may have an industrial electric stapler, but teachers and students will enjoy the ease of having this battery-operated personal electric stapler conveniently located in their classrooms.



## 8 Student scissors

Not all scissors are created equal. Annie states that for student scissors, "They HAVE to be Fiskars."

## 9 Individual white boards

"I can't live without individual dry-erase lapboards for the kids," says Denise N. These lined on one side, plain on the other boards are great for students' printing practice, class participation and to save a few trees—and a few dollars on paper.

THE NEW SCHOOL SUPPLY LIST: 21 CLASSROOM ESSENTIALS

**10 Dry-erase markers**

In the tradition of Laura Numeroff and Felicia Bonds' classic books, if you give a student a dry-erase lapboard, he's going to need a dry-erase marker to write with. Helena B. says, "Stay away from cheap dry-erase markers. Expo brand is the best."

**11 Crayons**

Many of our teacher respondents echo the words of Jennifer M.: "Crayola crayons are worth the extra money." Some WeAreTeachers members like to give students their own boxes, others prefer the class-pack for easy replacement of individual crayons.

**12 Colored pencil alternative**

Another popular Crayola product is the Twistables colored pencils. Classroom veterans say the colors are more vibrant, they last longer and their self-sharpening properties keep them from jamming pencil sharpeners like traditional colored pencils.



**13 Markers**

If we could market a colored marker that does not dry out when students leave the caps off, we would be gazillionaires. Until then, Catherine H. says, "Mr. Sketch markers have the best color and don't dry out when you use them."

**14 Red pens**

Not only can teachers use red pens for grading student work, they can also hand them out to students for in-class correcting.

**15 Sharpies**

Forget diamonds! Sharpie fine-tip markers in assorted colors are teachers' best friends.

**16 Composition books**

"Get students used to using composition books early rather than spirals. Clothing, space and fingers are saved by doing this, and they will be used to it when they are required to have them in middle and high school," says Amanda B.

**17 Large labels**

From cubby and desk name plates to designating bookshelf subjects and classroom centers, teachers find loads of uses for big beautiful labels in the classroom.



**18 Sticky notes**

Daisy D. recommends buying "Sticky notes. Lots and lots of sticky notes—all sizes and colors. My coworkers make fun of me, but when kids give them to me as gifts, nothing makes me happier. They are all over my classroom!"

**19 Clipboard**

Tom Hanks had Wilson. Teachers have their clipboards, and they would be adrift without them. Tip: Purchase bright colors, so teachers can easily find them under messy desks and lecterns.

**20 Lesson planner**

Middle and high school teachers say that even in this digital age, their lifelines for keeping organized are their multi-period lesson planner books.

**21 Grade book**

Pen and pencil recording is still the go-to grading system of many educators we know. For them, leatherette-bound grade recording books still make the grade. ■





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# RESOURCES FOR PLANNING & PURCHASING

Take advantage of these great resources for maximizing your planning and procurement.

## On-demand Webinar: Brain-Friendly, Beautiful Classrooms



Free! Author and second grade teacher Erin Klein offers a [dynamic presentation](#) (with data and helpful slides) on how to embed technology, create spaces that promote learning, and organize classrooms to increase engagement.

## Article: How (and How Not) to Get Good Deals on Classroom Supplies

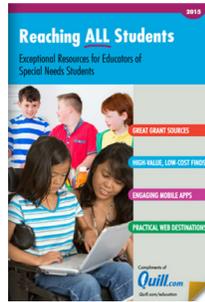


[Sound advice](#) on making classroom dollars do more when it comes to school supplies.

## Resources: Teacher Grants, Contests & Awards

From back-to-school supplies grants to support for the arts and science education, check out our [list of the latest funding opportunities](#) for the classroom.

## eBook: Complete Resource Guide for Teachers of Special-Needs Students



Grant resources, low-cost teaching tools, apps and a directory of organizations that can help. [Reaching All Students](#) will set up your teachers for success.

## The New Essential Item: Chromebooks for Education, starting at \$229.99. A new type of computer with everything built in. Ideal for multiple users.



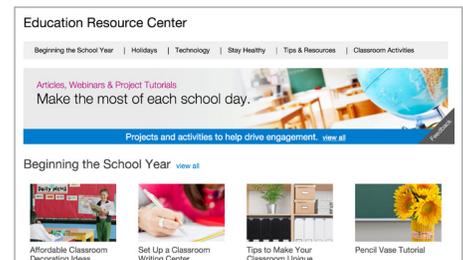
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