



BREAKAWAY LEARNERS

Strategies for Post-Secondary Success with At-Risk Students

Karen Gross

This powerful book explores how institutions of higher education can successfully serve “breakaway” students—first-generation, low-income students who are trying to break away from the past in order to create a more secure future. The gap between low-SES and high-SES students persists as efforts to close it have not met with great success. In this provocative book, Gross offers a new approach to addressing inequities by focusing on students who have succeeded despite struggling with the impacts of poverty and trauma. Gross draws on her experience as a college president to outline practical steps that post-secondary institutions can take to create structures of support and opportunity that build reciprocal trust. Students must trust their institutions and professors, professors must trust their students, and eventually students must learn to trust themselves.

Book Features:

- Addresses flagging efforts to improve the educational progress of low-income students.
- Focuses on the institutions that serve students as opposed to efforts to fix failing students.
- Provides concrete strategies and describes their actual impact on individuals and institutions.
- Offers strategies that can be replicated and scaled and can be adapted to the K–12 educational landscape.
- Includes images, some of which were created by a breakaway learner.

Karen Gross is a Washington, DC–based advisor and consultant to non-profit schools, organizations, and governments. She was president of Southern Vermont College and senior policy advisor to the United States Department of Education. She is the author of a children’s book series, *Lady Lucy’s Quest*.

“A must-read for academics, policymakers, teachers, social service providers, police chiefs, and government officials.”

—**Martha Kanter**, former under secretary, U.S. Department of Education

“We need to pay attention to what Karen Gross says. Read this book, then share it.”

—**Mark Huddleston**, president, University of New Hampshire

“Karen Gross offers practical ideas based on her research and, more importantly, on her substantial leadership in assisting our nation’s colleges and universities serving at-risk students.”

—**Marybeth Gasman**, University of Pennsylvania

“It takes courage and tremendous effort to offer both a new paradigm and a new educational concept: “elasticity.” The author deserves enormous credit for rocking the proverbial boat.”

—**Irwin Adler**, public school principal

April 2017 / 240 pp. / Paper, \$30.95 / 978-08077-5842-7



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