“This book studies what math students do, how they do it, and what support they need to disengage themselves from our national caste system as it manifests itself through educational inequality.” —From the Foreword by Bob Moses

“Building Mathematics Learning Communities is an insightful and informative account of what is required to raise the math performance of students, not only in urban high schools, but in all high schools. Walker provides a blueprint for changing the way urban students should be served in mathematics classrooms and beyond, and offers explicit perspectives and strategies for closing the achievement gap. This is a must-read for the mathematics education community.” —Lee V. Stiff, professor, mathematics education, North Carolina State University; past president, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

“This volume provides insights into the role of peer interactions in the mathematics learning process. The analysis describes with a sense of purpose a topic that is typically overlooked in discussions of mathematics reform. The case study is an important contribution to the urban mathematics education literature.” —William F. Tate, Edward Mallinckrodt Distinguished University Professor in Arts & Sciences, Washington University in St. Louis

Drawing on the perceptions, behaviors, and experiences of urban high school students—both high and low achievers—this timely book demonstrates ways to successfully engage youth in learning mathematics. The author presents a “potential” model rather than a “deficit” model, complete with teaching strategies and best practices for teaching mathematics in innovative and relevant ways. This resource offers practical insights for pre- and inservice teachers and administrators on facilitating positive interactions, engagement, and achievement in mathematics, particularly with Black and Latino/a students. It also examines societal perceptions of urban students and how these affect teaching and learning, policies, and mathematics outcomes.

Based on extensive research in urban high schools, the author identifies three key principles that must be understood for teachers and students to build strong mathematics communities:

- Urban students want to be a part of academically challenging environments.
- Teachers and administrators can inadvertently create obstacles that thwart the mathematics potential of students.
- Educators can build on existing student networks to create collaborative and non-hierarchical communities that support mathematics achievement.

Erica N. Walker is Associate Professor of Mathematics Education at Teachers College, Columbia University.


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