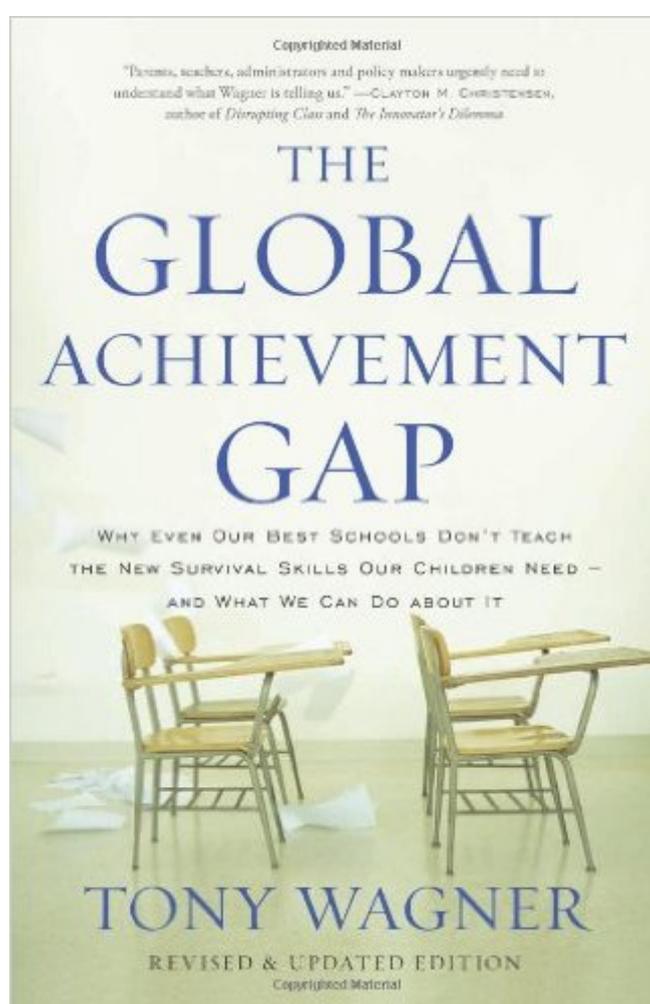


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# The Global Achievement Gap: Why Even Our Best Schools Don't Teach The New Survival Skills Our Children Need—and What We Can Do About It



## Synopsis

In *The Global Achievement Gap*, education expert Tony Wagner situates our school problems in the larger context of the demands of the global knowledge economy. He illustrates that even in our best schools, we don't teach or test the skills that matter most for the twenty-first century. Uncovering what motivates today's generation to excel in school and the workplace, Wagner explores new models of schools that are inspiring students to solve tough problems and communicate at high levels. An education manifesto for the 21st century, *The Global Achievement Gap* is a must-read for anyone interested in seeing our young people achieve their full potential, while contributing to a strong economy and vibrant democracy. This updated edition includes a new chapter discussing changes in education since the 2008 financial crisis, ethics in education, and recent initiatives such as the Department of Education's Race to the Top program and implementation of the Common Core.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*The Global Achievement Gap* by Tony Wagner is another in a series of recent books that present a critical view of American education. What Wagner and others decry is the failure of schools to teach what he calls "survival skills," namely such things as critical thinking, problem solving and teamwork. Wagner is described on the back cover of the book as an "Expert in Residence at Harvard University's Innovation Lab." He claims that there are two achievement gaps in our education systems. The first is the gap between the quality of schooling that most middle-class

students get and the quality available to poor and minority children. The second gap, and the one that is the primary focus of the book, is the global gap between even what our best schools are teaching and testing and what all students need to succeed as workers, learners and citizens in today's global knowledge economy. Wagner posits seven "survival skills" that he says are necessary. These include: 1. Critical thinking and problem solving 2. Collaboration across networks 3. Agility and adaptability 4. Initiative and entrepreneurship 5. Effective oral and written communication 6. Accessing and analyzing information 7. Curiosity and imagination. He discusses these shortcomings in detail and gives many examples. He states that there is an overemphasis on testing which leads teachers to teach to the test. Another problem is that the training future teachers get in education schools is not adequate to what is needed. This book is very valuable for parents, students and anyone interested in education "both in the United States and globally. It not only provides specific examples, it also gives sources and organizations that you can contact.

First published in 2008, this edition contains updates from 2010 and 2014, which I found most interesting. After identifying seven survival skills all students must know to be successful participants in the workplace and community and giving examples of good schools, Tony Wagner relates what has happened in our schools since. Not much. Not enough. Praises for the school initiatives which strive to keep up with the changing times, but leaving our public schools in the dust. Good things are happening, but not enough. This book is insightful, and easy to read, for anyone who wants to better understand where the gaps currently exist in our education system, and what still needs to be done.

I love how this book addresses the importance of critical thinking, communication, creativity, innovation to name a few in education. Standardized testing is out of control and this Harvard man hits the nail on the head about what is wrong with schools.

I have gained so much from this book. Every person in the education field should read this book. Yet, I highly recommend others who aren't in the education field to read this book as well. I can't wait to implement what I learned into my classroom.

The author states that critical thinking skills are not being taught in government schools, but he is an example of one who doesn't apply such to the topic of education in its entirety. It reminds me of the efforts to reform the old soviet models where government had one-size-fits-all statism in every

aspect of life..... The author omitted- Family values, pop culture that became law including parental control and discipline of children, and no reference to the outstanding model becoming a norm among responsible parents - homeschooling. Homeschooled children do not have the same problems, as documented in many places, including <http://www.nheri.org/research/research-facts-on-homeschooling.html>. The homeschooled kids I know all love learning, have an excitement about learning skills, make high marks on SAT tests, and interact regularly with other children also being homeschooled, along with organizations in sports and hobbies, including dance troupes, musical groups, etc.... The giant difference is parents. Teachers are caught between government, top-down local bureaucracies, and rules from above....The teachers who are passionate about learning soon burn out and leave.

We have a problem with our public education system. Not only does this book analyze the problem, it also provides ideas for solutions including examples of schools doing quality work.

Excellent insight from an education professional on the problems with Americas failing schools. This an easy read and stimulates a desire to find a fix to this problem.

I've already read his book *Creating Innovators* and just started to read this one and I love reading this one also

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