



Education and the Commercial Mindset

By Samuel E. Abrams

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The movement to privatize K–12 education is stronger than ever. Samuel Abrams examines the rise of market forces in public education and reveals how a commercial mindset that sidesteps fundamental challenges has taken over. Nevertheless, public schools should adopt lessons from the business world, such as raising teacher salaries to attract talent.

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Editorial Review

Review

Given the near-complete absence of public information and debate about the stealth effort to privatize public schools, this is the right time for the appearance of [this book]. Samuel E. Abrams, a veteran teacher and administrator, has written an elegant analysis of the workings of market forces in education in his book *Education and the Commercial Mindset*. (Diane Ravitch, *New York Review of Books* 2016-12-08)

In 1962, Raymond Callahan's classic text *Education and the Cult of Efficiency* argued that the goal of efficient operations had become a first-order priority in public education. Callahan's work is now joined by a new definitive account, the brilliant book *Education and the Commercial Mindset* by Samuel E. Abrams.... Abrams has provided a thoughtful, critical, and rigorous explanation of crucially important distinctions that will be invaluable to scholars, policymakers, administrators, and teachers alike. (Megan Tompkins-Stange, *Teachers College Record* 2016-10-18)

In *Education and the Commercial Mindset*, Abrams provides a detailed, informative and insightful account of the rise and fall of the Edison Project as a case study of for-profit schools.... Abrams demonstrates that for-profit schools have no incentives to consider long-term educational or social goals. Obsessed with achievement metrics that might persuade consumers to purchase their product, they often exclude students with cognitive, emotional or behavioral problems. Or with failing grades.... Running schools like businesses won't solve the problem, Abrams makes clear. (Glenn C. Altschuler, *Huffington Post* 2016-06-02)

[An] outstanding book. (Carol Burris, *Washington Post* 2016-05-23)

Grounded in meticulous research in Finland and Sweden as well as the United States, *Education and the Commercial Mindset* is a bracing assessment of contemporary education reform and its consequences. (Pasi Sahlberg, author of *Finnish Lessons*)

Lucid, thorough, and balanced, *Education and the Commercial Mindset* is a riveting analysis of current education policy and how we got here. It will serve as an invaluable resource for policymakers involved in urban school reform. (David Rogers, author of *110 Livingston Street*)

Abrams's book is the best, most insightful and comprehensive analysis of the modern-day efforts to manage schools like businesses. It is beautifully written and documented with careful research. (Diane Ravitch, author of *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*)

Abrams describes eloquently the disconnect between the optimism underlying for-profit companies' efforts to improve urban education and the realities that their schools faced. He also describes the history of KIPP charters, their accomplishments, and the limits of the KIPP model as a strategy for improving the life chances of urban children growing up in low-income families. (Richard J. Murnane, co-author of *Restoring Opportunity*)

Abrams provides a comprehensive and insightful analysis of the private sector's foray into public education. His analysis of Edison Schools, an educational management organization, demonstrates why private sector practices may easily be applied to purchasing scheduling software or contracting bus service, but why they cannot be easily applied to the management of schools where the purpose and process of education is much

more complex and opaque. He also examines charter school organizations, the use of publicly funded vouchers for students to attend private schools in Chile and Sweden, and the application of business practices to schools in Finland. Altogether, Abrams makes a compelling case on the limits of private sector practices in public education. (Russell W. Rumberger, author of *Dropping Out*)

About the Author

Samuel E. Abrams is Director, National Center for the Study of Privatization in Education, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Users Review

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Jill Davis:

In this 21st millennium, people become competitive in every single way. By being competitive right now, people have to do something to make these individuals survive, being in the middle of often the crowded place and notice simply by surrounding. One thing that sometimes many people have underestimated it for a while is reading. Yeah, by reading a book your ability to survive raises then having a chance to remain than other is high. For yourself who want to start reading any book, we give you this particular *Education and the Commercial Mindset* book as beginning and daily reading e-book. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

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