

Hilderbrand Pelzer III

Award-Winning Educator

Most Americans perceive urban education as a war zone—a place where we continue to lose the war on properly educating children. Leading the good fight, Hilderbrand Pelzer III has been a first responder at the ground zero of urban education for over 25 years. A Philadelphia native whose interest in education was piqued by inspiring educator parents, Hilderbrand has served as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, and assistant regional superintendent.

Hilderbrand is a tireless educator with an unwavering commitment to managing urban schools with difficult learning environments, organizing them to reform instruction and strengthen academic performance. During a school visit, Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, lauded Hilderbrand's leadership and extraordinary ability to motivate students, saying, "It's people like Mr. Pelzer who inspire you to want to learn."



Having successfully led large-scale strategic and operational efforts at the school and district levels, Hilderbrand's most notable accomplishment was the creation of a successful school model for children inside Philadelphia's prison system. His leadership challenged the existing assumptions regarding school capacity and capability, and he designed a successful solution-focused model. Hilderbrand was credited with effective change leadership in a large, complex public-sector organization.

His leadership inside Philadelphia's prison system is a model for success and a guide for those facing educational challenges. Hilderbrand's book *Unlocking Potential: Organizing a School Inside a Prison* shares the story behind his strategies used to expand educational opportunities and create a strong educational culture across the prison system. It examines public education from a perspective that is grossly underrepresented in national debates—that of incarcerated students.

Heralded by the Midwest Book Review, the book chronicles Hilderbrand's invaluable insights into urban education and underscores how education both can and should play a prominent role in all institutions that are responsible for children. Hilderbrand's conviction, that all children, even those in prison, deserve a quality education, is inspiring.

Because most people have never considered educating children in prison, his compelling story and courageous action motivates readers and audiences to overcome the daunting array of issues in urban education as well as affect positive change.

Drawing from his successes and failures when leading five different types of urban schools and relaying powerful stories about educating incarcerated children, Hilderbrand offers a unique perspective on urban education. With his heartfelt message on important educational topics, Hilderbrand holds the capacity to inspire, encourage, reassure, and touch the hearts and minds of his audiences.

His work has earned him numerous honors, including the prestigious Queen Smith Award for Commitment to Urban Education in 2008 and the Lindback Award for Distinguished Principal Leadership in 2014. The former, presented by the Council of the Great City Schools, is a national award recognizing significant contributions to urban education by an educator chosen from 68 large, urban public school systems nationwide.

Hilderbrand holds a BS from Hampton University, an MEd from Cheyney University, and a superintendent's letter of eligibility from Saint Joseph's University. He has also completed training through the National Superintendents Academy and the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Large-Scale Improvement program.



Hilderbrand has spoken to numerous organizations on a range of topics, including his signature presentations:

Committing to Urban Education: What do you think we are doing here?

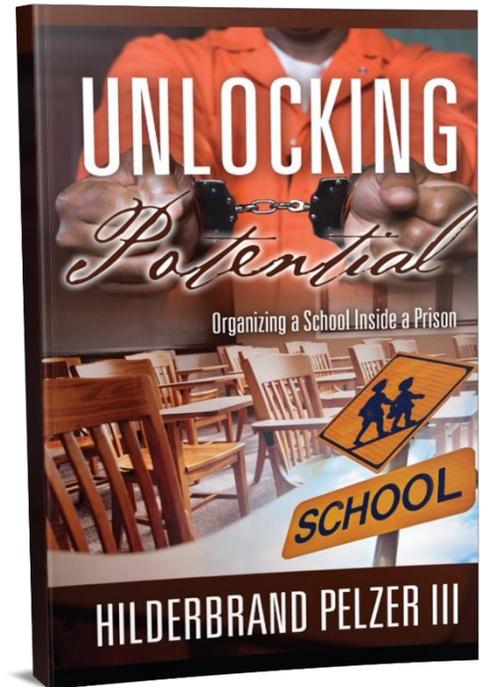
Unlocking Potential: What I learned about education when I conquered the 5th largest county jail system in the United States

Whole School Reform: Why it is hard (but not impossible) to save the life of an unhealthy school?

Transformational Leadership: Would you consider a school that looks and feels like a prison to be a model for success?

Strategy Execution: What do you do when nobody believes in your strategy, but you?

Change Leadership: Preparing new leaders for tomorrow's classrooms and schools (presentation for aspiring teachers, assistant principals, and principals)



Contact Hilderbrand today to speak at your next event

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