**Most Likely to Succeed: Preparing our Kids for the Innovation Era**

**Chapters 6 Teaching, Learning, and Assessing**

On the very last page of Chapter 6, (page 220), Ted Dintersmith and Tony Wagner provide five strategies for teachers who want to improve their practice. I’d like to challenge you to step out of your comfort zone and try one of them.

1. Find and team up with a trusted colleague. That person’s support and objectivity will be invaluable.
2. Review the tests, quizzes, and assignments you give students. Assess them on the basis of how memorization-intensive they are. Could anyone with access to online search have answered the questions? Do these assignments help your students develop critical skills? How?
3. Gauge how much of the “talk time” in your class is you’re lecturing, compared to student-led discussion. Do students have opportunities to teach and learn from one another? To work in teams? It’s easy to have the impression that you’re speaking very little, only to find that you’re talking most of the time. Use your phone to video one of your typical classes, and be rigorous in determining your percentage of “air time.” If it’s more than 20 percent, figure out how to restructure your class.
4. Are students assessed on the questions they ask, as well as the answers they provide?
5. Do students have opportunities to create their own projects, define goals, develop their plan, and communicate their achievements to a broader audience? Can a student afford to make mistakes and fail, and still do well in your course? What percentage of the time they spend is on self-defined projects? If it’s less than 20 percent, try to get there.