

“Readers will be reminded that if we really seek to improve public education, **good intentions are just not good enough.**”

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—PEDRO A. NOGUERA, DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION,
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When School Policies Backfire

How Well-Intended Measures
Can Harm Our Most
Vulnerable Students

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When School Policies Backfire How Well-Intended Measures Can Harm Our Most Vulnerable Students

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FOREWORD BY AMANDA DATNOW

Like medical practitioners, educators share the moral obligation to “first, do no harm.” But as this provocative volume shows, education policies do not always live up to this ideal, especially policies intended to help our most vulnerable students. *When School Policies Backfire* draws our attention to education policies designed to help disadvantaged students that instead had the perverse effect of harming them by exacerbating the very problems they were intended to solve.

The rigorous case studies that make up the book are contributed by a diverse group of scholars with different methodological approaches. The cases address important areas of education reform, including:

- middle school literacy intervention
- school accountability
- minimum grading
- school closures
- school choice
- technology programs

Each case shows how and why a particular program backfired. Taken together, they present a wide-ranging critique of the kinds of policies that compose the cornerstones of current education reform efforts.

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