Contents

Preface  xi
Acknowledgments  xv

1 Welcome to Faircrest High  1

2 Kevin Romoni: A 3.8 Kind of Guy  7

Pleasing Dad: The “Good” Student
Getting Furious: The Competitor
Motivated By Passion: The Engaged Learner

3 Eve Lin: Life as a High School Machine  29

“Going for the Maximum”
Survival of the Fittest
Enjoying the Process

4 Teresa Gomez: “I Want a Future”  50
Dancing as Engagement
“Wanting More”: The Search for Engagement

5 Michelle Spence: Keeping Curiosity Alive?  81
An Alternate Course
“Sacrificing Academics”
Learning by Doing What You Love

6 Roberto Morales: When Values Stand in the Way  117
Diligence
Anxiety
Playing by the Rules
Stress
“Fun”

7 The Predicament of “Doing School”  149
“Doing School”
The Grade Trap
Constraints of the School System
We Get What We Bargain For
“If Only Things Could Be Different”