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Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction: Three High Schools with Three Distinct Ideas about School Success -- 1. Alternative High: Effort Explains School Success -- 2. Fearing Failure at Alternative High -- 3. Comprehensive High: Effort Is Helpful, but Intelligence Limits School Success -- 4. Separate Worlds, Separate Concerns: AP versus College- Prep Track at Comprehensive High -- 5. Elite Charter High: Intelligence plus Initiative Bring School Success -- 6. Competitive Classmates at Elite Charter High -- 7. Beyond Identity: Consequences of School Beliefs on Students' Futures -- Afterword -- Appendix A: Identity Theory and Inhabited Institutionalism -- Appendix B: Methodology -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index -- About the Author
Sommario/riassunto	The key to success, our culture tells us, is a combination of talent and hard work. Why then, do high schools that supposedly subscribe to this view send students to college at such dramatically different rates? Why do students from one school succeed while students from another struggle? To the usual answer-an imbalance in resources-this book adds a far more subtle and complicated explanation. Defining Student Success shows how different schools foster dissimilar and sometimes conflicting ideas about what it takes to succeed-ideas that do more to preserve the status quo than to promote upward mobility. Lisa Nunn's

study of three public high schools reveals how students' beliefs about their own success are shaped by their particular school environment and reinforced by curriculum and teaching practices. While American culture broadly defines success as a product of hard work or talent (at school, intelligence is the talent that matters most), Nunn shows that each school refines and adapts this American cultural wisdom in its own distinct way-reflecting the sensibilities and concerns of the people who inhabit each school. While one school fosters the belief that effort is all it takes to succeed, another fosters the belief that hard work will only get you so far because you have to be smart enough to master course concepts. Ultimately, Nunn argues that these school-level adaptations of cultural ideas about success become invisible advantages and disadvantages for students' college-going futures. Some schools' definitions of success match seamlessly with elite college admissions' definition of the ideal college applicant, while others more closely align with the expectations of middle or low-tier institutions of higher education. With its insights into the transmission of ideas of success from society to school to student, this provocative work should prompt a reevaluation of the culture of secondary education. Only with a thorough understanding of this process will we ever find more consistent means of inculcating success, by any measure.

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