

# Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

Issue: February 1, 2016

## **The Battle for Room 314: My Year of Hope and Despair in a New York City High School.**

Boland, Ed (Author)

Feb 2016. 256 p. Grand Central, hardcover, \$26.00. (9781455560615). Grand Central, e-book, \$13.99. (9781455560608). 373.11092.

Boland's mother couldn't believe it: he was going to take an \$80,000 pay cut to teach in a public school. As the development director for a nonprofit program that prepared minority children for stellar academic careers, Boland had a hand in plucking some outstanding students from their disadvantaged neighborhoods and into a new life. But he wanted to give back more directly and so made his radical announcement that he was changing careers. The year he then spent teaching in a tough New York City high school was harrowing and eye opening. To a white man from Chelsea—and a gay one at that—the students could be brutal. But just as tough were the odds that these kids would get the support they needed from an overstuffed and underfunded system. Boland has a knack for capturing the stakes in seemingly small moments and the intensity of clashes between personalities. Ruthless in his evaluation of himself, his students, and the larger educational system, Boland provides a clear look at the challenges facing public schools today.

— *Bridget Thoreson*