

EMBRACING THE STANDARDS, RAISING THE BAR

the NATIONAL SORORITY OF PHI DELTA KAPPA, INC.
KRINON

SPRING 2015

92ND ANNIVERSARY



NATIONAL SORORITY OF PHI DELTA KAPPA, INC.

The Sorority was founded in 1923 in Jersey City, New Jersey. Its purpose is:

- To stimulate professional growth among teachers;
- To foster a true spirit of sisterhood;
- To promote the highest ideals of the teaching profession; and
- To encourage the development of the potential of our youth.

There are over one hundred chapters across the United States.

Our Philosophy

The National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. is a professional organization of teachers dedicated to the task of educating youth of America. We believe education to be a potent factor in maintaining and perpetuating democracy as the most ideal form of life. To remain in this position, modern education must provide youth with abilities for developing an integrated personality, assuming a successful place in a group and adjusting to the ever changing problems of society.

Through day by day instruction in the classroom and multiple contacts in the community, the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. seeks to inform all citizenry of the ever changing problems of our society and to equip them with the necessary social and academic skills to solve these problems according to a true democratic process. In addition, we are committed to celebrating success of individuals and groups and to honoring the legacy of those who have gone on before us. The National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. shall continue to take its rightful place among those who point the way in establishing, maintaining and sustaining avenues of communication between and among all people and in fostering the pursuit of excellence in education.

Purpose

The Krinon is the official journal of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. It is published for the purposes of:

- Providing current, relevant facts regarding emerging initiatives, trends and issues which impact education, family, school, and community; and
- Promoting and advancing the interests of the members.

Publication Date

The magazine is published annually.

How to reach the Krinon Staff

Correspondence, which includes your name, title, email or home address, and telephone number may be sent to the current Chief Editor at bburrellpdk@gmail.com.

Subscription

Members who are financial before December 1st of the current sororal year will receive a free subscription. Non-member subscription cost \$10.00.

Publication Policy

Information submitted must adhere to the established guidelines of the magazine. All submissions are subject to editing for clarity and length. Photographs must be original. Full color, high quality photographs are acceptable.

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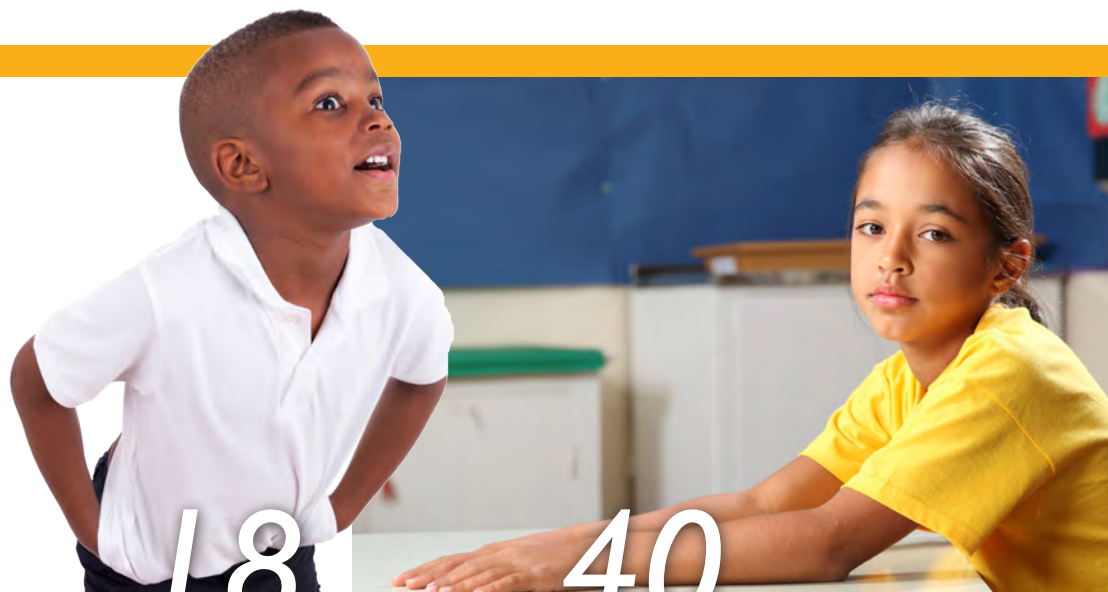
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KRINON

92ND ANNIVERSARY
SPRING 2015

**EQUITY:
QUALITY
EDUCATION
FOR ALL**



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OUR FOUNDERS



Front Row L-R: Gladys Cannon Nunery, Julia Asbury Barnes, Gladys Merritt Ross (Mother founder), Florence Steele Hunt; Second Row L-R: Ella Wells Butler, Marguerite Gross, Mildred Morris Williams
Not pictured - Edna McConnell



Our Founders attending the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. in New York City, New York.
L-R: Florence Steele Hunt, Ella Wells Butler, Gladys Merritt Ross, Gladys Cannon Nunery, Julia Asbury Barnes

Supreme Basileus' Greeting



As the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. celebrates ninety-two years of continuous service, our mission continues to be "Pursuit of Excellence, A Challenge to Fulfill." The overall organizational theme for 2013 - 2017 is "Embracing the Standards, Raising the Bar." The four issues of *The Krinon* during my term of office will focus on this overarching theme. This 2015 Edition narrows the emphasis to Equity – Quality Education for All. This focus brings to light the realization that when we consider education as a civil right, we as a nation have come far, but yet have much further to go as it relates to equity in education. To ensure increased achievement for all students, we must address effective instructional practices, efficient decision making based on data, policies addressing equity, effective teacher training, and adequate educational resources.

Over the last three years, America has turned its attention to the state of this country in terms of Civil Rights. America has celebrated and honored those who paved the path of equal protection under the law for minorities. We recognized and celebrated three major events in American history, the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education*; the 1963 March on Washington, led by Dr. Martin Luther King and other religious and social justice leaders; and the March on Selma, Alabama, again led by Dr. King and others. These significant events led to the signing of the Voting Rights Act in August 1965, which reinforces the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

While education has embarked on this era of *The Common Core Standards*, designed to create a pathway to success for all students, with it the assessments are intended to measure the success of our educational systems and achievement of our children. The opinion of this writer is that the Common Core Standards and no other standards or accountability measures will have merit if we do not ensure that all students are provided with equal opportunities for successful achievement of the standards. We must ensure that our schools are equipped with adequate infrastructure to meet the technological needs required by 21st century skill set, adequate instructional materials and resources to provide meaningful daily instructional experiences, and teachers who are prepared to meet the needs and challenges of an increasingly diverse and global population.

Each reader is encouraged to utilize and share the information, strategies, and techniques in this journal with your professional learning communities. You are encouraged to be an informed participant on educational issues and reform during community discussions, local and state school board meetings and forums.

Thank you to the members of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Incorporated for providing this opportunity for members of this sorority and affiliate organizations to share their professional and experiential knowledge as it relates to the theme. Thank you to the supporters of this organization and the readers of this publication who will continue to benefit from the knowledge and information shared. It is our desire to learn and grow with you as well as to enlighten ourselves and community members as we continue to pursue excellence in education.

Chief Editor's Message

The facts are alarming and the issues are complex. Take for example, have you truly observed the school to prison pipeline? Believe it or not, beginning in pre-school, Black boys are suspended or receive harsher punishments for the same offense than white boys. The U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics concluded that an African American male born in 2001 has a 32% chance of going to jail in his lifetime, while a Latino male has a 17% chance and a white male has a 6% chance. On the issue of poverty in America, some studies report that one of every two African American children live in poverty. The dropout rate for African American students in urban areas is 50% or higher. Racial and ethnic disparities exist in our society and in our schools. Startling information, but all of these equity issues and more affect learning.



If we are serious about creating a level playing field, we must address the subject of equity in America's educational system. Let me be clear: There is difference between equality and equity. The 1954 Supreme Court decision (*Brown v Board of Education*) supposedly resolved the equality issue. However, any person that has stepped inside two schools on different sides of town can still see that things are not equal. Equality means sufficient grade level, up to date textbooks at all schools. However, you must look deeper to notice the equity issues. Yes, both schools have textbooks but are they on the level needed by the students? Are there enough computers at schools for use by students who don't have computers at home? Are there multicultural supplemental books if the textbooks are not adequate? Equality is making sure that all children have shoes. Equity is making sure all children have shoes in the size that fits them. Equity is making sure that all children have quality books; supplementary instructional materials; and instruction based on their learning levels and styles. We need both equality and equity in our schools.

This edition of *The Krinon* explores several issues regarding equity in schools. Within these pages, the Sorors of the National SorORITY of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. are wrestling with real issues of hunger, homelessness, dropouts, discipline, and policies impacting our schools today. These educators offer suggestions of modified instruction, supplementary service, changes in policy, fair and equitable distribution of resources, richly diverse curriculum, and culturally responsive teaching. This is just the beginning of the conversation. We encourage you to continue the dialogue. Raise your voices, join together and take meaningful action. The struggle is definitely not over. The victory is not won. Our children are depending on you.

Yours in the struggle,

Brenda Burrell, Ed.D.
Chief Editor

National Directorate



Charlotte M. Williams
Supreme Basileus



Christella Cain
First Supreme
Anti-Basileus



Dr. Sherelene A. Harris
Second Supreme
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Supreme Basileus

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First Row L to R: June Day, Della Oliver, Mary Jane McCoy, Florence King, Dr. Jessie Muldrew, Opal Hampton, Gertrude Robertson. Back Row L to R: Ernestine Moore, Louise Smith, Margaret Hope, Mattie Woolen-Clay, Lisa Frieson, Huberdean Lowe, Joycelyn Hentley, Harriett Crouch, Jessie Hopkins, Kathleen Thomas. Not pictured: Marguerite McClelland, E. Lucille Minor, Zeline Richard, Barbara A. Williams.

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Mary E. Ennon
Associate Editor
Alpha Chapter
Jersey City, NJ

Soror Mary Ennon is a Diamond Life Member of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. and an active member of Alpha Chapter for 39 years. She is a graduate of New Jersey City University receiving both her Bachelors and Masters Degrees, Mary is a retired educator of the Newark, NJ School System where she worked in several capacities ranging from classroom teacher, Reading Recovery Teacher to “at risk” students, a mentor in New Jersey State Alternate Route Teacher Certification Program, and NJ State Mentor to New Teachers. Soror Ennon was Supervisor and Curriculum Specialist in the Department of Teaching and Learning Office of Early Childhood, Literacy Staff Developer, and a Success for All Literacy Program Facilitator. She was a recipient of the New Jersey Governor’s Teacher Recognition Award, and a Fellowship to the Institute for Educational Leadership at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ and Washington, DC. After retirement, Soror Ennon was Literacy Consultant in the Englewood, NJ School District and for the Catholic Arch Diocese of Newark. As a member of Alpha Chapter Soror Ennon has functioned in numerous capacities including Basileus, First and Third Anti-Basileus, Tamiouchos, Tamias, Epistoleus and Executive Advisor. She was a sponsor for the chartering of Delta Nu Chapter in Bergen County, NJ. Soror Mary has served in several capacities in the Eastern Region: Eastern Region Retreat Chairperson, Epistoleus, Elections Chairperson, Tamiouchos and Chairperson of the Officers’ Workshops. As Eastern Region Member-at-Large, Mary was National Chairperson of The Constitution and Bylaws Committee. She served as Second Supreme Anti-Basileus, National Membership Chairperson 2009-2013, and National Anthropolos Chairperson in 2013. She is an active member of Christ Episcopal Church, Teaneck, New Jersey.



Vikki Pruitte-Sorrells
Associate Editor
Alpha Xi Chapter
Cleveland, OH

Soror Vikki Pruitte-Sorrells is a native of Cleveland, Ohio and an active member of the Alpha Xi Chapter where she has been a member since 2002. She graduated from The University of Akron with a Bachelor of Arts in English and Case Western Reserve University with a Master of Science in Organizational Development and Analysis. In addition, Soror Pruitte-Sorrells holds a Master of Arts degree in Ministry from Ursuline College. As a part of her personal calling and ministry, Soror Pruitte-Sorrells is an educator who currently teaches in the South Euclid/ Lyndhurst School District at Charles F. Brush High School in the Department of English / Language Arts. Her teaching career began in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District where she taught English/ Language Arts in Glenville High School and served as Team Leader and Testing Coordinator. Soror Pruitte-Sorrells is also a dual professional. She serves as Co-Pastor of Lee Heights Community Church in Cleveland, Ohio where she has been serving since 2003. Soror Sorrells is a Life Member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., and numerous other civic organizations. She has served NSPDK as Basileus of Alpha Xi Chapter of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. and Midwest Regional Chaplain.



Dr. Lenora D. Waters
Associate Editor
Delta Beta Chapter
Austin, TX

Soror Dr. Lenora D. Waters is a Life Member of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. and a thirty-three year member of Delta Beta Chapter in Austin, Texas. She holds the following degrees: Doctor of Education from Baylor University, Waco, Texas; Master of Science from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma; and Bachelor of Science from Langston University, Langston, Oklahoma. She has forty-five professional years in education, including eleven in the Ponca City, Oklahoma public school system and 34 years at two Texas colleges. Soror Waters retired from Huston-Tillotson College, Austin Texas as Senior Vice President/Dean of the College in 2000. During her tenure at Huston-Tillotson College she also served as Counselor, Director of Basic Studies, Chairperson – Division of Education and Vice President of Academic Affairs. Soror Waters served two terms as Delta Beta Chapter’s Basileus, 1987-1991 and 1995-1999. She also served as First-Anti Basileus and on numerous chapter committees. She served as Supreme Parliamentarian and Member of the Headquarters Committee, 1991-1993; National Chairman of International/ National Projects, 1991-1992 and National Chair, Every Member Forum 1996-97. She is presently Southwest Region Chairperson for Internal Structure and Delta Beta Chapter Parliamentarian. Soror Waters is an active Life Member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and Langston University Alumni Association. She is also President of the Sanctuary Choir of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Austin, Texas.

Chief Editor and Krinon Committees

Soror Dr. Brenda J. Burrell is a Life Member of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. and a twenty-seven year member of Delta Beta Chapter in Austin, Texas. Her Bachelor of Science degree in Education, her Master of Education degree and her Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy were received from the University of Texas in Austin. She has taught in the Austin Independent School District, Austin, TX and the Normandy School District, St. Louis Missouri. After seventeen years in the classroom, she became an administrator and served as Assistant Principal, Principal of Casey Elementary and Principal of Lyndon Baines Johnson High School, Austin, Texas. While principal of LBJ, her school moved from low-performing to the ranking of 41st of the Top 100 High Schools in the nation.



Dr. Brenda J. Burrell
Chief Editor, The Krinon
Delta Beta Chapter
Austin, TX

Very active in the National Education Association, she has served as President of the Austin Association of Teachers, District XII President of Texas State Teachers Association, and a member of the National Resolutions Committee. Currently, she is an educational consultant in the areas of diversity, multiculturalism and culturally responsive pedagogy. Some of her publications include Not Yet, The Krinon 2011; Raising the Academic Achievement Levels of Ethnic Minority Students (2009); and Teaching in Segregated and Desegregated Schools: African American Female Teachers' Voices, National Journal of Urban Education and Practice 2008. Soror Burrell is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Mt. Sinai Baptist Church, and the American Association of University Women. A dedicated worker in the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., she has served on numerous committees at all levels. She served as Parliamentarian and Basileus of Delta Beta Chapter, Southwest Regional Chaplain, Regional Parliamentarian, National Chair of the International Project and Supreme Parliamentarian.

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Greetings from the Eastern Region



On behalf of the “Dynamic” Sorors of the Eastern Region, it gives me great pleasure to extend greetings to Supreme Basileus Charlotte M. Williams, members of the Executive Council, and to my Sisters of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc.

The region’s goals for the past four years may be summed up with the acronym T-I-M-E: Transacting NSPDK business; Improving our implementation of the National YES Program; Maximizing participation at the chapter, regional and national levels; and Embracing Excellence in all that we do.

In the immortal words of venerable educator, Mary McLeod Bethune, who recognized the “powerful potential in our youth,” “Knowledge is the prime need of the hour,” and by cultivating a “thirst for education...we will be able to rear increasing numbers of strong, purposeful men and women, equipped with vision, mental clarity, health and education”(Bethune, 1955).

As educators devoted to our organization’s mission, “To Foster A Spirit of Sisterhood Among Teachers and To Promote the Highest Ideals of the Teaching Profession,” and committed to its theme, “Pursuit of Excellence, A Challenge To Fulfill,” we endeavor to ensure Equity: Quality Education For All. We do so because the Most High God has commissioned us to be willing workers in His vineyard.

This year, the Star in the East burns especially bright because of three significant celebrations: the 67th Annual Xinos and Kudos Youth Leadership Conference, hosted by Epsilon Alpha Chapter in Somerset, New Jersey; the 75th Eastern Regional Conference, hosted by Epsilon Chi Chapter in Tarrytown, New York; and the 92nd Anniversary Conclave hosted by Beta Lambda Chapter in Winston-Salem, North Carolina!! We are truly “blessed and highly favored.”

The evidence of our posterity is reflected in the numbers...92 years as a sisterhood, 75 years as a region, and 67 years working to develop the potential of our youth. In tribute to our Founders, IT’S OUR T-I-M-E TO SHINE!!

Live the Vision!

Light the Way!

Leave a Legacy!

Drusilla M. Kinzonzi
Eastern Regional Director
2011- 2015

Greetings from the Southeast Region



It is with extreme honor and great respect that I salute our illustrious and dynamic Supreme Basileus, Soror Charlotte M. Williams, the Executive Council, Sorors, and Affiliates (Anthropos, KOTS, Xinos and Kudos).

I am privileged to greet each of you on behalf of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Incorporated, Southeast Region and in reverence to our Esteemed Founders who over 90 years ago had a vision to plant the seeds to establish this professional organization. This vision was to be planted in the hearts and minds of female educators.

Through the years of toil, struggle, great joys and great sorrow, the Founders and sorors have tended this garden of educators. They have watered it with hard work and ingenuity. They have fertilized it with passion and thanksgiving and watched bountiful roots of dedicated members extend throughout the United States and abroad.

Sorors, we must continue to stand on the idealism, power, purity, and femininity of our Founders so that we can continue to push ahead in the field of education, both individually and collectively. We must believe in our mission, our vision, and the profession that we as educators have chosen.

As a servant of this organization, especially, the Southeast Region, I stand with pride in my heart for I know that God has not brought us this far to leave us. You have been very supportive and demonstrated it through your love and devotion to this organization. As we continue the pursuit of excellence, let us remember it's only what you do for Christ that will last. Sorors, stand boldly to serve those who depend on your expertise as educators and those who expect you to give your best effort each and every day.

As I complete my tenure as Southeast Regional Director, I thank God for each of you. It has been a pleasure to serve you these last four years. I have developed friendships and relationships, which I know, will last for years to come. I have felt the spirit of true sisterhood throughout the regions as I traveled to the various conferences. Through Christ you have done great things in touching the lives of our youth. May we stay united in our quest for excellence in the garden of educators and continue to watch it bloom.

Fondly,

Yvonne Joyce Williams Ben
Southeast Regional Director
2011-2015

Greetings from the Midwest Region



My Dear Sorors,

I humbly and gratefully extend greetings as Midwest Regional Director (2011-2015). Serving in this capacity rates as one my top ten accomplishments as an educator. I thank you for the opportunity to serve the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. Such an exciting educational opportunity!

The 75th Midwest Regional Conference was held at the Cincinnati Marriott North, West Chester, Ohio, April 30 – May 3, 2015, hosted by Sigma Chapter, Basileus Soror Sonia Delaine. Conference Coordinators were Sorors Sharon Alford, Gloria Shelton, and Christine Whaley; Conference liaison was Soror Jan Mason. The theme was “Celebrating 75 years of Excellence in Education.”

Highlights of the conference included recognition of Community leaders during the public meeting. Honorees included: Dr. Carolyn Mazloomi, “The Quilt Lady”, nationally renowned quilter, Ms. Cynthia Booth Franchise owner of McDonald’s Restaurant, Mr. Donald Sherman, CEO of Cincinnati Black Theatre Company and Mr. Anthony Smith, Superintendent of Winton Woods School System. A special musical award was presented to Soror Tillie Colter for unselfish use of her musical talents.

Workshops included Women In Finance presented by Church Futel; Closing the Health Gap by AARP; Exercise for Seniors by Melanine Moon; and Donuts, Documents, & Social Media by Past Supreme Basileus Betty Dixon. The Vital Issues Breakfast panelists included James Thingwa, A.F.T., and Annie Bgenschutz, The Community Learning Center. The topic was “When Poverty Comes to School.”

The 2015 Youth Conference convened in Toledo, Ohio, on April 17 -19, 2015 was hosted by Beta Gamma Chapter. Leadership for the conference included Sorors Dorothy Batson, Chapter Basileus, Linda Collins, Chapter Advisor, and Conference co-chairs, Sorors Pandra Taylor and Sherry Reed. The Conference theme was “The Dreams of Today can Become The Realities of Tomorrow”. Xinos, Kudos, and Hub Parents attended in large numbers, and participated in “Imagination for Science Enrichment.” The students participated in a Community Service Project and toured the Toledo Museum Of Art. Thanks to Soror Aleen Donaldson, Regional Member-at-Large, Soror Evelyn Hicks, Regional Kudos Advisor and Soror Aleen Butts Regional Xinos Advisor for their cooperation. All left the Conference inspired make their dreams of today a reality of tomorrow.

Emma Henderson
Midwest Regional Director

Greetings from the Southwest Region

Where the Sorors are Willing, Innovative, Loyal and Dedicated



It is hard to believe that my journey as Regional Director has come to its final stop. My journey took off in the state of Oklahoma (Gamma Epsilon in Oklahoma City) and landed in the state of Oklahoma (Epsilon Delta in Lawton). Ironically, Oklahoma's name originated from two Choctaw Indian words that mean red people. Don't we wear RED? Oklahoma's motto is, "Labor Omnia vincit", which means "Labor Conquers All Things". You guessed it; I have had quite a laborious journey as SWRD.

Conference Snapshots

The Southwest Regional officers served as hostesses and wRAPPED up the 42nd Xinos/32nd Kudos Regional Conference on March 6 - 8 in Ft. Worth, Texas. The conference theme was "R.A.P.P. (Reaching-Achieving-Purpose-Power)". Our NSPDK's National Honorary Soror, Irma P. Hall (Big Mama from the movie Soulfood), was our guest judge for the talent extravaganza. The interactive workshop, "Get Yo' Life 101", was presented by Amanda L. Sargent from the University of Texas Outreach. Each of the four states in our region was represented with a table full of college materials. The conference culminated with a grand tour of AT&T Cowboy Stadium where the students relaxed in owner Jerry Jones' private suite. Sports Administration, Mass Communication, Business Administration, Recreation/Entertainment and even Culinary were a few major fields discussed that would afford one employment at a major stadium. We were honored with the presence of the National Youth Coordinator, Soror Aleen Donaldson.

Epsilon Delta Chapter greeted us to Lawton in three different languages (cha-ching, cha-ching, cha-ching). Basileus Cheryl Monts, Conference Coordinator Gwen Monts, Member-at-large Dr. Sylvia Williams and the sisters from Epsilon Delta all personified Oklahoma's motto, "Labor Conquers All Things". These ladies built a dynamic conference around the theme, "Endless Possibilities in Education with the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc". The beauty, the education and the sisterhood were truly endless. The Great Finale was the recognition of the Freshman to Freshman Initiative. During the Awards Banquet, fifteen graduating young men marched, to the tune of War March of the Priest, into a zebra clad ballroom of black and silver to receive \$1,000 to jumpstart their freshman year in college. What a way to end my journey as RD! It was a WILD beginning and truly a WILD ending.

I am looking forward to seeing everybody in Winston-Salem, NC in July!

Margarette Galloway, Southwest Regional Director
What a Wonderful Journey, 2011-2015

Greetings from the Far West Region



I extend greetings to our illustrious Supreme Basileus, Executive Council, sorors, and affiliates and friends of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc.

I am indeed grateful for the many wonderful experiences, knowledge and insight I have encountered while serving as the Far West Regional Director. My sincere appreciation and love is extended to sorors of the fantastic Far West Region for your dedication and commitment to NSPDK. I wish to thank each of you for your support, caring, understanding, sharing and helpful suggestions. To my Executive Board of the Far West Region, you are awesome! Together, we make the difference. To the Sorors and Regional Directors from the other four regions, I sincerely thank you and appreciate the sisterly love shown to me.

This year the Far West Region is celebrating its 50th year as a region. Our conference theme is “Keeping the Spirit Alive: Through Innovative and Creative Dimensions.” The challenge before us is the pursuit of excellent in education. All students deserve a quality public education; however, this can only occur when we close the gaps in equity and access. It is only through a continued commitment to excellence that our students will be prepared with the academic tools to successfully compete in this global workforce. As members of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc, we must be among the leaders of educational reforms. The time is now if we are to remain a vital organization in the community. The National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. has survived due to its strong foundation; which was laid down by our Founders and those in leadership that followed them. Let us continue to promote the highest ideals of our profession, perpetuate the spirit of sisterhood and preserve the honor of our Founders.

I leave this position as Far West Regional Director but not my commitment and service to this organization. May God continue to bless each of us!

Our good works are like stones cast into the pool of time; though the stones themselves may disappear, their ripples extend to eternity.

Sisterly,

Hattie McFrazier
Far West Regional Director



S Sisterhoods of women throughout the world bringing together educators from where they toil and labor teaching people of all ages, knowledge to bring forth to our universe.

O Opening the ability to think, learn and educate our people from young to old, while instilling in them the qualities of life's abundance of brilliancy.

R Resourcefully teaching people how to learn, and giving them the tools to utilize in all phases of this universal world of opportunities.

O Organizing and processing thoughts of ingenuity, expertise, talents, and learning forever, God's precious gift of life and knowledge where ever they dwell, while rising to the top of their skills from the beginning of time for all mankind.

R Realizing that the knowledge imparted to them is only a given for them to share with others on this earth. Believe it or not, it can be yours, for you, just learn to share and you will see, that this gift of teaching, is not only for you and me. It is for everyone to take advantage of this beautiful opportunity.

S Sorors, forever fostering a sisterhood of teachers, sharing with their love, feelings and knowledge of their profession and God's spiritual gifts from above. They will never forget that it is not only for them, but for the world to understand that a sorority of women are here in this world, not only for our chapter, but for others to build a society of educators; women to nurture our people for life's expectancy of everything that we can touch, realistically for Phi Delta Kappans like you and me.

This poem has been generously contributed by Roberta Fluellen. She is a member of Delta Pi Chapter, Hillside, NJ.



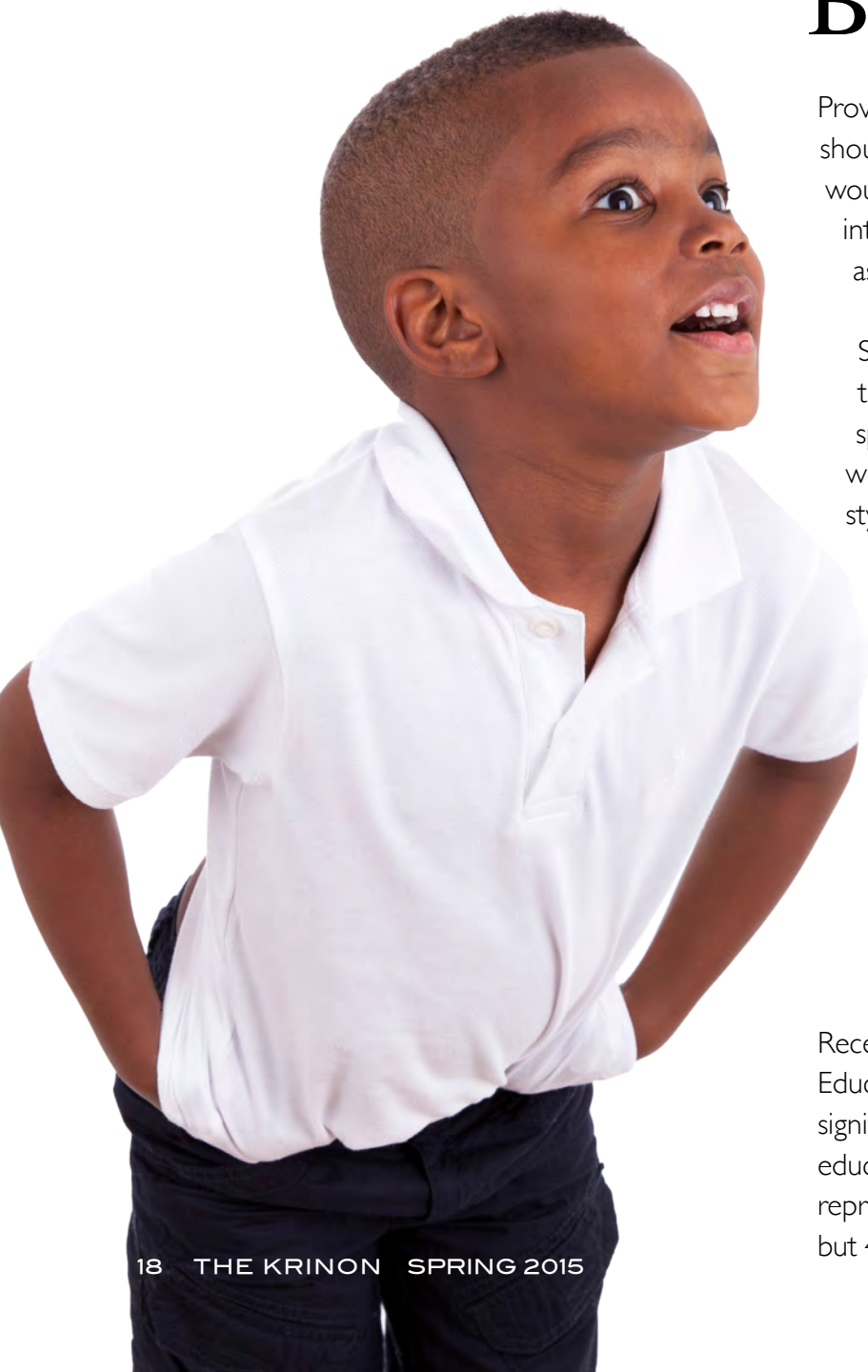


Suspension *of* BLACK BOYS

Providing opportunities for all students to succeed should be the ultimate goal of teachers or one would certainly think that is why professionals go into teaching. Most teachers have a passion to assist students with learning.

Surprisingly, this scenario is not necessarily true or happening for all students or more specifically for Black and Latino preschool boys, who exhibit loud outbursts or varied behavioral styles of learning than their other preschool constituents, “disrupt school activities, and willfully defy the authority of teachers, administrators or school officials engaged in the performance of their duties.” On the one hand, when Black students expose this type of behavior, they are either put in “time out” or are sent to the principal, even expelled while on the other hand, a White student demonstrating the same type of behavior, is talked to. This is definitely showing disparity and bias.

Recent data released by the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights portrays significant racial disparities existing across the public education system. Black students, for instance, represent just 18 percent of preschool enrollment but 42 percent of the students who are suspended



more than once. Only about 60 percent of public school districts offer some form of preschool.

As a volunteer tutor in a Kindergarten classroom, I have noticed a similar situation by the teacher. A small group of children were busy chatting and interacting with one another, going about their task when, for some reason, a minority male student became boisterous, agitated and raised his voice at the other male students. Instead of the teacher counseling the group of boys, she immediately singled out the Black boy and that caused him to talk back to the teacher, disrupt activities, lower his head and mumble to himself under his breath. I could see he was not happy by his body language.

So often, this is the case with newer inexperienced teachers who either lack patience and/or skills in which to turn the moment of outbursts and disruption into a teachable moment. I could see that the teacher was frustrated.

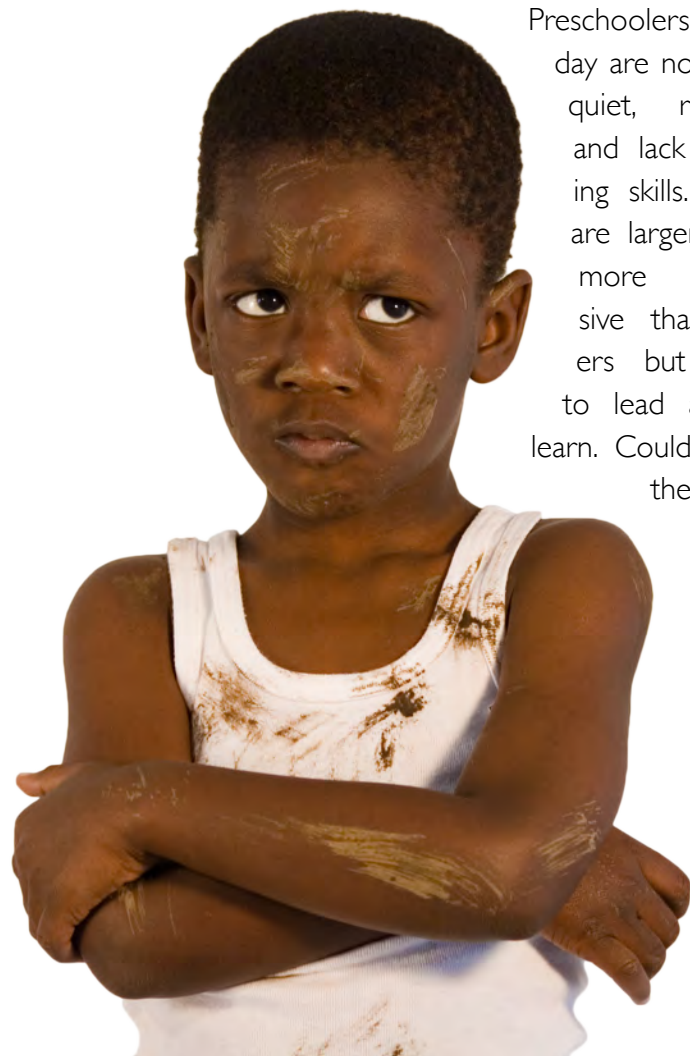
Preschoolers of today are no longer quiet, resolved and lack speaking skills. They are larger, some more aggressive than others but ready to lead and to learn. Could this be the reason

why children are more talkative and not necessarily ready to sit for any length of time in their seats? They are quick to tell you what they want, and they don't hold back. But isn't this how energetic preschoolers act? They are ready to conquer the world and are still full of play. But this is exactly where teachers come into the picture. Teachers should come to class prepared with a teaching plan and if the plan doesn't work, be prepared to have another plan ready or modify their plans. Suspending a preschool child is not the answer. Increased police presence in schools and overreactions to small behaviors is funneling more kids out of classrooms and into situations where they are more likely to run into trouble with the law. If you make a child think he is bad, he will internalize the "Bad Boy" effect and then act bad. Governor Brown of California signed a bill eliminating suspensions K-3 or recommending expulsion of students K-12 for willful defiance of school activities.

As I see it, problems that start in preschool continue throughout all grades. From an early age, whether it's preschool or beyond, Black and Latino students, especially boys know when they are singled out. It seems as if they are punished for being minority, Black, outspoken boys.

By the time some of these same Black and Latino boys reach high school, if they are lucky to do so, they know the teachers and administrators who care. They know those who teach them and those who do not. If you ever want to know what's occurring in the classrooms at your school or the climate at any school, ask the students. They are very candid. ▲

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Delorace Daniels. She is a member of Beta Theta Chapter, Los Angeles, CA.



Grasp Them



Before They Slip Away

Identify and Supply Our Youngest Learners Beyond Cookies, Crayons and Penmanship

Are very young students who are gaining zero or minimal progress getting the opportunities they deserve? Teachers, parents, principals, elected officials and other child advocates have to offer students specific support

before school failure is more difficult to turn around. There are many avenues mapped out for positive student enhancement, but are they being explored and taken advantage of?

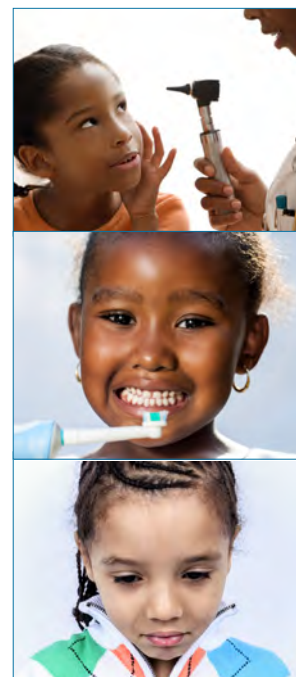
Young students deserve to be armed with proper basic medical assistance. Clearly, school annual vision, hearing, dental screenings and resources should be revisited, revamped and fundamentally accessible. There are numerous students with tremendous possibilities, but do not reach their potential. In many cases, the young children simply need, for example, hearing aids or eyeglasses. Consider the tasks students perform daily with their eyes, such as: reading, calculating, creating, problem solving, writing and using the computer. The American Optometric Association (2014) estimates that as much as 80% of the learning a child does occurs through his or her eyes. Wang, Bovaird and Ferjusion (2011) cites that at least one in six children has a vision problem. Teeth do also matter; Seirawan, Faust and Mulligan (2012) found the correlation of dental diseases with academic performance. Students with tooth pain for instance, were nearly four times more probable to have low grades.

How else might student performance and grades be affected? Young learners who attend school regularly and on time make adequate progress on a continual basis; early chronic absence has negative impact later. Early nonattendance is related with continued attendance problems and lower achievement. ECONorthwest 2010 demonstrated chronic absence in one early grade is associated with lower test scores throughout elementary school. Since many of the young students are escorted to school, escorts and parents are empowered in some schools with the importance of regular school attendance information. Gift cards, family trips, 100% attendance certificates and assemblies, free books, extra-curricular activities, computers and school supplies are some incentives presented to students and parents with improved attendance.

Where will particular striving young children school-based support be found? One of the best replies is in the Response to Intervention (RTI) facilitation. During instruction, teachers and other service providers utilize the RTI strategies that are aligned with explicit practices to boost young student grades. RTI is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and provision for students with learning and behavior needs (RTI Action Network 2011).

The objectives are to: identify students early with a researched-based school-wide screening process, implement a responsive multi-level prevention system, frequent progress monitoring, and make decisions based on data. The systematic intensive assistance for young students is delivered in three tiers: Tier 1 is provided within the core curriculum where instruction and interventions target all students. Tier 2 students receive additional supplementary support in small group instruction of up to five students, three days a week for 30 minutes. Tier 3 students should receive individualized supplementary support five days a week for 45 minutes. Both Tier 2 and Tier 3 students should receive intervention sessions with a specialist other than the classroom teacher and core instructional program.

There must be a continued quest to support and authenticate effective learning development in early childhood education; the push should include preventive measures with proven successful approaches for early access. Stakeholders will avoid lengthy and costly reactive actions when health assistance, increased school presence and adaptive instruction are the basic ingredients on the regular school menu. The time is now right to create the paths that will direct all of our young students to the roads of success. ▲



This article has been generously contributed by Soror Yvette Grant. She is a member of Theta Chapter, Brooklyn, NY.





A Real Teacher

A *real teacher leaves her heart in the classroom because of the passion for her profession and the love of students she engages. This is her lifelong responsibility to those who sit day after day like sponges.*

A sponge absorbs. Real teachers realize the magnitude of their influence, and students absorb the good, the bad; the positive and the negative. Real teachers strive to deliver the positive over the negative. Real teachers leave their hearts in the classroom because they care about the future, they know the importance of their calling, and they want to be remembered for a life time.

Think back on your own school experiences. Who are the teachers you remember? What was it that made them memorable? Was it their delivery style? Was it their strong disciplinary strategies? Was it the challenge or motivation they gave? Was it their high level of expectation that made you feel somewhat inadequate? Was it what they said which reminded you of your parents, or was it the

constant reprimands concerning your mediocre performance? No matter the reason, a real teacher sticks in your mind for eternity.

For me, my second grade teacher was a real teacher, and I remember her now after 50 years. Mrs. Daisy Adams was probably not more than five feet tall; however, she could still control her class. She held the attention of her class with a ukulele. "Down By the Old Mill Stream" was her theme song. She sang it with such great feeling. I was fascinated by her playing the ukulele and singing to us. The school required the teacher to administer to each student a cod liver oil pill with orange juice. She treated us like her own children, nurturing us physically, educationally and socially. Her passion and heart were felt and imparted to us in the classroom. Truly, music did calm the little savage beasts we were as second graders.

By fourth grade, I was in a completely different environment and school setting. Real teachers were on their job here also inspiring students for a future as contributing citizens to society. Mrs. Crawford was a strict disciplinarian whose often used expression for unruly boys was "Breath & Britches." She told these troubled disruptive boys that they were nothing but "breath & britches." The girls giggled and the boys being reprimanded retreated embarrassed by her reprimand. Her lesson was that we must stand up and be accountable for our deportment. Her students would not be passed on to the next grade level without exemplifying her required standards of deportment and fourth grade academic standards required by the state and school. You see, the standards of real teachers for students are set really early. Therefore, high expectations in the early grades are critical for establishing a firm foundation for later in life. Discipline is essential.

According to Dr. James G. Bilkey, "You never will be the person you can be if pressure, tension and discipline are taken out of your life." Mrs. Crawford was a real teacher who taught us a wonderful lesson that included these three principles.

Mrs. F. D. Gunn was my fifth grade teacher who knew her calling. A "calling" is a part of destiny, and real teachers realize their profession as a calling that must be done well. At this grade level, learning styles are emerging. Students remember what they do. Mrs. Gunn motivated our love of literature by selecting interesting classics for us to read. Books like Tom Sawyer engaged us, hooked us and kept us giggling and relating. The students became Tom and Becky Thatcher. We related to the shenanigans of all the major characters in the novel. We were hooked on literature and transported to the setting of the main characters, Tom, Becky and Huck Finn. Our futures had been outlined for all the takers.

A real teacher must realize where her influence lies. She affects eternity for a lifetime. Whether through music, discipline or literature, real teachers understand their calling; they leave their impact in the classroom as they prepare young learners for a great future. ▲

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Ann Moyer. She is a member of Beta Lambda Chapter, Winston-Salem, NC.



Are Students Gett

It's 7:50 a.m. The first bell sounds to signal the beginning of the school day. Students hustle to their classes as teachers stand at their doors welcoming pupils into the trenches of education. It is now 8:00 a.m. The principal announces over the intercom for everyone to stop and listen to the school creed. Once the creed has been cited, she wishes everyone a productive day and reminds staff and students to prepare for the upcoming state test.

The routine of "preparing for the state test" seems to be the emphasis of most educational programs across the nation. As most states have instituted mandated standards to raise the quality of education in America, many school districts have designed and implemented curriculum plans that align instruction with the stipulated standards.

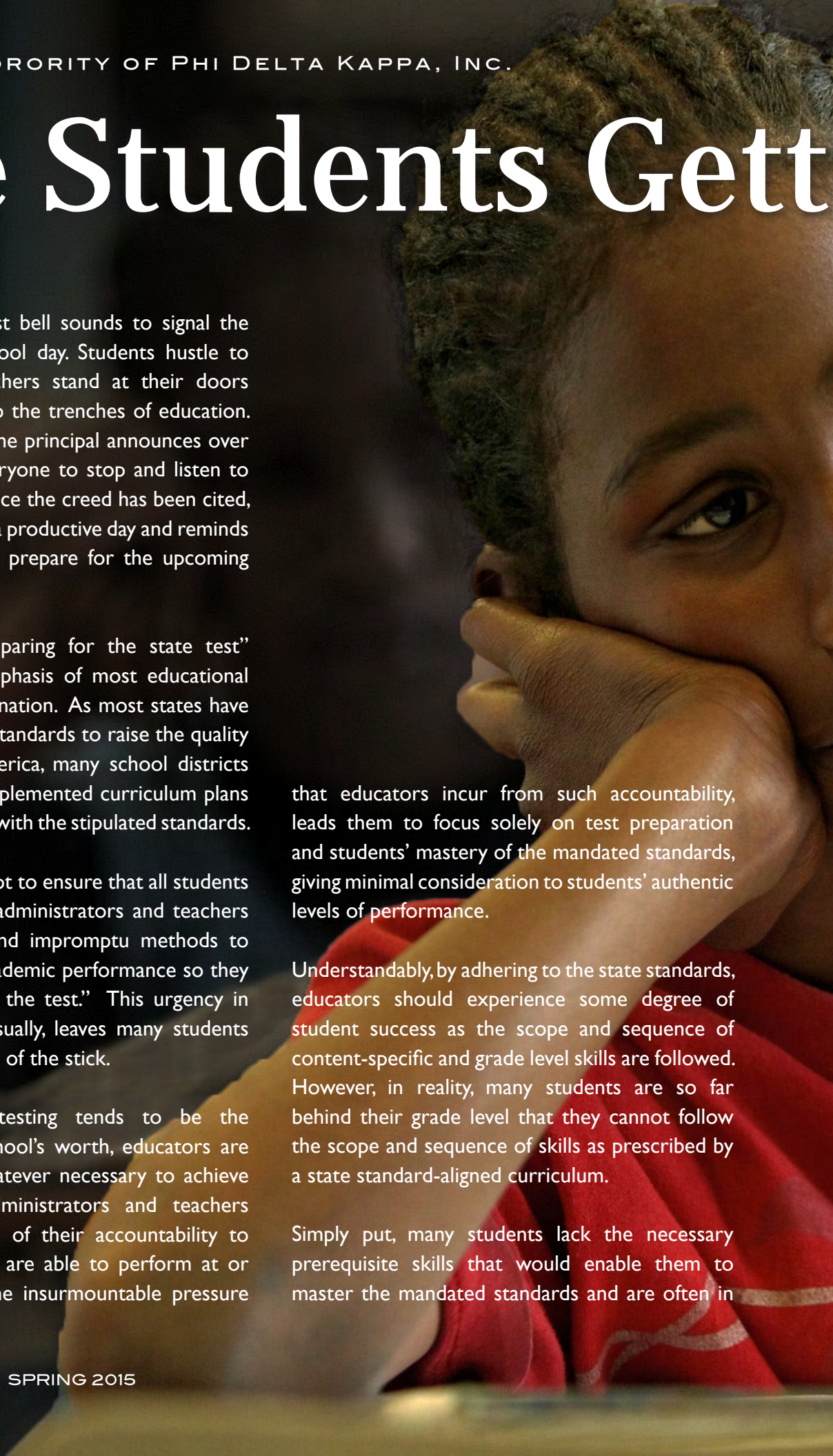
However, in an attempt to ensure that all students meet the standards, administrators and teachers often scramble to find impromptu methods to improve students' academic performance so they will be able to "pass the test." This urgency in "passing the test," usually, leaves many students holding the short end of the stick.

Since high stakes testing tends to be the "parameter" of a school's worth, educators are compelled to do whatever necessary to achieve passing scores. Administrators and teachers often feel the wrath of their accountability to ensure that students are able to perform at or above the norm. The insurmountable pressure

that educators incur from such accountability, leads them to focus solely on test preparation and students' mastery of the mandated standards, giving minimal consideration to students' authentic levels of performance.

Understandably, by adhering to the state standards, educators should experience some degree of student success as the scope and sequence of content-specific and grade level skills are followed. However, in reality, many students are so far behind their grade level that they cannot follow the scope and sequence of skills as prescribed by a state standard-aligned curriculum.

Simply put, many students lack the necessary prerequisite skills that would enable them to master the mandated standards and are often in



ing the Short End *of the* Stick

need of intense remediation. For this reason, only addressing state standards and being concerned with “passing the test” tend not to be educationally feasible.

No one would argue that there should be alignment between state standards and district curriculum, but does the practice of focusing solely on “passing the test” actually facilitate the type of educational development that prepares students for succeeding in all aspects of life? In pondering this, I believe the answer is emphatically NO. From my observation, students are often left behind without the necessary basic skills to not only “pass the test” but to experience adequate academic success, overall.

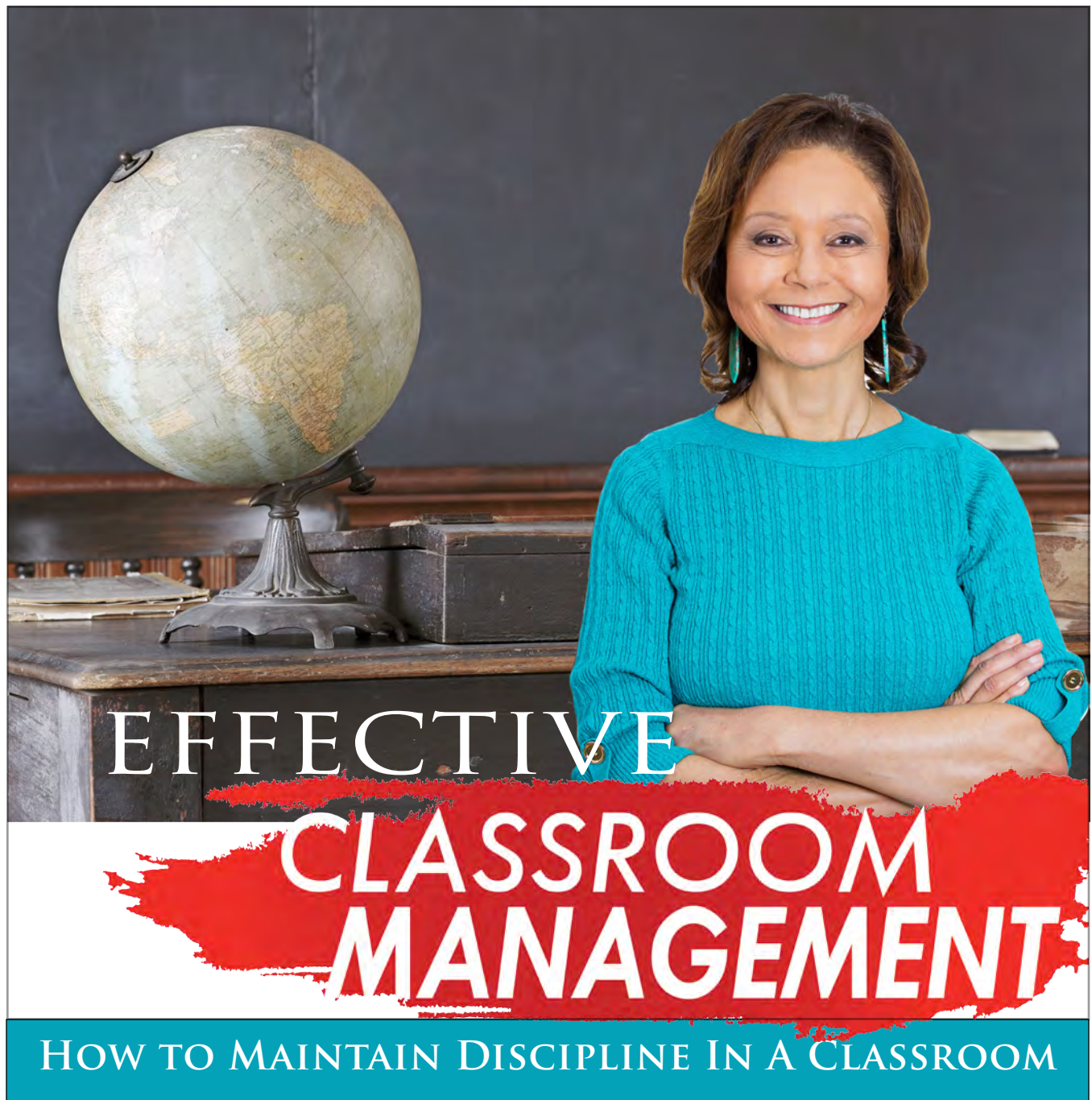
Furthermore, such curriculum cannot be deemed

effective unless the plan includes courses or programs that address the social issues that attribute to the “stunted academic development” many students experience. Whether or not the deficiencies are due to a child’s economic or domestic upbringing, school districts must allocate time for behavior modification and mentoring to offset the issues that impede children’s learning.

For this reason, to ensure that students are not getting the short end of the stick, and are, indeed, getting the most out of a standard-based educational program, school districts must seek balance in their curriculum. Of course, instructional curriculum (for the sake of norm and criterion referencing) must adhere to state mandated standards, but it should most definitely allocate allowances for the instructional and social needs of all students. ▲

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Onitta Parker, M.Ed. She is a member of Beta Mu Chapter, Gary, IN.





As a middle school educator I taught mathematics to mostly seventh and eighth grade students for thirteen years. It was rewarding as well as challenging on a daily basis. It is true that one of the biggest challenges educators face is maintaining and managing classroom discipline. Teaching rules and routines early in the year means more time to teach later. Whether you're a beginning teacher or

a veteran, you must set the tone for a well-managed classroom. The teacher must promote the right classroom climate, handle conflicts, and win respect. How well students conduct themselves, how well they work collaboratively with each other, and how effective the teacher's discipline is noticed first when walking into a classroom.

The Importance of Classroom Management

- It engages students in the lessons so they will be able to internalize the information better and able to apply their knowledge when it comes to test taking.
- It keeps students prepared to learn lessons taught, learning will be easier to be administered and the results will be more effective.
- It boosts confidence which allows teachers to devote more attention to each student and structure lesson plans to meet individual needs.

How to Manage a Classroom Effectively

Effective classroom management is being able to implement and maintain classroom discipline in an effective manner:

- Have clear classroom rules. It is important to have a basic set of rules for students to follow.
- Clarify expectations. If your students know what you want from them, they are more likely to exhibit the type of behavior you want.
- Make sure your students are aware of the rules and the consequences if the rules are not adhered to.
- Review rules regularly. Children need consistency.
- Be firm and consistent. When rules are developed to manage your classroom, make sure that they are realistic and void of any inconsistencies.
- Be professional. An effectively managed classroom is conducted with professionalism and adequate structure.

- Deal with troublemakers. No matter how great your plan or classroom management techniques are, there are usually some students that will disrupt your class or fail to follow the rules, if allowed.

Classroom Management Techniques

- Keep the class interested. Students who are interested in the classroom learning experience will be less likely to cause any disruption, as their attention will be focused on their lesson.
- Practice fairness. As a teacher, you must be fair and make sure that you keep your word and follow up with anything you commit to.
- Practice humor. Creating a positive environment where there is laughter and happiness is key to keeping students interested and engaged in their work, and more likely to comply with any rules.
- Do not threaten. Threatening students can weaken a teacher's credibility in a classroom.
- Lead by example. If one of your rules is to have students show up to class on time every day, make sure that you practice this rule yourself.
- Give students opportunities. Giving students the reigns to lead certain activities in the classroom will make them feel trusted and responsible.

In addition to having an effective classroom discipline management system, establishing a behavior incentive will also help keep students motivated while in the classroom. A sample incentive system that will add to the school culture is to have daily morning meetings that would last no longer than ten minutes. During this time students would hear announcements, be given a common core word of

the day, review the key for the month (ex. courage) recite the school promise/creed (if there is one for the school).

While in classes students can be awarded points for following the 4P's:

- Prompt—arriving to class on time
- Prepared—having all needed materials, paper, pencil, homework etc.
- Polite—being respectful to adults and peers
- Productive—staying on task while in class

Possible Rewards:

- Tangible Treats
- Movie and Popcorn
- Field Trips
- Free Homework Passes

The points can be tallied using an excel spreadsheet to determine what reward the student will receive. This can be done on a weekly, bi-monthly or monthly basis depending on how often you want the students to receive an incentive and how much money is available.

Date	Math				Science				Social Studies				ELA			
	Prompt	Prepared	Polite	Productive	Prompt	Prepared	Polite	Productive	Prompt	Prepared	Polite	Productive	Prompt	Prepared	Polite	Productive
Student A																
Student B																
Student C																
Student D																
Student E																

When all students are actively engaged, learning is taking place without the distractions of negative student behavior. ▲

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Adrienne Clotman. She is a member of Alpha Xi Chapter, Cleveland, OH.



We Shall Teach!

Through our struggles and pain we find a way
We sit up late at night to find the right activity
Just to find out that you need one more thing to make it perfect
The students are the ones that will learn from this new venture and we will too!

No matter the race to keep the students involved
Is always a minute away
Stay focused, on task, and with a steady pace
We are building leaders of tomorrow!

As they paddle upstream and are eager to learn
We find ourselves swimming along the way with them
They stomp through all core subjects as they leap into all the other classes
What gratitude and appreciation is given when they leave you.

Equity of an education is always a disparity
However, we continue to stay on the battle field of education is the key to success
All along building dreams and goals
And hoping that they will all reach them or at least come within a reach.

Our students are trying to compete globally
We know they can and will
Why? Because we know that through our struggles and pain they will find a way
As they learn we learn that all of our efforts have become their gain.

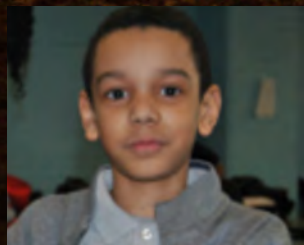
This poem has been generously contributed by Soror Lynnette M. Millner. She is a member of Mu Chapter, Chicago, IL.



Hunger, Poverty, and Homelessness Affect the Learning Process

Mom, what's for dinner? Mom, I'm hungry, can I have a snack? Innocent enough questions from children who do not know the fear of hunger, true poverty or homelessness. Child hunger has no boundaries. Right here in the United States, one out of five children do not know where their next meal is coming from. That's 16 million suffering from child hunger — and one could be someone in your own neighborhood. Hunger exists in every community in the nation from urban city centers, through suburbs and across rural America.

While hunger has no boundaries — African-Americans are more than twice as likely to suffer from food insecurity as their white, non-Hispanic



counterparts. One in four (25%) of African-Americans households are food insecure as compared with one in ten (11%) of Caucasians households and one in seven (15%) households overall. More than one in three African-American children (36%) live in food insecure households as compared to one in seven (15%) Caucasian children. These facts demonstrate that African-

Diabetes and other chronic health conditions can further complicate the issue of food insecurity. Latino children and adolescents are also at greater risk of being overweight and of being obese than their white or African-American peers: 38 percent of Hispanic children age 2 to 19 are overweight or obese compared with 32 percent of all children.

Jersey City, New Jersey is a highly diverse urban center with significant needs: JC is the second most diverse city in the U.S., comprised of 250,000 people of whom 40% earn less than \$50,000 a year resulting in 70% of JCPS students qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch. JCPS has 28,562 students with 38% Latino, 32% African-American, 17.5% Asian/Pacific Islander, 11% white, 3% other with 13% English Language Learners and 14% in Special Education. Most English Language Learners are native Spanish speakers but there is also a rising population of Arabic, Hindi, Urdu and Gujarati speakers as well. JC is designated as a high poverty district with 40% of their schools deemed low performing by the State of New Jersey. These demographic affect learning in a real way. There is more than a 30% gap between Asian scores and Black on NJ Ask in both ELA and Math. The district anticipates a \$21 million shortfall over the next three years due to flat funding from the state, rising cost and other financial obligations.

Americans are disproportionately affected by poverty, food insecurity, and unemployment.

Hispanic families also suffer from hunger and poverty. Nearly one in four (24%) Latino households are food insecure as compared to just one in ten (11%) Caucasian households and one in seven (14%) households overall. Latino households are more than twice as likely to be food insecure as white, non-Hispanic households. More than one in four (30%) live in food insecure households as compared to one in seven (15%) Caucasian children. Latino adults and children are at greater risk of obesity and diabetes than their African-American and white, non-Hispanic peers.

The district also reports that 66% of their school building are over 80 years old with 33% of them being over 100 years old. In addition, some sections of the city are becoming more densely populated while others are losing population creating intense space shortages in parts of the district. Other buildings require much more maintenance, do not run efficiently and need to be upgraded to keep up with contemporary demands.

Of the thousands of students enrolled in the

JCPS system, there is a sizable subset of children who have no place to call home. While there is no system in place to track the academic achievement of these students, advocates say homelessness can have wide-ranging effects on a child's educational development and performance in schools. Susanne Byrne, executive director of the York Street Project in Jersey City, said "When you get early intervention of homeless children you can mitigate effects of homelessness in terms of education." Byrne has come to understand the psychological effects that homelessness can have on a child's learning ability, especially among adolescents. Children between the ages of 9 and 12 have a reduced ability to trust people around them - including teachers - and are more self-reliant because of the trauma they've likely experienced or witnessed while homeless. "This has a direct impact on their schoolwork and behavior," Byrne said. "They don't trust their teachers and are commonly labeled as learning disabled or 'troubled.' But really it's outside factors that impact their abilities."

The National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. Alpha Chapter located in Jersey City, understanding our National YES program and the need to help feed our youth in JC became a state approved sponsor of New Jersey State Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Food Program for the "At Risk" Dinner Meals. The purpose of this program is to serve students in grades K-12 in after school programs with hot meals. Alpha is currently serving approximately 2,500 meals a day. The meals are at no cost to the students and are nutritionally balanced as a requirement by the State Department of Agriculture.

Students receive school lunch between the hours of 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and are in after school programs until 6:30 p.m. Thousands of students in JC who participate in afterschool programs are extremely hungry at 3:00 p.m. and providing a hot

nutritionally balanced meal fortifies our students for the rest of the afternoon. Alpha Chapter realizes that this effort is not the total answer to hunger and the effect it has on the learning process in JSPS, but we also realized that it was a start. Students can now receive three full meals each day — two provided by the school district, breakfast and lunch, and the third (dinner meal) provided by the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. Alpha Chapter. This helps many families make sure that their child has nutritionally balanced meals that are necessary for successful development and the ability come to school ready to learn. ▲



Sorors Kerri Williams, Diana Ondande, and Shawnte Williams are members of Alpha Chapter and Monitors for the Food Program.

For more information regarding this program contact:

Soror Verna Sims, Project Director
Alpha Chapter Headquarters
155 Martin Luther King Drive
Jersey City, New Jersey 07305
201-434-3025 (O); 201-434-4247 (F)



¹ Feeding America <http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/impact-of-hunger>

² Jersey City Public Schools Annual Report 2013-2014

³ Jersey Journal, Matthew Speiser, December 18, 2014

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Sandra J. Webster. She is a member of Alpha Chapter, Jersey City, NJ.



Limiting Our Students

via Race, Class & Gender

The other day, I took my 13 year old niece to the beach. An hour and a half drive gave us plenty of time for conversation. One part of our conversation went like this:

Me: Well, when you learn how to drive...

Niece: I'm not driving, it's too dangerous.

(I cringe because I can feel her world getting smaller)

Me: Really? Well, you can see the world if you travel by plane.

Niece: I took a plane once, planes are dangerous.

13? No one should place limits on their life at 13. The world should be open to them at this age!

This led me to think about teachers and our students, (of course), and the limits we place on them, consciously or subconsciously.



RACE: What do you see when you first look at someone? Physical appearance is all you have to go on until you actually interact with this person. Many times we form perceptions based on race. It may not be a conscious perception, but unfortunately opinions are formed based on those perceptions: the Asian and Caucasian students will be smart, the African-American students will struggle, the Latino students will have language barriers.

We all do it. An educator tweeted that he was “color-blind.” I don’t believe that’s true of any of us. Race is more than the “color” of our skin. We can not ignore it, because it is an integral part of who we are. But, we should not limit our students because of it.

I do believe educators exist who can see past race and see students. I recognize that but there are also educators who cannot see past race.

Does your classroom have role models of people of color and/or other cultures on the walls? Does your curriculum talk about the history of people of color and other cultures? If it doesn’t, do you supplement it? Do you challenge ALL your students? Do you make sure that your students are aware that they are capable of so much more?

CLASS: “This population can’t...” I cannot tell you how many times I have heard this sentence come out of an educator’s mouth. Unless they change their way of thinking, the students in their classrooms will never be given the opportunity to strive for more. They will be forever limited by what teachers feel they are capable of due to their socioeconomic status. I will never forget a presenter/teacher making the statement, “These kids will probably be filling boxes for a living anyway.” A new teacher cut her off, “I don’t know what kids you’re talking about, but my kids will be future presidents or CEO’s!” I couldn’t have said it better myself!

Think about these two classrooms.

One will be taught as students who can barely make it to high school, and the other, the sky is the limit.

Why should one’s socioeconomic status determine how we teach them? Why must we let poverty determine what our students’ are capable of? And yes, some of them can’t meet the challenge, but there are middle and upper class students who can’t meet it either. The difference is that no one puts a cap on what they are capable of achieving.

GENDER: Our girls tend to get the short end of the stick. We want them to be “girls”, sugar and spice, and everything nice. They are often looked at as the weaker sex and it is implied in conversations every day. “You let a girl beat you?” “Don’t run like a girl.” (I had to correct myself after saying this to my students during a kickball game.) Girls “can’t” do math and it’s OK. Girls can’t code. Girls aren’t interested in science. The curriculum in Social Studies textbooks is dominated by males. I make sure that I supplement with contributions of females. We explore women in history, before and after Women’s History Month. I make a conscious effort to call on girls in my classroom as much as boys. I allow my girls to participate in things that may be considered “boys only.” I lived during a decade when girls could not be something as simple as bus drivers or carry the mail, much less travel into space. These limits are gone; they should be erased in our classrooms as well.

We all have our biases; it’s an innate part of being human. The difficult part is knowing that we have them, and working on not making them a part of our classroom. We need to make sure that we grant ALL of our students the same opportunities as everyone else, no matter their race, class, or gender. ▲

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Lisa M. Mims. She is a member of Rho Chapter, Wilmington, DE.



Is Teaching Based on **Competence** or

**and How Does
This Fit in with
the Common
Core Standards?**



“Awareness of alternatives and the basis of choices distinguish the competent teacher from the merely intuitive one.” ~ Elizabeth Brady

Talk to anyone in the education field and the conversation will quickly turn to the Common Core Standards, teaching practices, and the student outcomes. There is also discussion regarding expectations of educators, student achievement and how the latest research affects the philosophy of teachers, parents and the community. “Who is ultimately responsible for student achievements? How can teachers develop a mindset that embraces all the required expectations?”

As teachers, we often reflect on what brought us into the field and our early teaching experiences.

Also, the idea of wanting to make a difference in the lives of those we teach appears to be the common theme. As teachers we are responsible for the care and education of children and the learning process at all levels. We agree that as teachers we intuitively recognize our roles in the education process. As teachers we are accountable to the children, parents, schools, communities and the nation.

In an article from the National Education Association (NEA) Higher Education Journal, author Leigh O’Brian reflected in her study on student applicants

entering their teacher education programs at the undergraduate and graduate level. She reviewed the applicants' essays of why they wanted to be teachers. The applicants' essays suggested that they believed (intuitively) they could make a difference by simply exporting their skills and knowledge to children.

She also noticed that; "There was no mention of teachers and children together constructing knowledge or even an interaction between teacher and learner; one of the key components of social constructivism. Further, there was no critique of 'getting kids ready for school' discourse. Also missing was a view of education as a vehicle for social change." Yet, one cannot help but ask the question: So where do we go from here? Today, this is a crucial point as teachers are often judged on how well we prepare students. Currently, teachers and principals alike are now being evaluated by performance reviews, and for the first time teacher evaluations are now directly tied to student performance, competence and skills. Does this then suggest that 'Good Teaching' is not only intuitive, but requires one to engage students successfully through the learning process? Must teachers then provide lessons that will combine both competence and skills versus treating students as mere consumers to a successful outcome? If viewed by teachers, parents and other investors, this goal can be attained by understanding and evaluating the goals of the standards as a bridge in acquiring the skills and knowledge for student success.

One teacher viewed teaching as an intellectual and ethical part of one's life, and therefore believes that it should be taken very personally. Yes to an extent if we are to be considered good teachers then 'Good teaching' does require specific levels of

competency. It is something that one learns to do, but with practice and experience comes growth. If one is to believe that people build friendships and relationships, in comparison then it is only crucial to believe as teachers we must build good teaching practices from theory, practical experiences, standards, philosophies and values which must co-exist. However, this must be kept in balance.

The competent teacher is then aware that this balance incorporates an education that is aligned with the Common Core Standards in all the content areas. It is to know that theory is integrated with skill practice. For example, new innovation in technology is an opportunity for innovation in education. New tools give us additional possibilities to reach students in different ways – even perhaps by designing interactive activities that better engage them in the material. Teachers must provide valuable concrete experiences that will help the individual student make the connection for understanding. This will empower the students to make powerful learning connections and engage them in ways to create personal meaning. Only then can students achieve successful outcomes in school readiness at all levels regardless of their culture or background. Embracing the standards can be used then as a means to this end and not merely a guide to teaching.

A competent teacher is aware that teaching is a complex challenge because of the many different learning styles they face every day. Being competent demands a teacher to embrace these diversities and differences in learning styles, yet take the time to reach every student in the classroom. Anything worth doing requires knowledge, skill, effort, and

mutual support; a support that must come from parents, principals, and community leaders. It takes knowledge of current standards to plan a lesson that integrates technology and empower students to succeed. It is not an easy task to provide concrete activities and lessons that will inspire and motivate every student in the classroom, but one of total commitment, full effort and a complete understanding of the learning process.



The competent teacher recognizes that teaching is an ongoing process. It begins with intuition and is a lifelong journey. Change can be tough, but as Alex Rodriguez, the great baseball player said, "You either go one way or the other, you might as well be the one deciding the direction."

Current education trends in the 21st century hold teachers accountable for student outcomes. However, with the threat of failure in our education system, and poorly performing schools across the nation, what message are we sending our students? Are we embracing all the alternatives, or merely intuitively supporting our students to seek the knowledge and skills that we desire to share? We

must remember that the Standards alone do not improve the system or how we as teachers share our best ideas and practices. It is teacher preparation, parent involvement and upholding high standards for all our students that will carry them through life.

Every day is an opportunity to become aware of the alternatives, embrace the choices and be committed to the ideology of teacher and children constructing knowledge together. In her book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (2006), Dr. Dweck says "teaching is a wonderful way to learn." Teachers should use our intuition, but we must embrace all of the alternatives if we expect to continue to grow and become competent teachers. It is not a question of intuition versus competence. It is a matter of intuition and competence! ▲

Source:

Dweck, Carolyn S. PhD. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, Ballantine Books, (2006) Random House, New York.
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This article has been generously contributed by Soror By Anna Russell. She is a member of Mu Chapter, Chicago, IL



MULTICULTURAL EDUCATORS

The Key to Eliminating Prejudices

Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education describes prejudice as an unfavorable opinion or feeling formed beforehand or without knowledge, thought, or reason, regarding ethnicity, culture, social, or religious group.

(Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education, 2012).

Today's classroom is extremely diverse, with various ethnicities, which include different cultures, social groups and religious groups. A myth of popular culture is that young children are colorblind or they are not aware of race, cultures or religious groups. By this reason, most believe children are blank slates who cannot cultivate prejudices until they are openly taught to do so. Children not only recognize race from a very young age, but also develop racial biases by ages three to five (Aboud, 2008). Most three to five year olds are of the age to enter school, which means eight hours or more of their day is spent with an educator. What is being implied is that, educators can make a difference with this matter.

Eliminating prejudice in the classroom begins with the educator(s) in charge of that classroom. So one might ask how this can be? In reality the teacher's attitude sets the tone for his or her students and determines the progress of the whole year. So how can the teacher start the year on a good note and end the year on a good note? It's quite simple; before students enter the classroom, focus on creating a healthy classroom environment, which means all students begin the year with a blank slate. In other words the educator will not hold any preconceived expectations about and for students. All students should be looked upon as equal, believing in the value of the culture represented in the classroom. It is important to be cognizant about what diversity may look like in the classroom, therefore planning to differentiate instruction through multicultural education is essential.

Multicultural Education is aimed toward preparing students for citizenship in a democratic society by teaching them to consider the needs of all individuals. The decrease of prejudice in the classroom is a very necessary component of multicultural education (Banks, 2006). It illuminates how issues of race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, gender, and abilities/disabilities are interwoven with educational processes and content. Many educators may ask, "If I incorporate this in my curriculum is it really necessary?" Absolutely, this exposes biases, stereotypes, and policies that restrict achievement. It will definitely accommodate diverse teaching and learning styles of the teacher and student. Those educators who are unsure of how to implement Multicultural Education would benefit from collaboration with other educators who are more familiar with it.

Educators are in one of the most remarkable positions with regards to the improvement of prejudice of intergroup relations inside and outside of school because public schools offer two resources: differences and common goals. The educator must be aware of his/ her student's needs, wants and even cultural backgrounds within the social environment that has been created so that multicultural education and prejudice reduction can transpire.

Eliminating prejudice in the classroom might be an easy task for experienced educators or a hard one for inexperienced educators. In all honesty, not every student comes from the same background, upbringing, nor do they have the same socioeconomic status. Therefore, all educators should be culturally responsive teachers. It is vitally important for educators to restructure the climate and culture of their classrooms in order for students to experience equality no matter the race, ethnicity, socioeconomic, and language group. In a nutshell, let's teach our students to celebrate each other's differences! ▲

Resources


Aboud, F. E. (2008). A social-cognitive developmental theory of prejudice. In S. M. Quintana & C. McKown (Eds.). *The handbook of race, racism, and the developing child* (pp. 55-71). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley

Banks J. A. (2006). *Cultural diversity and education* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon

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This article has been generously contributed by Soror LaToshia S. Chism, Ed.S. She is a member of Gamma Psi, Jackson, TN.





Working with Linguistic Learners & Collaborative Strategies

With the increase in immigration into the United States as well as the passing of legislation in various states which grants rights to illegal citizens and immigrants, educational systems will see an even larger influx of English Language Learners (ELL) from a multitude of cultures. When working with ELL learners, there are many things which the instructional and administrative staff need to know. One of these strategies is to review vocabulary and provide multiple methods to encode. Linguistic learners have difficulties with putting vocabulary in context and defining words from the content read. Having some pre-reading vocabulary exposure and background knowledge (discussion of vocabulary, defining words, and making vocabulary come to life)

will help in the comprehension process. Secondly, the staff need to be knowledgeable of the pace and tone in which they deliver lessons, directions, expectations, etc. Students (ELL) who are in inclusion classes, need processing time to decode language and apply strategies due to linguistic barriers. Lastly, teachers should be cognitive of some of the norms and cultures relevance of his/her student population. In other words, teachers should include culturally relevant topics, illustrations, real-life connections, and other such items in delivering instruction. By including these things, students will feel more a part of the class environment and it will create a sense of belongingness for all learners.

In addition to linguistic factors, collaboration will improve inclusionary practices. Strategies for working with diverse learners as well as problem-solving needs can be done via the collaborative process. The collaborative process allows educators to discuss students (academically and behaviorally) via a structured process. Instructors can share data of student performance on assessments and tasks related to the common core standards. They can share ideas of what is working, what is not working, and further critique and develop new methods for delivering instruction as well as problem-solving difficulties. Collaborative teams can meet by grade level as well as by content level in order to allow different approaches to improving student learning and team approaches to best practices.

The collaborative process not only helps teachers, but it allows students and parents to see that teams within the school work collectively to implement best practices, plan lessons, and improve student learning. Themes for learning, common planning, data chats, and methods to infiltrate across grade levels and or content levels will provide support in working with all types of learners (special education, ELL, and general education).

Overall, when working with students, one has to be willing to engage in best practices, strategies, and collaboration with peers in order to positively improve student progress. Without this willingness and engagement of staff to incorporate these practices, it will be very difficult for students to collectively make consistent and sustained progress within a school. ▲

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Leslie Finley. She is a member of Beta Chapter, Washington, D.C.



A Sister's Prayer

Now I lay me down to sleep

A Sorors heart I pray to keep.

A Soror who is considerate and kind

One who's actions leaves no sister behind.

The realization of being human too can be a strain

It can be difficult to keep the pledge

When others push your sanity close to the edge.

Maybe I'll just be faithful and still

And dream of a day when others will.

Be more sisterly than our beloved founders planned

To foster a sisterhood of which none is more grand.

Now as I close my eyes on a most glorious day

God bless my sisters forever I pray.

This poem has been generously contributed by Soror Karen O. Kelly. She is a member of Xi Chapter, Chester, PA.



MATHEMATICS DISCOURSE

When teachers include Mathematical discourse in daily instruction, they are supporting each one of the Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice. It is no longer effective to provide students with worksheets full of math problems that simply require them to only provide an answer. Common Core Standards also encourage students to justify how they know that their answer is correct. Students are asked to show the mathematical strategy they used, as well as explain how they know the strategy worked to give them the correct answer.

The 8 Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice are:

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
4. Model with mathematics
5. Use appropriate tools strategically
6. Attend to precision
7. Look for and make use of structure
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

I know you are wondering where to start including Mathematical discourse in your Math lessons. First, I suggest assessing the current level of discourse that takes place in your classroom daily — using the attached chart of the Levels of Classroom Discourse from Hufford-Ackles, Fuson, and Sherin (2014). This chart provides accurate descriptions of the various levels of discourse, and will help educators know exactly what they need to do to improve their current levels of discourse.

Choose a plan of action and incorporate it in your daily instruction. At the start of the Mathematics block of instruction, conduct a Mathematics Meeting in which you spend 10 to 15 minutes using one of the following models:

1. Problem of the Day
2. Mental Math Strings
3. Number Talks

Each of these models allow for students to get actively engaged in the mathematics that they are performing, and allows for much discussion to take place regarding their work.

Problem of the Day: During this model students are focused on solving one problem that demonstrates their mastery of various problem types. These problems can be solved mentally or they can be written out. Students can find solutions to these tasks by writing out their solutions. Then, students discuss their findings and whether the problems were solved mentally or on paper.

Mental Math Strings: In this model four to five purposefully crafted computational problems are solved mentally. Then during discussion students share the paths they followed to achieve an answer. During the discussion, the teacher models a few of the student strategies used by writing them out on a chart so students can refer to it during the math unit.

Number Talks: This final model uses classroom conversations and discussions centered on purposefully crafted computation problems. The classroom comes together and shares their mathematical thinking. Each problem in a Number Talk is designed to elicit specific strategies focused on number relationships and number theory.

All three of the models have similarities and allow for students to share their thinking with each other. These models only take about 10 to 15 minutes a day, and I have found this meeting time to allow me to quickly assess the strategies that my students have mastered, and which strategies may need additional attention .

The Problem of the Day is usually included in most basal mathematics programs. My school district currently uses EnVision by McMillian-McGraw Hill.

This program has a series of problems that correspond with each lesson. There are also Problem of the Day math books that teachers can use to provide a spiral review of various tasks appropriate for each grade level. Mental Math Strings are provided in the material provided by Cathy Fosnot. She

has included these Strings in each of her units of study, as well as her books that focus on Mini-lessons. Number Talks is actually the title of a book provided by Math Solutions which was founded by Marilyn Burns. The author of "Number Talks" is Sherry Parrish.

Once Mathematical discourse is effectively included in math lessons teachers and students will be able to view Math as something that they can actually become engaged in. No longer is Math considered a boring time of day, but a vibrant opportunity for each student to work as a mathematician.



Levels of Classroom Discourse

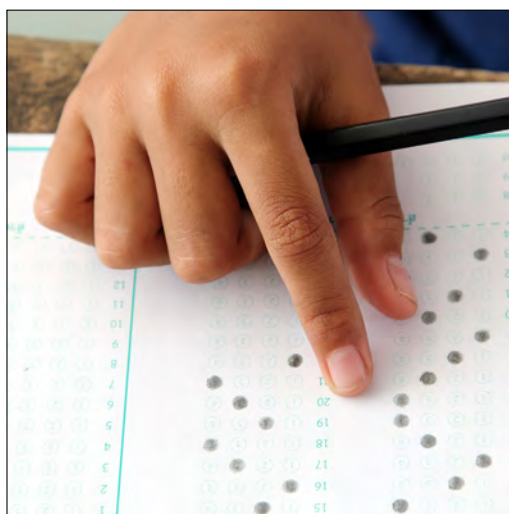
	Teacher's Role	Questioning	Explaining Mathematic Thinking	Mathematic Representations	Building Student Responsibility within the Community
Level 0	Teacher is at the front of the room and dominates conversation.	Teacher is only questioner. Questions serve to keep students listening to teacher. Students give short answers and respond to teacher only.	Teacher questions focus on correctness. Students provide short answer-focused responses. Teacher may give answers.	Representations are missing, or teacher shows them to students.	Culture supports students keeping ideas to themselves or just providing answers when asked.
Level 1	Teacher encourages the sharing of math ideas and directs speaker to talk to the class, not to the teacher only.	Teacher questions begin to focus on student thinking and less on answers. Only teacher asks questions.	Teacher probes students thinking somewhat. One or two strategies may be elicited. Teacher may fill in an explanation. Students provide brief descriptions of their thinking in response to teacher probing.	Students learn to create math drawing to depict their mathematical thinking.	Students believe that their ideas are accepted by the classroom community. They begin to listen to one another supportively and to restate in their own words what another student has said.
Level 2	Teacher facilitates conversation between students, and encourages students to ask questions of one another.	Teacher asks probing questions and facilitates some student-to-student talk. Students ask questions of one another with prompting from teacher.	Teacher probes more deeply to learn about student thinking. Teacher elicits multiple strategies. Students respond to teacher probing and volunteer their thinking. Students begin to defend their answers.	Students label their math drawings so that others are able to follow their mathematical thinking.	Students believe that they are math learners and that their ideas and the ideas of their classmates are important. They listen actively so that they can contribute significantly.
Level 3	Students carry the conversation themselves. Teacher only guides from the periphery of the conversation. Teacher waits for students to clarify thinking of others.	Student-to-student talk is student initiated. Students ask questions and listen to responses. Many questions ask "why" and call for justification. Teacher questions may still guide discourse.	Teacher follows student explanations closely. Teacher asks students to contrast strategies. Students defend and justify their answers with little prompting from the teacher.	Students follow and help shape the descriptions of others' math thinking through math drawings and may suggest edits in others' math drawings.	Students believe that they are math leaders and can help shape the thinking of others. They help shape others' math thinking in supportive, collegial ways and accept the same support from others.

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Jill Reed. She is a member of Beta Phi Chapter, Compton, CA



No More Modified Assessments Now What!

The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness Modified (STAAR® Modified) is an alternate assessment based on modified academic achievement standards. This assessment is intended for a small number of students receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements. The STAAR Modified assessments were administered for the final time during the 2013-2014 assessment cycle. The U.S. Department of Education has informed states that assessments based on modified standards for students served by special education cannot be used for accountability purposes after the 2013-2014 school year.



STAAR Accommodated

For the 2014-2015 school year, new accommodations are in place. Accommodations can be made for:

- Students with identified disabilities who are receiving special education services.
- Students identified with dyslexia or a related disorder (as defined in Texas Education Code §38.003) and are receiving Section 504 services.
- If a student falls into one of these categories and receives accommodations in instruction similar to those found in STAAR A, the STAAR A Eligibility Requirements should be reviewed.

Texas Education Agency (TEA) has developed an online accommodated version of STAAR called STAAR A. This accommodated version of the general STAAR

assessment will provide embedded supports designed to help students with disabilities access the content being assessed. These embedded supports include

visual aids, graphic organizers, clarifications of construct-irrelevant terms, and text-to-speech functionality. STAAR A is available 2015 for students that meet eligibility requirements.

STAAR Alternate 2

House Bill 5, passed by the 83rd Texas Legislature in May 2013, required a redesign of STAAR Alternate. The redesigned assessment is known as STAAR Alternate 2 and is a standard-

ized item-based assessment administered to students in a one-on-one setting. Participating students will respond to questions provided in a test booklet, and answers will be submitted by the test administrator in an online form.

Because this information is essential to classroom teachers, chapters are urged to conduct training sessions. Zeta Beta Chapter conducted a training as its Teach-A-Rama program. It was opened to all Port Arthur Independent School District teachers. The information was well received. ▲

*Resources: Student Assessment Division,
Texas Education Agency*

*This article has been generously contributed
by Soror Germain Jackson Eddie, M.Ed. Zeta
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Equity: Quality Education for All

ARE WE READY *to do* What It Takes?

The education reformers have for years attempted to convince the American public that the best and most effective way to achieve quality education for all is to first disband the existing public education systems and replace them with an atmosphere of competition within and between the schools. They have insisted that the only way for schools to improve is to have schools to operate like businesses. Without any research to support their rationale they have attempted to convince the masses that if public school teachers had their same "NO EXCUSES" approach to education they could eliminate the achievement gap.

Let's first address the fact that schools should not, nor could not operate like businesses. Businesses select, inspect and reject raw materials or resources that may damage the brand name. A school's raw material is its students and the community is their resource. Schools are in the business of correcting not rejecting. Parents and legislators should pause for serious reflections of the ramifications if educators were to adopt the corporate philosophy that schools are like production lines. What criteria would be used to reject those students that may damage the reputation of the school? Who would set that criteria? And most importantly, what will become of those students who are rejected? When we consider that a school cannot dictate the education and earning levels of its surrounding

community, how then can we hold the school and teachers solely responsible for the success of the student, especially when the student starts school at a disadvantage? This leads me directly into the second issue on achieving equity.

One of the most blaring problems with the argument of reformers is their insistence to continually ignore all of the social research that identifies the contributing factors that created the achievement gap. They assert that the gaps would narrow if the teachers demanded more and incorporated the strict codes of discipline and compliance they use. Corporate reformers and political rhetoric will dismiss educators' complaints about funding shortages, staffing and resources as excuses for failure. However, no rational thinking person can discount or minimize the impact income has on experiences and exposure. Income, experience and exposure are deeply interdependent and shape a person's perspective, values and awareness. A child who grows up healthy, safe, warm and provided for is vastly different and has a completely different mindset than a child who is homeless and only gets medical attention from the school nurse. Kozol, (2005), drew attention to this very issue by describing how in a less than 25 year period New York City schools reduced their medical department by 94% when the district saw the mass exodus of many of their White students. The district cut

377 positions leaving 23 doctors to be responsible for the entire city. How then could you convince those who remained that their well-being was still a priority to the district administrators and legislators? I do not believe the achievement gap is the result of differences in intelligence and ability but it becomes an issue of prioritizing. A cold, sick, hungry or neglected child will not focus or achieve as much as one when nutrition, heat and lights are not at issue. Do not interpret this as a justification for the lackluster academic performance. There are lessons and skill sets which must be taught and understood for these students to become successful. However, getting them to that point may mean an alternate route, supplemental services, additional resources and individualized pacing. We cannot ignore the impact the various contributing factors and the circumstances have on the child's learning style, their commitment to learning or the value they may place on getting an education at all.

A doctor cannot successfully treat a cold for a person who lives with no heat. What's more, society would not expect him to or hold him solely responsible for the patient not getting well. Why then hold teachers and schools solely responsible when a child is forced to attempt to learn in an overcrowded classroom, which is part of a building that is in disrepair that lacks ventilation, fresh water and resources. We cannot expect these students who grow up knowing that other children are in clean, healthy, bright classes with wide hallways and functioning water fountains to have the same faith and confidence in schools or even themselves as those other children. The conditions they are forced to endure throughout their entire academic career sends a clear message that they don't matter as much. This is the type of situation that fuels the systematic, subtle development of self-hatred that Carter Woodson wrote of in 1933,

in *The Mis-Education of the Negro*. Commissioner of Education for New York Schools, Thomas Sobol, explained in Kozol, (2005) that although he could not prove it was racism, he was sure that schools in the condition found in the Black and Hispanic communities would never be found in any school in a predominantly White suburban district like Scarsdale.

There can be no sincerely meaningful discussion on educational equity until we admit to and address the significance income and family have on student achievement. Ravitch, (2013) confronted the myth of student success being solely dependent on the effectiveness of the teacher in her book *Reign of Error*. She cites both social psychologists and economists who enforce what has been researched and restated for decades, that the most significant factor in predicting student success is the family.

If we are serious about achieving equity in American schools then we must confront those who would continue to mislead the public saying there is no difference between a child growing in an improvised community and a privileged one. Kozol asked, if citizens truly believed funding did not matter, why then do some communities fight so vigilantly against the idea of state led distribution of resources to all communities? It is unfair to compare American schools to those countries with higher achievement scores until we follow their example of fair and equal distribution of educational resources to every school. They have taken the initiative to prevent pocket communities where academics are superior to other segments. All children get the same resources the same materials, same textbooks, same curriculum options and access to technology, not just the same test.

Ravitch, Woodson, Goodman and Urbanski have all

argued that the systematic conditioning of submission and compliance destroys the imagination, innovation and ambition. Too often, particularly in high poverty urban areas students are being indoctrinated into submission with so much attention being devoted to “volume zero,” “straight lines” and tokens that education takes a back seat to discipline. Not that I advocate chaos, however, when students know what volume zero is, but cannot explain GPA then we have gone too far in the wrong direction. Goodman made this argument when speaking of the isolation and punitive consequences students face when they challenge or question authority in the corporate classrooms that stress conformity as part of the curriculum. Each one of them point out examples that lead to the creation of a mindset for a second class society. Urbanski confronts the idea that urban schools “need” uniforms, by noting that statement is not made about any other student population. She continues to challenge the subtle message of the comparison between the casual blue collar uniform look for urban schools to the jacket and tie uniforms of private schools. If they are learning to dress for their future positions what is being predicted for those who dress in the office. Woodson challenged the entire education system asking to know if the goal is to indoctrinate our students to follow the roles society has laid out for them or teach them so they are prepared to make the most of themselves through unlimited opportunities in society. Ravitch, continually points out how all these reforms have reduced options and narrowed the curriculums particularly for predominantly minority schools.

All students, despite their zip code, should have the same opportunity to explore and develop their interests and talents. They should all have a curriculum that is richly diverse and allows them to be successful as their personal interest, skill set and talent dictate. Success should not be so narrowly

defined and confined to a test of two content areas.

When we speak of equity we need to ensure that all students are allowed the freedom and comforts to be inventive, innovative and imaginative. All of these qualities, which are also typical attributes of leaders, should not be discouraged or drilled out of them in the name of discipline. We, as educators, should not passively allow others to systematically prioritize conformity over creativity, especially in our urban and improvised areas. Cynthia Urbanski, 2012 was involved in a Language development project when she noted and commented on another disparity between districts. In some districts divergent thinking of staff and students is celebrated and rewarded and as she moved into the cities that same behavior is criticized for being deviant and defiant, in both populations. “Why would we abandon the intellectual freedom and professional autonomy that has produced a spirit of inquiry and a love of tinkering and innovation?” (Ravitch, 2013). We cannot have equity in education until all teachers are again empowered with the professional autonomy earned through their education and experience. Teachers need and should be permitted to freely creatively develop lessons and design experiences that teach and challenge students. We should want to prepare the next generation to analyze, reflect, imagine and think not just sit silent and fill in circles.▲

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This article has been generously contributed by Soror Aaryenne S. White, ExeMED. She is a member of Eta Chapter, Camden, NJ.



Better Education Brighter Future



“Professional development for staff is a top priority. Educators must continue to learn to grow as professionals.”

The National Center on Education and the Economy released a report calling for changes to be made in our educational system entitled Tough Choices or Tough Times: The Report of the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce. The report states our current educational system is

not up to par and revisions must happen. They have developed ten steps that will restructure the public education system, with most of the changes taking place at the high school level.

Under the proposed system, high schools become places where students learn the skills necessary to pass state board qualifying examinations to better prepare for the workforce. The commission sets forth a plan to ensure the country's international competitiveness by educating all students to higher standards and rigor. They feel that the high level of education should be available to all students regardless of their zip code. The National Center on Education and the Economy makes some great

points. I would consider some of them to create my own educational system.

The mission of education is to provide the necessary tools to students to help them be successful and productive citizens. We need school systems that are designed with that goal in mind. An ideal school would encompass all of the various needs that are missing in many communities. We must raise the rigor of our education system, hire highly qualified teachers and support staff, encourage parental and community support, and provide the necessary supports for all students regardless of socioeconomic status. Every school should strive to be a high-performing reward school. The better we educate our students, the better our economy will be.

An ideal school would focus on the needs of every student and every parent within the school district; including English Language Learners (ELL), special needs students, poverty ridden students, and illiterate parents. In addition to gifted and talented programs, there should also be professional development for all staff, updated technology, and community partnerships and services. On-site RNs and/or LPNs would be available for each school site. Healthy children learn more, grow better, and achieve more. The Foster Grandparents program is an exemplary program that would be of benefit to a school. They will provide the additional emotional support that so many of our students desire and crave.

Professional development for staff is a top priority. Educators must continue to learn to grow as professionals. They must be up to date on the latest teaching strategies, curriculum, and assessment information. Professional development training should come from outside sources (paid for by grants and private donations) and from their colleagues. Using staff to provide professional development will

demonstrate that each staff member plays a crucial role in the school and develop team work within the school.

Field trips and educational experiences would include annual science fairs, a student-created art gallery on campus, annual instrumental and vocal concerts, field fitness days, and educational field trips that would include in and out of state excursions.

An ideal school would have SMARTboards in every classroom, science labs, a photography studio, fully equipped workout rooms for teachers and students, computer labs for each grade level, a sensory room for special needs students, and fully equipped physical and occupational therapy rooms. Providing students access to technology will open their world to new experiences that they may otherwise never see.

Community Partnerships and Services are vital to school districts. Developing a positive relationship with members of the community would be high priority.

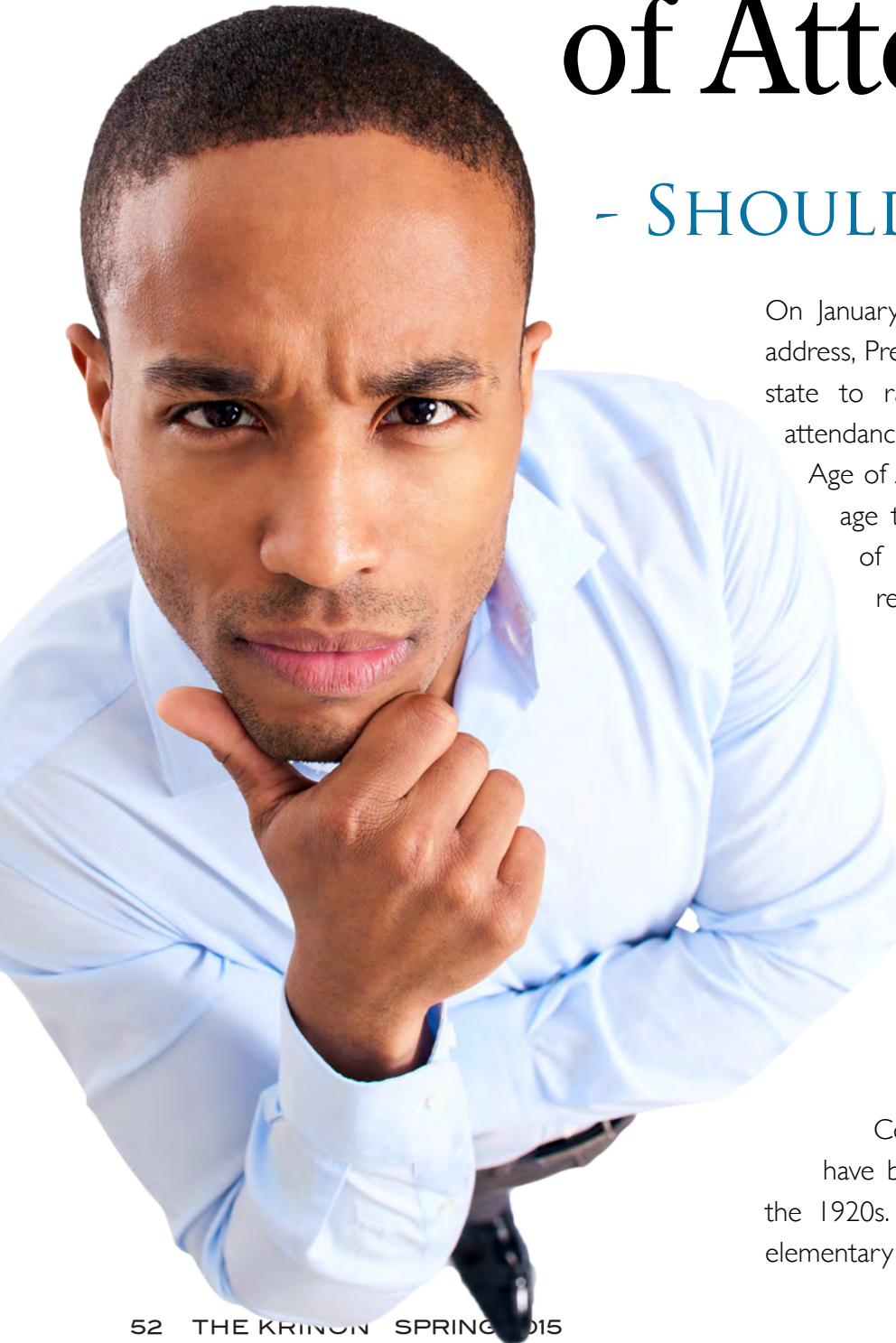
We must change our school systems but we must do it in a way that includes everyone. We must also figure out ways to make the necessary changes without them becoming a financial burden on the state and national governments. We must build up community relationships. In order to make the education system better, we need the village to help. ▲

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Myiesha Antwine. She is a member of Gamma Epsilon, Oklahoma City, OK.



Compulsory School Age of Attendance

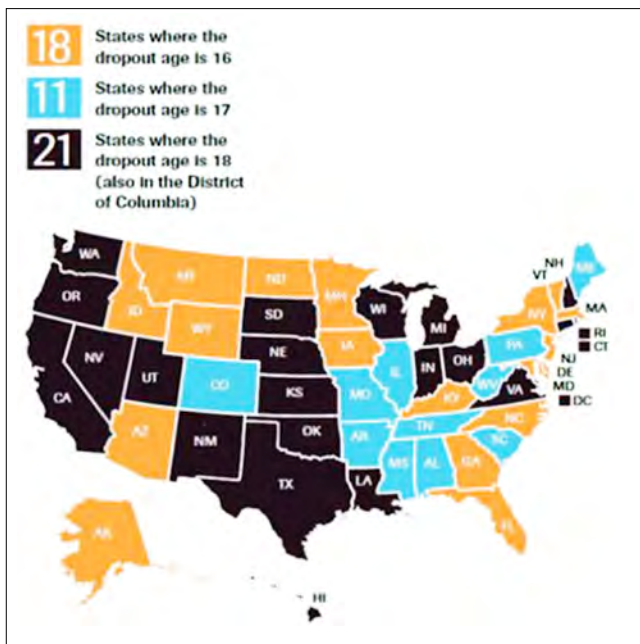
- SHOULD WE RAISE IT?



On January 25, 2012 in his State of the Union address, President Barack Obama called for every state to raise the compulsory school age of attendance to 18 years-old. Compulsory School Age of Attendance (CSAA) refers to the legal age to drop out of high school. The goal of compulsory school age of attendance reform initiatives is to reduce the number of high school dropouts in the U.S. Dropouts are defined as 16 to 24 year-olds who are not enrolled in school and have not completed a high school program, regardless of when they left school. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, students who left school but completed a GED prior to 24 years old are not included in the dropout statistics.

Compulsory school age attendance laws have been a part of American society since the 1920s. The age ranges have changed from elementary age to 16 years old. Over the past 10

years, some states have raised the compulsory age from 16 to 17 or 18 years old. (Provasnik, 2006.) Currently, there are 18 states where the compulsory school age of attendance is 16 years old, 11 states where the law is 17 years old, and 21 states where the law is 18 years old (Maxwell, 2012).



Landis and Reschly (2011) examined a national data set from 2001 to 2006 to identify the grade level at which students dropped out, rates of dropout over time, and high school completion by state, region of the country, and compulsory school age attendance of 16, 17, and 18 years old. They found that the school age attendance had a statistically significant, but weak relationship with high school graduation rates. The correlation was not as strong as they expected. Moreover, they did not find a discernible pattern of reductions in drop-out rates in states that raised the attendance age. According to Grover Whitehurst at Brookings, approximately twenty-five percent of public school students in the U.S. do not earn a regular high school diploma (Whitehurst, 2012). While some students are considered as

completing high school via alternative proficiency processes, and other students earn their GED while still high school age, the remaining percentage is a concern for proponents of this policy. Whitehurst found that raising the compulsory school age attendance does not address the underlying causes of non-completion. He also found that there is no consistent relationship between attendance laws and rates of school attendance (Whitehurst, 2012).

Proponents believe that the longer students stay in school, the less likely they are to drop out. Compulsory schooling provides structure that teens need, communicates high expectations to students and parents, and communicates our society's value on education. There has been no consistent relationship between the leniency of school attendance laws and rates of attendance. States that raised their school attendance requirements did not necessarily experience a greater decline in dropouts than states who kept the age at 16. Also, completion rates did not vary between states with different compulsory school attendance ages. An increased school attendance age does little to address the root causes of high dropout rates, and changes in compulsory school attendance age, independent of effective interventions is negligible.

Under the proposed policy, the population of eventual dropouts will stay in school longer; but absent from the discussion is the opportunity cost (instructional and disciplinary) for housing students who do not want to be there. Some say students who stay in school until the age of 18 earn more money, are likely to be healthier, and less likely to be in trouble with the police. However, this is correlation, not causation. There is no evidence to support that students who have the greatest

potential to dropout would reap these benefits (Whitehurst, 2012). Leaving school at age 16 is more cost-effective than raising the age to 18. The primary cost factor is the per pupil cost of the increased numbers of 10th, 11th, and 12th graders at the secondary level. However, in some school districts, especially poorer school districts, requiring students to stay in school past the age of 16 could mean overcrowded schools. This could result in additional school construction to expand existing facilities or build entire new buildings. There are the added costs of additional services that schools will need to provide to resistant and troubled students who do not wish to remain in school after the age of 16, such as staffing costs for truancy, counseling, and school security.

The proposed policy comes with some hidden costs to society. In the long run, a better educated workforce is more economically beneficial to the national economy. However, it is difficult to predict whether or not the students who fit the profile of a dropout would have earned more over the course of their lives if they were forced to stay in school, primarily because forcing students to stay does not necessarily mean that they will perform better academically or result in a different earning outcome. The real economic benefit to the national economy is not rooted in forcing students to stay in school. True economic benefit is derived from helping students to make more sound decisions about their life goals, and this work with students should begin well before they turn 16 years old.

States that have not already increased their compulsory school attendance age should consider maintaining their current law. In many of the states where the law is 16 years old, the proposal has al-

ready been examined and rejected. In the meantime, there are other options to consider. States could increase education spending for post-secondary education and vocational programs. States could also support districts in implementing effective dropout intervention programs. For example, an increase in co-op and work study programs would allow students to work while completing high school. An increase in online course offerings for high school students would allow students to complete their schooling with a more flexible schedule. And since there is a correlation between the dropout rate and incidents of bullying, a continued emphasis on harassment, intimidation, and bullying prevention in Grades 7, 8, 9, and 10 could help reduce the dropout rate without the need to raise the compulsory school attendance age. By completing longitudinal studies over the next decade, while simultaneously performing cost implication analyses and feasibility studies, it would be possible to better pinpoint early warning indicators and linking predictors for at-risk students. Valid research of effective programs and policies is critical in determining optimal solutions to provide quality education for all. ▲

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This article has been generously contributed by Soror Melanie Alston-Balaputra. She is a member of Delta Nu, Bergen County, NJ.



Sagging

I just can't understand.... all these sagging britches.

Hanging to the floor,
Why kids today just don't have pride,
In how they dress no more.

Britches just a sagging and a draggin'
Why they look like a clown.
I don't understand,
Why the britches just don't fall down.

If somebody starts to chase them,
Why they couldn't run half a block.
Before them britches fall down,
Over their knees and lock.

I just can't understand.... all these sagging britches.

Big and oversized, not slim.
Looking like elephant pants,
Why two people could fit in them.

Back in the day, when I was a kid,
My daddy would've skint me alive.
If my britches hung
Like I was po' and deprived.

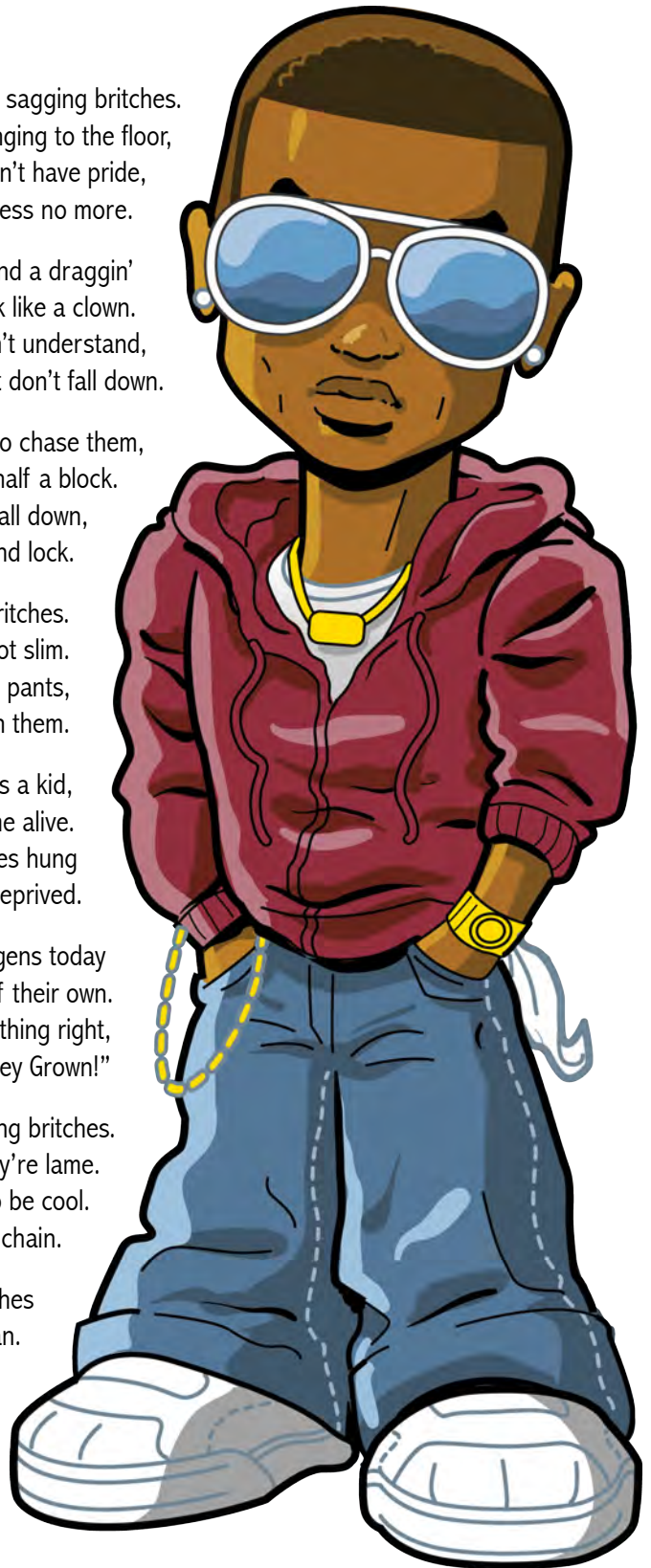
What can I say? These youngens today
Gotta mind of their own.
Try telling them something right,
They tell you..."They Grown!"

I just can't understand....all these sagging britches.
And that strut that makes the young boys look like they're lame.

Tryin' to be cool.
Draggin' that leg like it had a ball and chain.

BOY!!! Pick up those britches
And walk like a proud black man.
The way you look and carry yourself,
Is a disgrace and a cryin' shame.

If my Grandmama was here,
And had some Chinaberry switches,
I bet she'd put a stop
To all these Sagging Britches.



This poem has been generously contributed by Soror Margarette Galloway. She is the Southwest Regional Director and member of Alpha Rho, Dallas, TX.



Equity for Special Needs Students & Staff

Do you know any educator or parent who is not cognizant of at least one specific example of how school policies positively or negatively impact classroom teachers' efforts to educate all of their students? Are school boards or politicians who hold the purse strings on educational budgets aware of how their decisions affect the day-to-day learning within classrooms? Let's not forget the negative impact of theory or non-reality based decisions made by school supervisors who have been out-of-the-classroom for ten, fifteen, or twenty plus years! Even in affluent areas of this great country, educational budgets are seldom fully funded every year. In less affluent areas, budget decisions never include sufficient money for school personnel, classroom supplies, and/or curricular materials.

In order to provide equity for special needs students and a quality education for all students (i.e., the immediate removal of disruptive students from the classroom), it is past time that detrimental school policies and educational practices be exposed

so necessary changes can be immediately made within school districts. First of all, let's examine the sacrosanct inclusion model of educating all students with special needs within the general educational setting. This educational model works well only if there is a fulltime general education teacher and a fulltime special education teacher within each classroom. Whenever, which is 90% of the time, insufficient personnel is available, a special education resource teacher has to split his/her time between two general education teachers for two core subjects (i.e., reading and math) per grade level. Why? Because of high stakes testing based upon one formal summative assessment instead of academic growth over time, a classroom teacher may have up to 50% of his/her performance rating based upon one state-wide or district-wide test. This teacher does not want all of the special needs students (who may be academically functioning two or more grade levels below average) within his/her classroom. If this scenario is not enough to make you scream, how about one special education

resource teacher being responsible for two or three grade levels? When this situation happens, a special education resource teacher's school day is split between 4 to 6 teachers for reading and 4 to 6 teachers for math. Regardless of what their Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) state, special needs students are lucky if they receive one hour of direct services from a special education resource teacher per day.

Prior to retiring at the end of last school year, I was the sole special education resource teacher for kindergarten through sixth grade from August to February. My expected duties included the following:

1. Fulltime team or co-teaching within every classroom;
2. Attending all grade level planning sessions – which conflicted with my schedule to service a different grade level;
3. Providing direct small group pull-out intervention instruction;
4. Providing assistance to struggling students within the general education classroom;
5. Providing modified classwork and/or homework for special needs students;
6. Collaborating with both the general education and special-subject teachers;
7. Providing remedial instruction to two groups of students at least twice a week;
8. Plan/attend/document one-to-three IEP Meetings per special education student;
9. Plan/attend/document one-to-three IEP Meetings per each referred struggling general education student;
10. Administering quarterly state-wide or district-wide assessments;
11. Conducting formal/informal assessments for identified special education students;
12. Conducting formal/informal assessments for struggling general education students;

13. Writing 20 plus page IEPs at home;
14. Implementing IEP goals/objectives in a classroom shared with two speech pathologists and one special education resource teacher;
15. Writing quarterly progress reports and/or assessment reports at home;
16. Writing detailed Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) based on detailed Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) at home;
17. Participating on a minimum of two school committees;
18. Attending all after-school/night meetings and activities;
19. Participating in after-school professional development training and/or courses;
20. Volunteering to teach in an after-school remedial and/or enrichment program; and
21. Grading papers and writing daily/weekly/monthly lesson plans at home.

As you can probably surmise, I was not successful in accomplishing all of the aforementioned expectations as a special education resource teacher. Why? There is simply not enough time within the school day (or a 24-hour day) to accomplish everything on my “to do” list of expectations. Who was the loser? Of course, everyone — especially the special needs students who were denied an appropriate education.

As stated previously, in affluent school districts, there is an overwhelming supply of personnel. It is past time for all school districts to fully fund educational budgets so in reality every child will truly have a quality education. ▲

This article has been generously contributed by Soror Dianna Mayo Neal. She is a member of Beta Chapter, Washington, D.C.



WHAT IS FAIR FOR A STUDENT ENROLLED IN A NEED OF ASSISTANCE SCHOOL (SEIA NOAS)?

My name is Seia Noas (Student Enrolled In A Need Of Assistance School). I am a fourth grader. I am in a classroom with 31 other students. I have been struggling with reading and math since I was in the third grade. I was receiving help in third grade, but for some reason that ended. I was getting help this year, but that ended too. I want to learn. Sometimes I don't understand what she is teaching me. Not because I am dumb. I just can't hear her over the 1, 2, 3..., 18 other students that won't stop talking, fighting, or playing. People think because we live in a poor neighborhood we don't want to learn. I feel sorry for my teacher. I believe she really wants us to learn. Maybe I should just stop trying to learn. It looks like the bad kids get all of the attention anyway.

How many students feel this way? Many of our urban classrooms are overpopulated with students that fall academically shy of meeting grade level standards. School districts are claiming to hold the

best interest for all of the students. However, many students like the fourth grader in the scenario are

basically considered spilled grains of salt from the shaker of bureaucracy. Where is the equity of education for students that suffer in silence or lose their desire to learn?

Let's begin with class size. This student is one of 32 students in her class. This class may have an average of seven special education students that may receive small group pull out services for math and reading. The number of

students that are consistent classroom disruptors maybe synonymous with the number of students that are one or two grade levels below in math or reading. Then there are the students like the one in the scenario. She has stated that she also struggles in math and reading, however, she is trying to learn. How can one person effectively service nu-



merous academic, emotional, and behavioral needs? Tennessee researchers found poor and African-American students appeared to reap the greatest learning gains in smaller classes (Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, 2011). Research from Columbia University Teachers College in New York showed the context of class-size reduction can affect its success in improving student achievement (Ready, 2008). Why would anyone think these students can achieve high learning standards with so many distractions? Class size should not rely only on the number of live bodies in a space. The academic background and needs of the students should bear weight in the decision to enroll to capacity.

Now, we will tackle the elephant in the room, classroom disruptions. There is nothing quite so distracting for a teacher than a student disrupting the class. Many times the disruptive student is behaving inappropriately due to academic shortcomings. They use the negative behaviors to take the focus off of their lack of understanding the lesson or their delay in learning. Unfortunately, in an urban setting where students are academically below average, the class sizes are at maximum capacity. Therefore, these students most likely will remain below average, escalate their behaviors, and continue to prevent others from learning. Classroom disruptions waste valuable instruction time and can also lead to ongoing behavioral problems for students (Concordia Online, 2013).

In the end, who is caring about Seia Noas? She is getting lost in the academic labyrinth of her school. She is frustrated and is giving up. Many times she may see those that prevent her from learning and her teacher from teaching get rewarded. Those rewards come in the form of mentors, special

treats for behaving appropriately, getting out of class (suspensions or sitting in the office) and not doing their work but are still getting promoted. What message are we sending our students? As she stated, she should give up because she isn't receiving what she needs to be successful. What has happened to the extra help she was receiving? Many times pull-out teachers are thrown into other duties instead of servicing the students they were hired to serve.

This situation is sadly common across our nation. The equity that many fought for during the civil rights movement has changed into a new beast. Inequality is rampant within school districts, throughout cities, and across our country. How can our First World country be wrought with Third World education concerns?

Numerous decisions that are made should not be implemented as a blanket across our schools. Each school is different because their students are different. Our school system is a quilt made up of several pieces that represent each of the delicate lives we are responsible for adequately educating. Equity can be destroyed by class size, class disruptions, and ignoring academic needs. Stand up for the Seia Noas in your school district.▲

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This article has been generously contributed by Soror Monica Jones, Ed. S. She is a member of Epsilon Tau Chapter, Stone Mountain, GA.



Lord, We Can't Handle It Without You!

*This poem was generously contributed
by Soror Phyllis Freeman-Stewart.
She is a member of Epsilon Theta,
Beaumont, TX.*



We have kids who make it, there are those we cannot save, we haven't a clue.
Lord, put your arms around them, WE CAN'T HANDLE IT WITHOUT YOU!
When the walls are tumbling around us and we don't know what to do,
Lord, help us find safe shelter, WE CAN'T HANDLE IT WITHOUT YOU!
It makes no difference what the race, be it Black, White, or Jew,
Lord, help them live with cultural difference, WE CAN'T HANDLE IT WITHOUT YOU!
When our vehicles have been vandalized on school grounds, and we no idea who,
Lord, help them know the difference between wrong and fun, WE CAN'T HANDLE IT WITHOUT YOU!
In eighty degree overcrowded classrooms, the students suffer and we do too.
Lord, send your cool breezes down on us, WE CAN'T HANDLE IT WITHOUT YOU!
We are working, we are preaching, we are teaching, we are praying, we are there for all to view,
Lord, help us to be teacher, mother, father, and friend, WE CAN'T HANDLE IT WITHOUT YOU!
This challenge to fulfill has been attempted by far too few,
Lord, help us accept the challenge, WE CAN'T HANDLE IT WITHOUT YOU!
We ask your blessings and come bowed for your review,
Lord, there is no way WE CAN HANDLE the education of our children WITHOUT YOU!
In the name of our Risen LORD, we wait in great anticipation. AMEN

The

OVERREPRESENTATION
OF BLACK MALES IN

“Out-Of-
School”

Suspensions:
Causes and
Remedies
From . . . the
Counseling
Discipline

Much has been written about the disproportionate number of out-of-school suspensions among Black males in comparison to their white counterparts (Bennett & Harris, 2013; Skiba & Williams, 2014). According to a 2013 study conducted by the University of California at Los Angeles Civil Rights Project, the average American secondary student has an 11 percent chance of being suspended in a single school year, while the African American (Black) student's odds for suspension jump to 24 percent (UCLA, 2013). In fact, more recent data, released by the U. S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, indicate a steady rise in Black suspensions between 1973 and 2014; thus, making Black students 3.5 times more likely to be suspended as White students (Skiba & Williams, 2014).

While myriad correlations have been observed and various theories posited, disaggregated data support the tendency toward more Black males being suspended than Black females (Toldson & Toldson, 1999; Wells-Wilbon & Holland, 2001; Skiba & Williams; U. S. Department of Education Civil Rights Data Collection Snapshot, 2014). For this purpose, and the need to move beyond the redundancy of restating the problem/phenomenon without end, this article will focus on the next levels, i.e., of sifting through research literature suggesting "causality"; and proposing "remedies" ensuing from the Counseling Discipline.

The significance of such focus is threefold: First, to remind ourselves of the continued and escalating problem for Black students in general (and, especially for the Black male) (Skiba & Williams, 2013); secondly, to identify the driving forces behind differential treatment of the races for comparable infractions; and thirdly, to find solutions that will benefit both offending students, his/her parents, school staff, and ultimately, society.

Causality

Contributing factors, to the aforementioned phenomenon, are simultaneously simple and complex. On the simple side, minority educators, parents and students alike, might easily attribute maltreatment only to prejudice and discrimination. What does the research show; and, one might think, "Is it even relevant to ask" if you are the recipient of more exacting and punitive consequences than your non-Black classmates? If, however, we are to eradicate the phenomenon of overrepresentation of Black male students in out-of-school suspensions, we must see with both subjective and objective eyes.

To begin, a 1982 study by Bennett and Harris proposed that the disproportionality depended on "school and staff characteristics" (Bennett & Harris, 1982). It looks at the school climate, the composition of the staff, the ratio of student to teacher, the actual misbehaviors, etc. Further, if a school/district, tracking the progress of all their students, finds racial disparities in any area and incorporates policies to address these, then there can be positive change. For example, in a Minneapolis public school, officials are making dramatic changes to their discipline practices by requiring the superintendent's office to review all suspensions of students of color. This moratorium has helped reduce overall suspensions by 50 percent. The superintendent, Dr. Bernadeia Johnson, said she remains committed to completely eliminating the racial suspension gap by 2018 (Matos, 2014).

A later (2010) study completed by Brown-Wright and Tyler (The Effects of Home-School Dissonance on African American Male High School Students), examined the correlation between "home-school dissonance" alongside other psychosocial variables. Using a sample of 80 Black high school

males, they concluded that, "...home-school dissonance significantly predicted multiple academic and psychological variables, including amotivation, academic cheating, disruptive classroom behavior, lowered academic efficacy, performance avoidant and performance approach goal orientations, and poorer self-reported English grades...". They conclude that, "...Researchers and education policy-makers must become more knowledgeable of ways to incorporate aspects of African American males students' home and out-of school experiences into their learning experiences." (Brown-Wright & Tyler, 2010).

There are hundreds of studies in pursuit of what makes Black males 3.5 percent more likely to become a target for out-of-school suspensions disproportionate to their White (and non-Black) counterparts. Many of them look at the type of transgression (violent and threatening or benign). A large body of research ascribes poverty, anger, growing up in a single parent home and home-school dissonance (Wells-Wilbon & Holland, 2001; Toldson & Toldson, 1999; Skiba & Williams, 2013; Brown-Wright & Tyler, 2010). While some theories have been debunked or called into question (Skiba & Williams), others continue on with strong "evidence-based" correlations. These strong associations are the basis for implementation of remedies out of the counseling discipline.

Remedies From the Counseling Discipline

The old African Proverb states that, "It takes a village to raise a child." Nothing demonstrates this more than the Mentoring/Counseling Model spelled out in the Moore & Ratchford Journal article, "Decreasing Discipline Referrals for African American Males in Middle School" (Moore & Ratchford, 2007).

Counselors, administrators, social workers, teachers and parents identified ten Black male seventh-

grade students (attending Brogden Middle School near Goldsboro, North Carolina), who had the most frequent discipline referrals. The principal then contracted a university professor to work with the staff for one year. The professor reported to the staff that, "The BMS demographics showed that 55% of the African American (Black) males were products of single parent-female homes. They experienced few positive male role models in their lives." The principal enlisted his fraternity brothers to provide mentoring, homework assistance, etc. There was a noticeable decline in referrals and suspensions (Moore & Ratchford, 2007).

Several other interventions were cited in the literature; however, space does not allow full detail. It is expected that over time longitudinal study will reveal those most effective. Counseling strategies currently in use to address the overrepresentation of the Black male in out-of-school suspensions are: Social Learning Theory (Wells-Wilbon & Holland, 2001); The H.I.S. (History, Identity, and Spirituality) Counseling Model; Esoteric group therapy (Toldson & Toldson, 1999) and more. ▲

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This article has been generously contributed by Soror Christella Cain, M.A., LPC. She is the First Supreme Anti-Basileus and a member of Delta Beta Chapter, Austin, TX.





CREDIT 101: A CLASSROOM LESSON ON FINANCIAL LITERACY

As we mature in life, some of us finally realize the importance of practicing sound financial principles like basic money management and budgeting. Financial literacy is one of the most powerful tools we can use to equip our young people for financial stability.

Many of the vocational education standards focus on how to earn a living. It is equally important to prepare our students on how to manage what they earn. As our students learn how to manage their money and control their credit stability, they can be better prepared to start businesses, provide jobs or invest in their communities.

According to an article in *Young Money*, “Research shows that students use credit poorly, unaware of rates and interest charges, because most colleges and credit card companies fail to educate them about loans and credit card finances.” There is a critical need to begin a basic foundation for students on financial literacy at the entrance of the middle school.

The Credit Card 101 project was developed to encourage financial literacy with middle level adolescents, in an effort to deter financial illiteracy for our future workforce. At the age of 18, students will be faced with making decisions for making purchases by using cash or credit cards. They need to understand early that credit cards have advantages and disadvantages. Because of prior lack of knowledge about Annual Percentage Rates (APR), interest charges and grace periods for the repayment of purchases, many adults do not consider comparing credit cards to determine which credit card is the best one for their life styles.

An informal survey showed, zero out of 25 adults could define a FICO Score. In the Credit Card 101 project, students will learn that a generic credit score developed by Fair, Isaac and Company, Inc. (FICO) was designed to predict the possibility of borrowers becoming seriously delinquent in their credit obligations.

Credit Card 101 begins: (1) In preparation for the project, begin collecting imitation credit cards. Start collecting them from colleagues, neighbors, church, etc. Collect enough cards to issue to the students. (2)

Select a time period you would like to use the cards; six weeks or longer is suggested. Set a \$100.00 credit limit for each student. (3) To give the students some flexibility in making decisions to make credit card or cash transactions, give the students \$5.00 per week in school money that you design; or purchase.

Class Period One. Give the students a pretest on the following terms. It can be verbal or written:

Credit	the ability of a customer to obtain goods or services before payment, based on the trust that payment will be made in the future.
FICO Score	a person's credit score calculated with software from Fair Isaac Corporation (FICO). The most important factor in determining a FICO score is past payment punctuality.
Consumer	a person who purchases goods and services for personal use.
Decision making	the action or process of making decisions, especially important ones.
Opportunity cost	the cost of a foregone alternative. If you chose one alternative over another, then the cost of choosing that alternative.
Scarcity	the fundamental economic problem of having seemingly unlimited human wants in a world of limited resources.

Activity. After the pretest, begin drilling the vocabulary terms. Put a dish of mini Snicker bars on your desk or table (or your preferred enticing candy). Put a clock next to the dish of Snickers where the students can see it clearly.

Borrow a pencil from one of the students and say: I will give this pencil back to you in three minutes. If I forget to give it back to you, I will give you a Snickers bar. Use the pencil to write something on a piece of paper; or pretend to write something. Continue to drill the vocabulary words. In two and one half minutes, give the pencil back to the student. Observe the student's reaction. Did the student try to get you to keep the pencil longer, hoping you will forget later? Notice, you might get offers from other students who want to lend you a pencil.

Continue to drill the vocabulary terms. In three or four minutes, borrow a pencil from a different student. Carry out the same scenario as the previous one. This time, you will intentionally forget to return the pencil in three minutes. Keep the pencil for four minutes and return it to the student. Observe the student(s)' reaction(s) to keeping the pencil overtime. Give the student the Snicker bar.

Discussion

This scenario introduced the students to the role and importance of character. In this scenario, the teacher was the borrower and the student was the lender. In the first borrowing session, it did not cost the borrower anything because the pencil was returned early. In the second borrowing session, it cost the borrower a Snicker's bar because the pencil was returned late. Explain to the students that credit card providers provide credit to consumers with an incentive to receive interest from the use of the credit card.

Resources: www.EconEdLink, National Council on Economic Education

This lesson plan has been generously contributed by Soror Antoinette Wilcox, Ed D. She is a member of Beta Sigma, Lakeland, FL



"Poets Who Don't Know It."



LITERACY PROJECT



Poetry is the most versatile and wide-ranging of literary forms. Students can express and write in poetry things that cannot be said in prose. This "Poetry Anthology Project" is an easy and fun activity for students to develop their creative writing skills. This project addresses the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. (LA6.CCSS ELA Literacy 6.3d; RL 6.7; CCRA W.5;W.6)

Formula poems require you to begin every line in a similar fashion or insert a particular kind of word in every line. Formula poems use repetition. The given formulas should be viewed as frameworks instead of strict "recipes".

Criteria: PowerPoint Presentation with hard copy given to your teacher. Loop music for slides and add graphics. Write two examples for each poem type on each page. (One poem for Address, one poem for Poembio)

1. "What is _____?" Poem

Beginning of each line with "_____ is _____", you describe a given topic.

Example:

What is Childhood?

Childhood is time for believing
 Childhood is a memory to treasure
 Childhood is a promise to fulfill
 Childhood is the wonder of youth

2. **Five Sense Poem**

Describe a topic using each of the five senses. These poems are usually five lines in length — one line for each of the senses.

Example:

Rain

Sounds like stones hitting the roof
Looks like a miniature waterfall
Tastes like a drink of crystal clear water
Feels like a cool shower
Smells like a spring

3. **Poembio**

Line 1	First name
Line 2	Three adjectives that describe the person
Line 3	A relationship (friend of Kendall, brother of Thossy)
Line 4	Three things you person feels strongly about
Line 5	Three things that the person worries about
Line 6	Accomplishments
Line 7	Something funny that happened in the person's lifetime
Line 8	Two or three things the person would like to see happen
Line 9	Where the person lives
Line 10	Last name

NOTE: You can create a Poembio about someone in the newspaper, family member, or favorite entertainer. Research to find the information needed to complete your Poembio!

4. **"I Used to...," "But Now I..." (minimum ten lines)**

Example: I used to lose my temper,
But now I control myself.

5. **List Poem**

List poems are a fun way to be introduced to free verse. Simply brainstorm a list of words related to a specified topic. The first and last lines of this poem are the same (the topic).

Example:

Children

happy
laughing
shouting
playing
running
jumping
carefree
innocent
dreamers

Children

6. Address Poem

The guidelines are to respond to the sections given. The first line is the title of the poem.

- Write everything that comes to mind about this particular address
- Describe this address using your five senses
- Write colors that you see at this address
- Describe what shapes you see at this address
- Describe the tone/feeling you get from this address
- Describe your position at this address
- Describe the time
- Describe who is/are there (is he/she alone?)
- Is anyone speaking?
- Anyone moving about?
- What has happened?
- What will happen?
- What will never happen?

Example:

1122 North Osprey Avenue

Clean white sidewalks, spacious homes, palm tree, Bernice, Lessie, Mother, Koot, and Mildred
 Oranges, limes, kumquats, mangoes, fried okra, barbeque, sanctified church, cymbals, singing
 Lizards, sand'tween toes, green, pink, white, blue sky, cumulus clouds, gigantic orange/yellow sunset
 Rectangular, split-leveled pooled homes, cathedral ceilings, quiet and peaceful, piercing hot sun
 Late afternoon, Lessie preparing once again as she had to do with Ms. McKurtie
 We wait for what sustains us
 Good, Good God, let's eat.
 Regretting the inevitable we mortals-what we all must face
 To forever be a part
 Never forgetting 1122 North Osprey Avenue, Sarasota, Florida

7. Haiku

The Haiku originated in Japan. It is an unrhymed poem made up of three lines and 17 syllables. The first and third lines have five syllables each, and the second line has seven. Traditional Japanese Haikus describes something in nature, with reference to one of the seasons.

Example:

Autumn

Their lines are unique,
 So poetic the movements
 Wind joins in the dance.

8. Cinquains

In some ways, Cinquains are similar to Haikus. Both Cinquains and Haikus are short poems that follow a set pattern. Like Haikus, Cinquains are often about nature, but many authors write about other topics. Cinquain poems do not rhyme.

The inventor of the Cinquain was Adalaide Crapsey (1878-1914). Cinquains have five lines. The numbers of syllables in successive lines are two, four, six, eight, and two.

9. **Narrative Poem**

All narrative poems tell stories. The stories can be about real or fictional events or ordinary or famous people. Narrative poems can rhyme or be in free verse.

Captain Kidd

By Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet

This person in the gaudy clothes
Is worthy Captain Kidd.
They say he never buried gold.
I think, perhaps, he did.

They say it's all a story that
His favorite little song,
Was "Make these lubbers walk the plank!"
I think perhaps, they're wrong.

They say he never pirated
Beneath the Skull-and-Bones.
He merely traveled for his health
And spoke in soothing tones.
In fact, you'll read in nearly all
The newer history books
That he was mild as cottage cheese
But I don't like his looks!



10. **Quatrains**

A quatrain is a four-line poem. Its rhyme scheme may be **aabb**, **abab**, or **abba**

Example:

Education opens doors you'll find,
Staying focused is what you must do;
When you're the master of your own mind
Success will come to you

HAVE FUN CREATING YOUR OWN POEMS. Remember do not procrastinate!

ASSIGNMENT DUE: _____

*This lesson plan has been generously
contributed by Soror Jarian R. Graham, M.Ed.
She is a member of Eta Chapter, Camden, NJ*



UNITY HAND PROJECT

Purpose/Overview

The purpose of this activity is to bring unity among the teachers, parents, students, and staff in the school. This activity will show everyone involved that despite outside differences, people are often similar on the inside.

Objectives

To improve school climate.

To promote a positive school and a positive classroom climate.

To build a safe environment for learning.

To learn diversity and unity in the school.

To bring students, staff, and parents together.

To stop bullying.

Materials Needed

Hand print outline; construction paper; crayons; markers; various decorating materials; glue or tape.

Step 1: Faculty and Staff

The teachers and staff members will be introduced to this project during a staff meeting or staff development meeting.

- Talk about how we are different and how our children and parents are different too.
- The staff members will then be asked what we can do to help our children become successful and to lower teasing and bullying in the school. This will lead to the terms diversity and unity.
- Each person will receive a hand and various materials to decorate it.
- Once the hands are decorated, we will put the hands together in a circle shape.
- The staff will discuss how different each hand is but when they are all put together, a strong united front is formed.
- This will show the unity and diversity with the teachers and staff and show them that they are all needed to make the school climate positive.





Step 2: Parents/ Parent Workshop or PTA Night

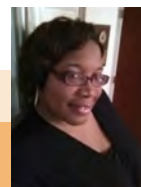
- The leader will speak to the parents about building a positive school climate and keeping our school safe.
- Brain storm ideas on how we can keep the school climate positive and how to keep the school safe.
- Explain that we are all different and unique and each child learns differently but if they have the support of their parents and teachers we can succeed.
- Each parent/guardian will receive a hand and decorate it with various materials; quotes can be placed on the hands also.
- The hands will be joined with the faculty and staff's hands. They can also create a hand so that when the children create their hands it can be joined together to promote a positive classroom environment.

Step 3: Students (School Guidance Lessons)

This will be done with each class. The students will create 2 hands. They will create a school hand and a classroom hand. This will build a positive classroom climate as well as a positive school climate. The students will be taught that everyone is different and that we are learn differently. The students will also be taught how to speak positive to each other and follow the rules. By creating the hand, the children will be instructed that they are agreeing to help our school and classroom become a safe haven and a positive learning environment. The students will decorate the hands. One hand will be joined with the parents and staff. The other hand will be for the classroom unity circle. This can be placed inside or directly outside of the classroom.

Reference: Miles, Leighla. (2013). Diversity Wreath.

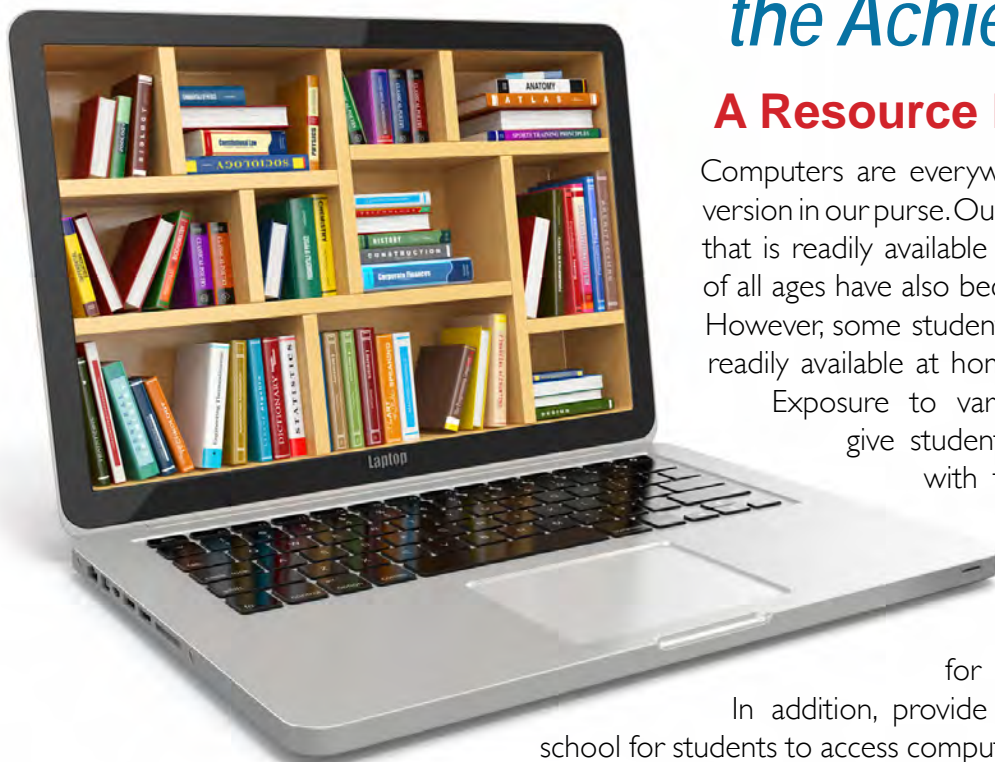
This lesson plan has been generously contributed by Soror Katrina Tillman. She is a member of Alpha Zeta Chapter, Richmond, VA.



Using Technology to Close

the Achievement Gap:

A Resource List for Educators



Computers are everywhere. Most of us carry a small version in our purse. Our lives depend on the information that is readily available to us via the internet. Students of all ages have also become dependent on technology. However, some students who do not have technology readily available at home are at a global disadvantage.

Exposure to various technological outlets will give students an opportunity to compete with their national and international peers. Listed below is a list of various Web 2.0 sources that can be used to close the technology gap for my lower economic students.

In addition, provide time before, during and after school for students to access computers in the classroom and library.

"Tech Thursday," is an example of setting aside one hour for students and their siblings to work on needed skills for thirty minutes and free technology time for the remaining thirty minutes. Use Edmodo: www.edmodo.com. This site allows you to integrate the other technology tools in one place.

1. ABC Mouse (Free for teachers): www.abcmouse.com
2. ABCya (educational computer games): www.abcya.com
3. Animoto: www.animoto.com
4. Assistments (Online formative assessments): <https://www.assistments.org/>
5. Better Lessons (Lesson Plans): <http://betterlesson.com/>
6. Bitesize: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/>
7. Blabberize (animate pictures): www.blabberize.com
8. Brain Nook: <http://brainnook.com/>
9. Calculation Nation: <http://calculationnation.com/>
10. Cartoon maker: <http://www.toondoo.com/>
11. Class Dojo (behavior management system): www.classdojo.com
12. Creaza Education (Reading): <http://www.crezaeducation.com/>
13. Cybersleuth Kids: <http://cybersleuth-kids.com/>
14. Digit Whiz (math skills): www.digitwhiz.com
15. Digital Delights for Learners: <http://www.scoop.it/t/digital-delights-for-learners>
16. Easy CBM (Progress Monitoring for Math and Reading): <http://easycbm.com/>
17. Five Card Flickr (Students construct a story based on the images): <http://5card.cogdogblog.com/play.php>

18. Flocabulary (using music): www.flocabulary.com
19. Fotobabble (Create talking photos): <http://www.fotobabble.com/>
20. Free Rice (vocabulary enrichment answers donate rice to end World Hunger): www.freerice.com
21. Games for Science: www.gamesforscience.com
22. Glogster (Interactive Posters): www.glogster.com
23. Inspirational movie clips: www.wingclips.com
24. Interactive games, etc.: <http://gamequarium.org/>
25. Interactive Sites for Education: <http://interivesites.weebly.com/index.html>
26. Interactive teaching resources all subjects/all grades: <http://www.iq.poquoson.org/science.htm#four>
27. Interactive Websites for PreK-12: <http://jc-schools.net/tutorials/interactive.htm>
28. Internet 4 Classrooms: <http://internet4classrooms.com/>
29. IXL (Math): <http://www.ixl.com/>
30. Jefferson Lab (Science): <http://education.jlab.org/index.html>
31. Jeopardy Labs (jeopardy games galore): <https://jeopardylabs.com/>
32. Kerpoof: <http://www.kerpoof.com/>
33. Khan Academy: <https://www.khanacademy.org/>
34. Learn Zillion: <http://learnzillion.com/>
35. Live Binders (Search for Bookmarks on anything): <http://www.livebinders.com/>
36. Manga High (games-based math teaching resource): http://mangahigh.com/en_us/
37. Mentor Mob: <http://www.mentormob.com/>
38. One Word (Students write about a single word for six seconds): www.oneword.com
39. Online Bookmaking and Publishing: Bookemon (Create Books): <http://www.bookemon.com/>
40. Online Bookmaking and Publishing: Create Space: www.createspace.com
41. Online Bookmaking and Publishing: Lulu: (connects to Amazon and Barnes and Noble to sell and get paid): www.lulu.com
42. Online Bookmaking and Publishing: Stories from the Web: www.storiesfromtheweb.org
43. Online Bookmaking and Publishing: Story Jumper: www.storyjumper.com
44. Online Bookmaking and Publishing: Storybird (use pictures that are already there to make a story): <http://storybird.com/>
45. Power Points: www.pppst.com
46. Prezi (multimedia- you can search and use Prezis made by others): www.prezi.com
47. Print, Cut and Fold: <http://printcutfold.com/>
48. Professor Garfield: www.professorgarfield.org
49. Q-Topia (online learning): www.qtopia.com
50. Quest Garden (Web Quests Search): <http://questgarden.com/author/examplestop.php>
51. Quiz Revolution (Online quiz creator): <http://www.quizrevolution.com/>
52. Quiz Tree: <http://quiz-tree.com/>
53. Scoot Pad: <http://scootpad.com/>
54. Starfall: www.starfall.com
55. Story Fair: <http://storyfair.webs.com/>
56. Story Jumper (Create Books): <http://www.storyjumper.com/>
57. Storyline Online (celebrities read picture books): <http://www.storylineonline.net/>
58. Study Jams (Math and Science): www.studyjams.com
59. Study Ladder: <http://www.studyladder.com/>
60. Sumdog: <http://www.sumdog.com/>
61. Super Teacher Tools: <http://superteachertools.com/>
62. Symbaloo (Search for bookmarks on anything): <http://www.symbaloo.com/>
63. Teachers' Domain (digital media for the classroom-Free): www.teachersdomain.org/
64. Teaching Channel: <https://www.teachingchannel.org/>

This lesson plan has been generously contributed by Soror Monica Jones, Ed. S. She is a member of Epsilon Tau Chapter, Stone Mountain, GA.



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SCHOOL GIRLS)**
KUDOS (HIGH
SCHOOL BOYS)
**C O L L E G E
G U I D A N C E**
K A P P A
OMICRON TAU
(KOT)

Education

SCHOLARSHIP **READING**
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AMERICAN HISTORY
COMPUTER LITERACY
MATHEMATICS **TEACH-**
A-RAMA LEADERSHIP
TRAINING **PUBLIC**
RELATIONS ACADEMIC
ISSUES **CURRENT**
TRENDS COMMISSION
ON CIVIL RIGHTS

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**NUTRITION, HEALTH
& HYPERTENSION**
ASSAULT ON
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CHILDREN & ADULT
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Chapter: Beta Zeta
University: Fisk University
Scholarship Chair: Jania M. Green Clark

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University: UT Martin
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University: South Carolina State
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Epsilon Eta	New Bern, NC
Epsilon Sigma	Gastonia, NC
Epsilon Upsilon	Greensboro, NC
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Psi	Mobile, AL
Alpha Beta	Nashville, TN
Alpha Gamma	Jacksonville, FL
Alpha Delta	Miami, FL
Alpha Epsilon	Atlanta, GA

Alpha Theta	New Orleans, LA
Alpha Omicron	Tampa, FL
Alpha Phi	Pensacola, FL
Beta Beta	Montgomery, AL
Beta Eta	Memphis, TN
Beta Kappa	West Palm Beach, FL
Beta Xi	Orlando, FL
Beta Sigma	Lakeland, FL
Beta Pi	Chattanooga, TN
Gamma Gamma	Panama City, FL
Gamma Eta	St. Augustine, FL
Gamma Theta	Brewton, AL
Gamma Omicron	Miami, FL
Gamma Psi	Jackson, TN
Delta Delta	Jacksonville, FL
Delta Zeta	Waycross, GA
Delta Iota	Olustee, FL
Delta Mu	Memphis, TN
Epsilon Mu	Bainbridge, GA
Epsilon Tau	Stone Mountain, GA
Epsilon Psi	Jackson, MS

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Mu	Chicago, IL
Sigma	Cincinnati, OH
Tau	Indianapolis, IN
Chi	Detroit, MI
Alpha Alpha	Kansas City, MO
Alpha Eta	Evansville, IN
Alpha Nu	St. Louis, MO
Alpha Xi	Cleveland, OH
Beta Gamma	Toledo, OH
Beta Delta	Dayton, OH
Beta Iota	Akron, OH
Beta Mu	Gary, IN
Beta Chi	Milwaukee, WI
Gamma Alpha	Columbus, OH
Gamma Beta	Kansas City, KS
Gamma Delta	Flint, MI
Gamma Kappa	Saginaw, MI
Gamma Rho	Shaker Heights, OH
Epsilon Xi	Forest Park, OH
Zeta Gamma	Maywood, IL

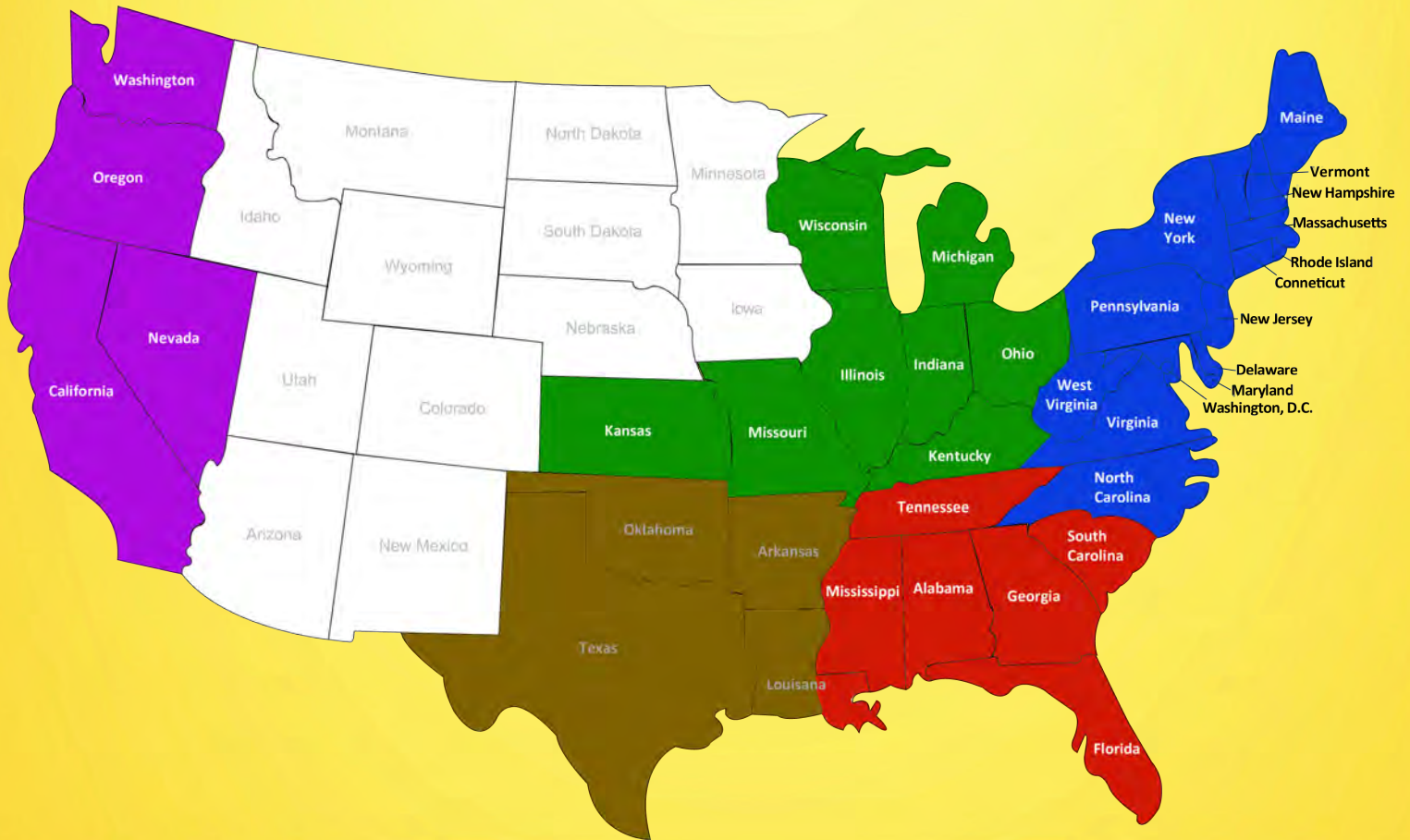
Southwest Region

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Epsilon Epsilon	Edmond, OK
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For more information, please contact

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Conclave Highlights — July 11-17

SATURDAY, JULY 11, 2015

2:00 to 4:00 pm Community Service Project

SUNDAY, JULY 12, 2015

9:00 am – 11:00 am Worship Service
11:30 am – 5:00 pm Visit Winston-Salem
4:00 pm – 10:00 pm Vendors' Marketplace
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm Evening with the Anthropos
10:00 pm – 12:00 am The Teachers' Lounge

MONDAY, JULY 13, 2015

9:00 am – 6:00 pm Vendors' Marketplace
9:00 am – 10:30 am General Session
10:30 am – 12:00 pm Educational Workshops
1:15 pm – 2:45 pm Educational Workshops
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm Public Meeting
8:30 pm – 10:00 pm President's Reception
10:00 pm – 12:00 am The Teachers' Lounge

TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2015

9:00 am – 11:00 am Sororal Leadership Institute
9:00 am – 10:00 pm Vendors' Marketplace
11:00 am – 12:00 pm Sororal Workshops
12:00 pm – 2:00 pm Membership Luncheon
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Sororal Workshops
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm 1st Plenary Session
10:00 pm – 12:00 am Candidates' Forum/Receptions

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2015

6:30 am – 7:45 am Elections
8:30 am – 11:30 am Vital Issues Breakfast
9:00 am – 10:00 pm Vendors' Marketplace
12:30 pm – 3:30 pm 2nd Plenary Session
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm Every Member Forum
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm Gala Night
10:00 pm – 1:00 am The Teachers' Lounge

THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2015

9:00 am – 12:00 pm 3rd Plenary Session
9:00 am – 12:00 pm Vendors' Marketplace
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm Candle Lighting Service
1:00 pm – 10:00 pm Vendors' Marketplace
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm Visit Winston-Salem
6:00 pm – 10:00 pm Calla Lily Gala
10:00 pm – 12:00 am Entertainment

FRIDAY, JULY 17, 2015

9:00 am – 12:00 pm Vendors' Marketplace
9:00 am – 9:30 am Council Continental Breakfast
9:30 am – 11:00 am Post-Conclave Council Meeting
12:00 pm – 3:00 pm New Officers' Luncheon

NOTE: AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Dr. Brenda Burrell, Chief Editor, Krinon
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