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26th Annual NYAR Conference (March 1-4,
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Building a Culture of Hope for At-Risk Students

Emily Louise Gibson
blueheronms@yahoo.com

Robert D. Barr
Boise State University, rdalebarr@aol.com

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Gibson, Emily Louise and Barr, Robert D., "Building a Culture of Hope for At-Risk Students" (2015). *National Youth Advocacy and Resilience Conference*. 159.
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National Youth-At-Risk Conference

Savannah, Georgia
2015



Building a Culture of Hope for At-Risk Students



Access to Presentation

Download PPT and PDF Files Here:

<http://tinyurl.com/q8bkc8y>

Robert D. Barr



Oregon State University

Boise State University

Cell: 208-860-1732

rdalebarr@aol.com

- National authority on poverty and the effective education of poor and minority students.
- Author/coauthor over a dozen books.
- Nationwide and international experience as a consultant, keynote speaker, and workshop presenter.
- Former Dean of Education at Oregon State University.
- Former Dean at Boise State University where he helped start the university's first doctoral program and a new Center for School Improvement.
- Dr. Barr continues to serve as a consultant to high poverty schools and university research centers.

Emily L. Gibson



Instructional Coach
Northern California

Cell: 707-834-8165

blueheronms@yahoo.com

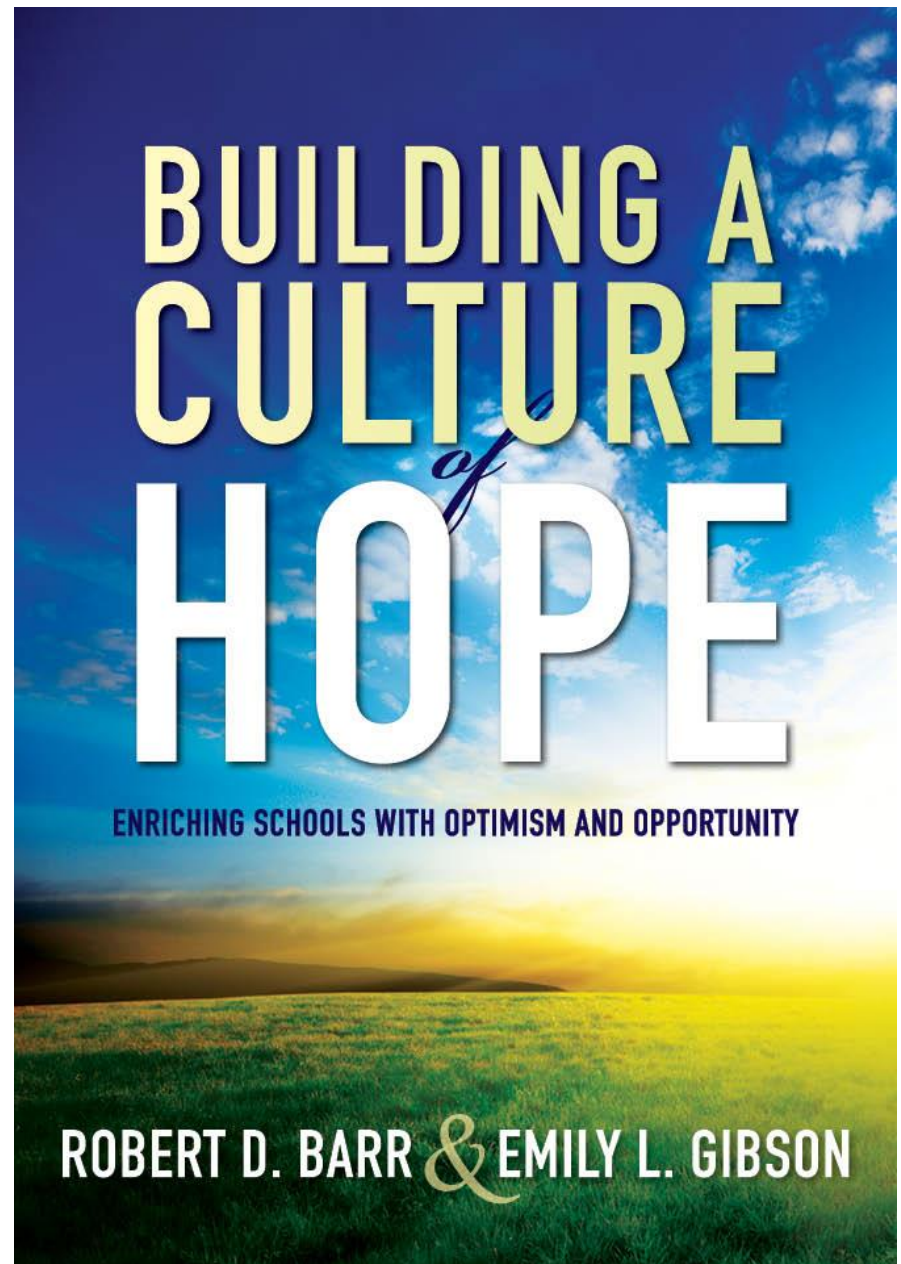
- 20 years of experience teaching in high-poverty schools.
- Instructional Coach in high-poverty schools.
- Professional development provider in writing, classroom management, differentiated instruction, SRSD, and curriculum design.
- Founded a charter school site for at-risk youth in grades 6-8.
- Earned Ed.D. in School Improvement from Boise State University.
- Earned MA in Education, emphasis on differentiated instruction, from Humboldt State University.



2014 Revere Award
Finalist



2015 Teachers' Choice
Award, Learning Magazine



Poverty and Education

- **WHAT STUDENTS NEED TO SUCCEED BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL...**

Our World Has Changed...



Transformation of Jobs

- New jobs **demand** technology skills
- 70% of the fastest growing jobs **require** education beyond high school
- 40% of all new jobs will require **at least** an associate's degree

UNCLE SAM WANTS YOU!

Well...not **all** of you...

Over 37 million Americans 17 to 24 years old are **unfit for the military**

- Too obese
- Uneducated, GED, dropouts
- Physically unfit
- On Prescribed Medication: Ritalin or other Stimulants [An Epidemic of 2 Million Children]

Predicting Income

Education has a dollar value...

	HS Dropout	HS Diploma	AA/AS Degree	BA/BS Degree	Master's Degree
Males	\$26,416	\$38,220	\$44,564	\$64,792	\$84,344
Females	\$20,072	\$29,172	\$34,268	\$48,412	\$60,164

All Students Must Have High Academic Achievement

- Or live out their lives **un**employed, **under**employed, or **un**employable
- Education...
the only door of Opportunity
- Education...
the ultimate Civil Right

Education is a Civil Right

“ Once social change begins, it cannot be reversed. You **cannot un-educate** the person who has learned to read. You **cannot humiliate** the person who feels pride. You **cannot oppress** the people who are not afraid anymore. We have seen the future and the future is ours”

Cesar Chavez

Poverty and Education

- **WHAT HIGH-POVERTY STUDENTS OFTEN EXPERIENCE**

Poverty and Education

*“How important is education? I will tell you how important it is. For my children, it is their **only hope**. I am telling you it is their **only hope**. I don’t know about your kids, but for my kids, education is a matter of **life and death**.”*

-Low-income Parent, Denton, Texas

Effects of Poverty

- Poor Health Care/Nutrition
- Few Books/Computers/Vocabulary
- Parents: Little Education, Highly Mobile
- Unchallenging Summer Vacation
- Low Self Confidence/Externally Controlled: Learned Helplessness

Many children prove to be highly resilient regarding the effects of poverty

Effects of Poverty: Research on Vocabulary

- Affluent Families:

2,300 words/hour

- Blue Collar Families:

1,200 words/hour

- Poverty Families:

600 words /hour

Apartheid of Ignorance

- A growing separation...
 - Between those with education and those without
 - Between those who enjoy economic prosperity and those living in the “other America” of poverty

Failure of Education

- Tens of thousands of failing schools
- Even high poverty/high performing schools often fall short
- Many students learn to read, succeed in elementary and middle school only to falter and drop out prior to graduation.

Long-Term Effects of Illiteracy & Learning Disabilities

Low levels of literacy are powerful predictors:

- Welfare dependency
- **Incarceration**
- Substance abuse
- **High costs of interventions**

Long Term Effects of Illiteracy & Learning Disabilities

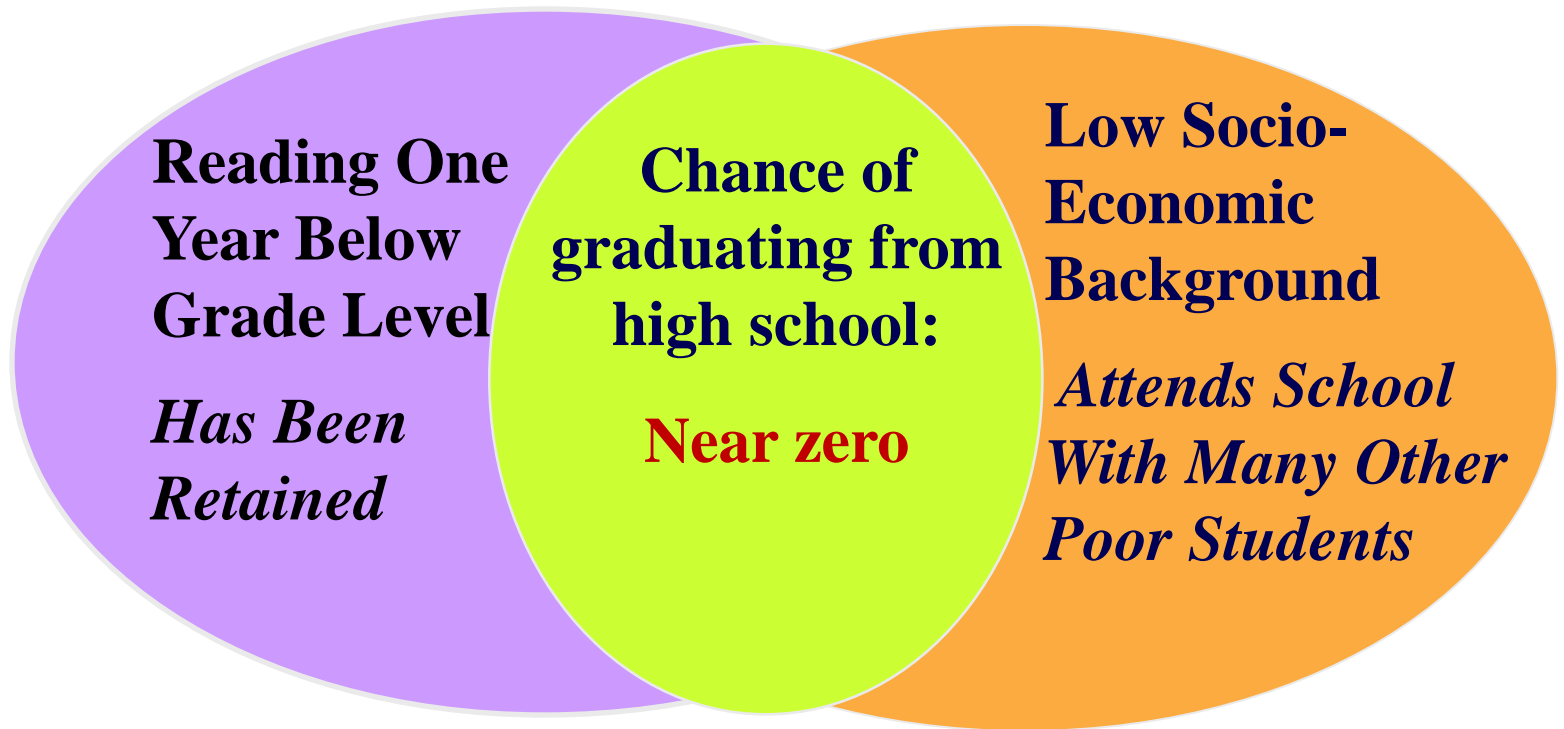
Nearly 40% of adjudicated juvenile delinquents have:

- Treatable learning disabilities
- Over-looked or undiagnosed in school

Long Term Effects of Illiteracy & Learning Disabilities

- More than 1/2 the adult prison population lacks literacy required in labor market.
- More than 80% of prisoners are high school dropouts.

Elementary Students At Risk



Increasing Achievement of At-Risk Students at Each Grade Level

US Dept. of Education, Karoly, 1998; Barr and Parrett, 2003

Dropouts...

- 7.8% of 19-24-year-olds **do not** hold a high school diploma.
 - 11.8% of Low-income
 - 1.9% of Upper-income
- The majority of students **dropout in 9th grade.**

Failure Factories

- Failing schools where achievement gaps have not closed
- *Where fewer than 60% of students graduate on time!*
- Thousands **still** operating throughout our nation



Kevin Siers, The Charlotte Observer, February 2004.



Ineffective School Practices

Brutalize and Stigmatize,

Isolate and Abandon

our neediest students



The results are devastating...

“Kids who come in a little behind, leave a lot behind.”

-Kati Haycock, Education Trust

Self-Assessment & Reflection

How are your poor and minority students doing?

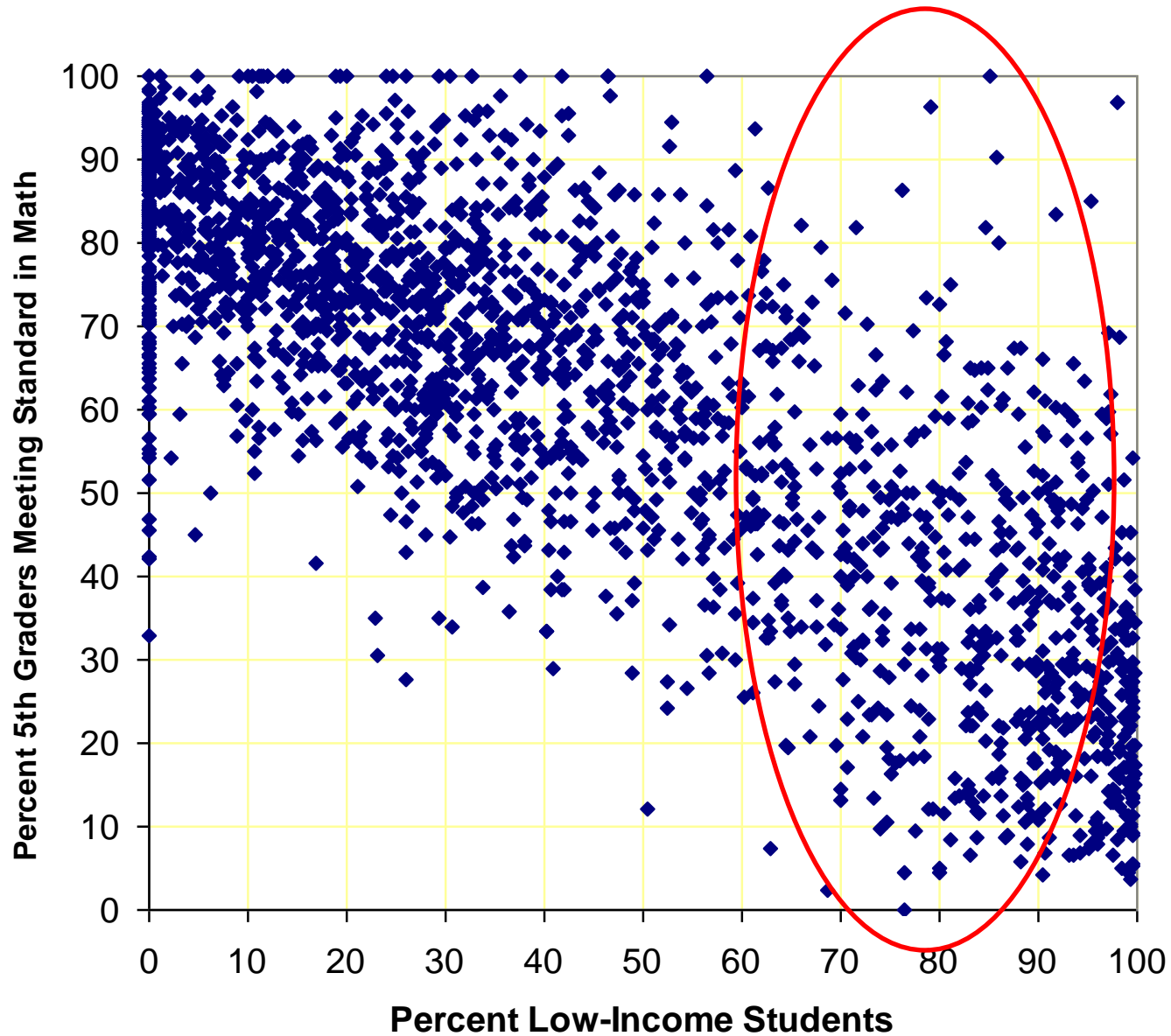
- How many graduate on time?
- How many graduate with high academic achievement and strong skills?
- How many must take remedial courses in college?

Reflection Questions

First Wave Research

- **HIGH POVERTY/HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS**

Poverty vs. Achievement in Illinois Elementary Schools

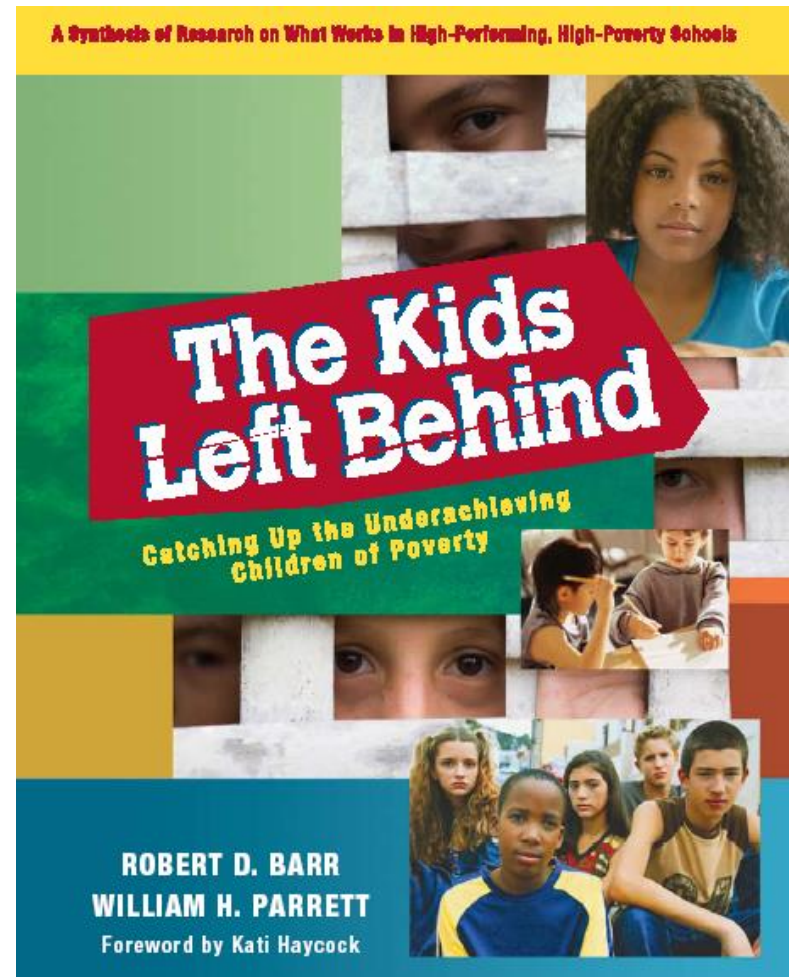
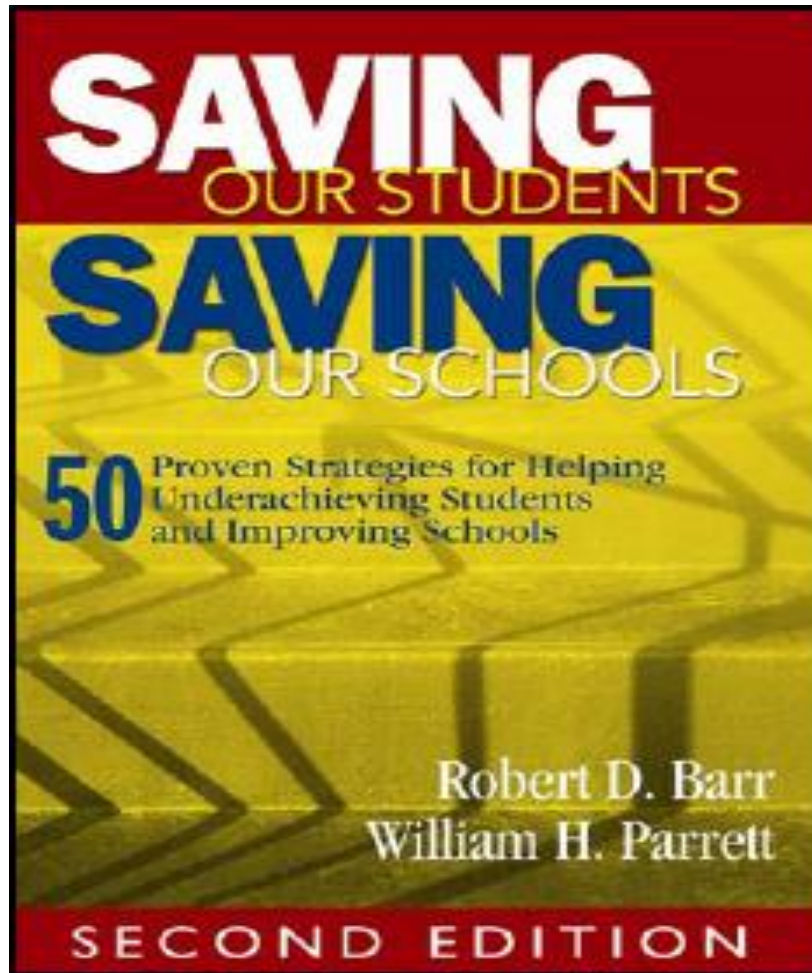


Source: Education Trust analysis of data from *National School-Level State Assessment Score Database* (www.schooldata.org). Data are from 2002.

Research: High Poverty/High Performing Schools

- A flood of research on high poverty/ high performing schools since early 2000s
- Research identified effective practices
- Research identified the essential characteristics of effective schools

First Wave Research...



Characteristics of High Poverty/ High Performing Schools

- District and School Leadership
- Engage Parents/Community Partners
- Understand/Hold High Expectations for Poverty Level Students
- Focus on Reading
- Align/Monitor/Manage Curriculum
- Culture of Data/Assessment Literacy
- Build and Sustain Instructional Capacity
- Reorganize Time/Space/Transitions

The Kids Left Behind, 2007

Five Instructional & Organizational Strategies that Work!

- Definitive Leadership
- **Extend Learning Time**
- Ensure Mastery of Basic Skills
- **Monitor Progress**
- Remediate/Re-Teach

First Wave Research

Positive Outcomes

- Resulted in tens of thousands of new high poverty/high performing schools
- Achievement gap closed or significantly narrowed at many elementary and middle schools

First Wave Research

Unchanged Outcomes

- The achievement gap remains almost unchanged at the high school level, even while average graduation rates continue to climb.
- Thousands of failing schools, K-12
- Male students of color continue to have nearly a 50/50 probability of graduating

First Wave Research

Now What?

“We just don’t understand it...we have tried everything; we use all of the effective strategies and yet there are so many student we have simply been unable to reach. We can’t try any harder....we are at a loss about what else to do. What are we missing?”

-High School Teacher, Florida

Second Wave Research

 **A SEARCH FOR MORE
EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES**

Focusing on the Needs of Students



Second Wave Research

*Academics being equal,
what makes a successful
high-poverty school
successful?*

Research on Student Needs

- School observations/interviews:
 - Effective schools focus on students' social & emotional needs
- Effective schools build foundations of student efficacy:
 - Students come to believe they can learn and succeed in school
- Cultivating “seeds of hope”

Learned Helplessness

“ I think that our greatest challenge is the fact that so many poor students do not believe that they can learn and succeed in school. They arrive at school with a learned helplessness.”

-Rick Stiggins

Learned Helplessness

- Little power to change one's life or future.
- Life is completely subject to an external forces.
- Luck, chance, or fate determine success, **not** effort/persistence

Boredom, Apathy, Anger

- Learned helplessness often transforms into boredom, apathy and anger
- Cultural conflicts between teachers and students = major obstacle for learning
- Lost Talent: students who **could** succeed in college/career, but fail and drop out

The Antidote: Hope

- Growing Research on Hope
- Brain Research on Optimism
- Hope Theory/Hope Survey
- Hope Can Be Taught

Teaching Hope

Schools teach hope by having students:


- Carefully consider options
- **Make decisions**
- Establish goals
- **Develop reasonable plans**
- Monitor progress towards goals

Teaching Hope

Optimism and Hope = antidotes to Learned Helplessness and Cultural Clashes

“How much hope and optimism your kids feel at school is more important for boosting achievement than IQ... Without it, all other strategies will fail.”

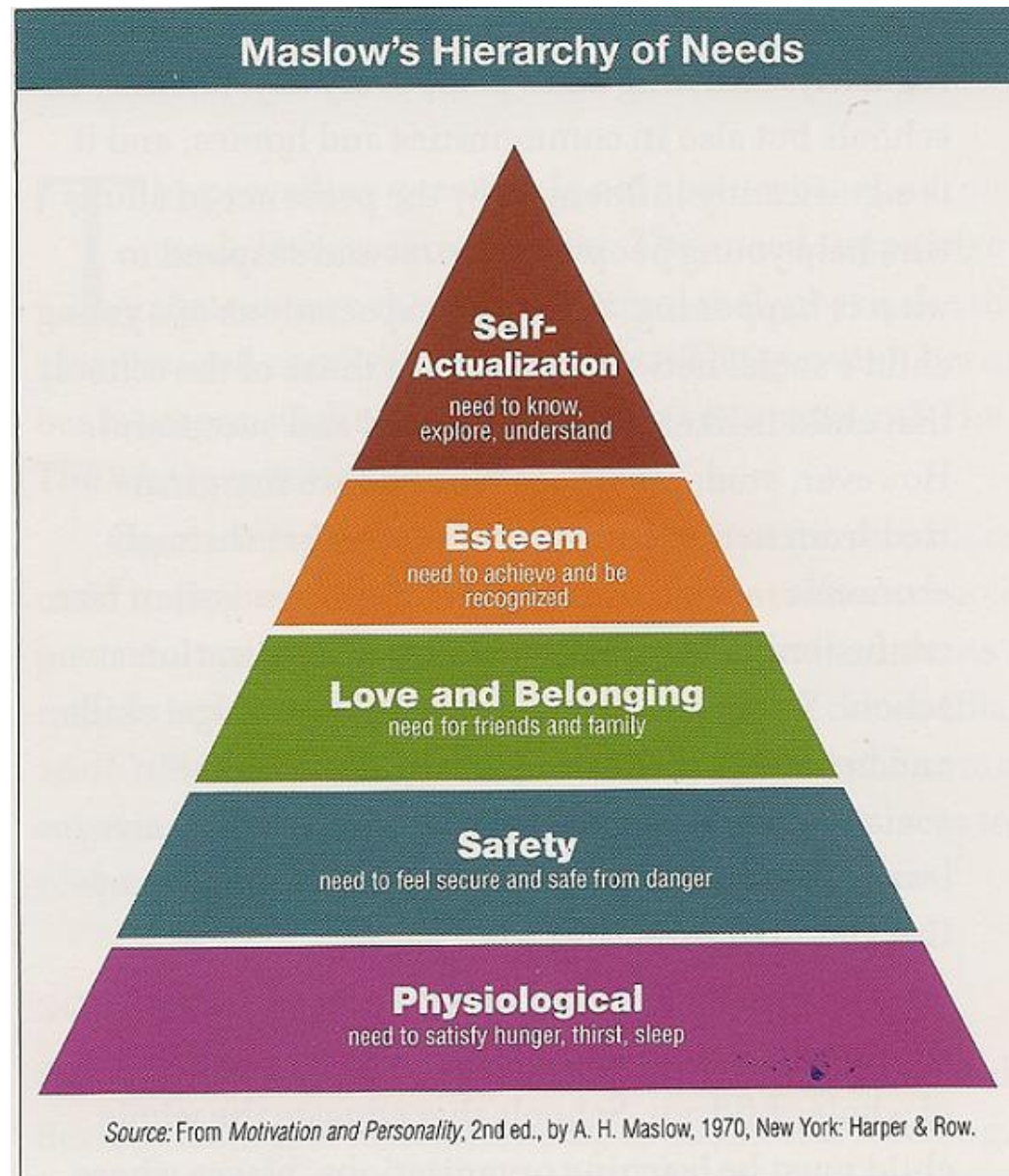
-Eric Jensen, 2011



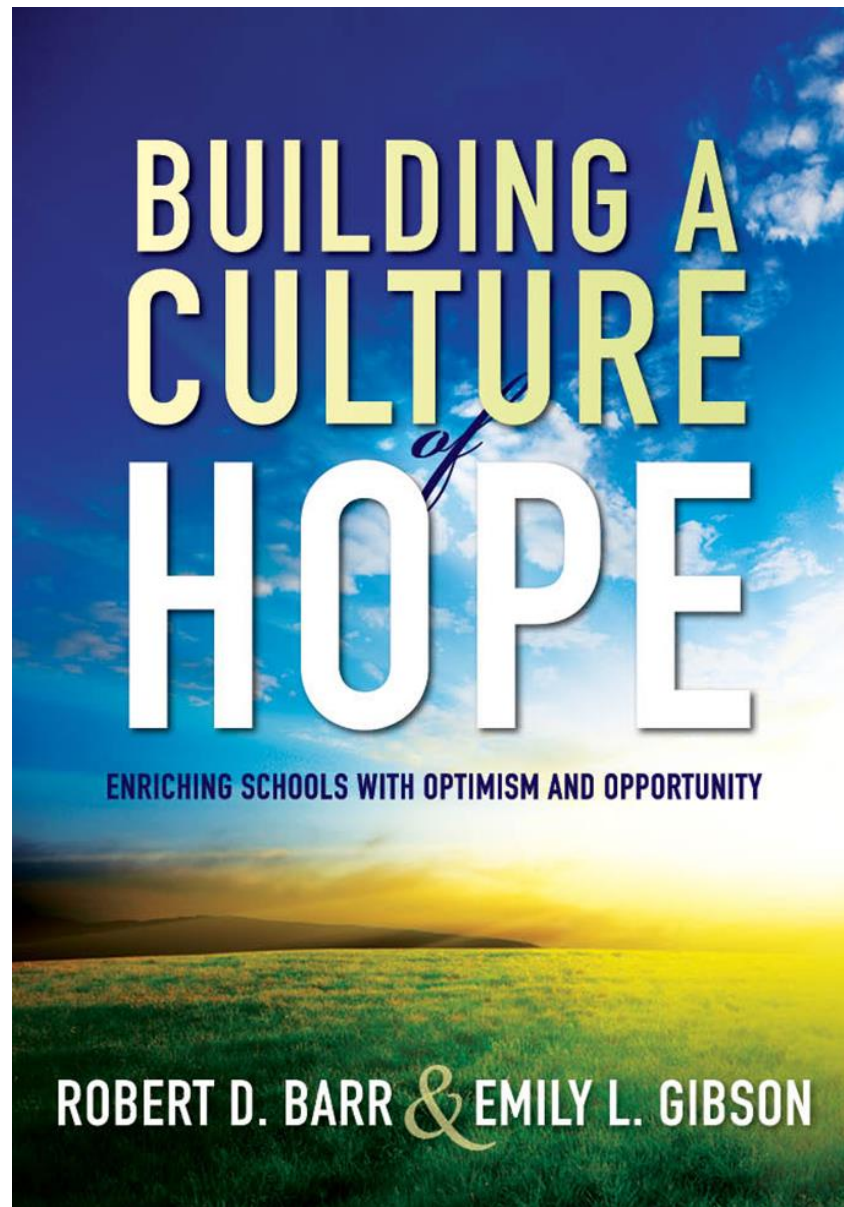
"Unless U.S. schools can better align learning strategies and objectives with fundamental aspects of human nature, they will always struggle to help students achieve their full potential"

--State of America's Schools, Gallup Poll 2013

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Second Wave Research



Effective Schools

- Implement Rigorous Common Core Curriculum
- Use Research-based Instructional Strategies

AND

- Develop a **Culture of Hope** focusing on students' social/emotional needs

Hope, Engagement, Well-Being

- Hope & Engagement = Significant predictors of student achievement
- Increasing student engagement = Gains in reading and math
- Teachers' engagement levels **directly relate** to student engagement & achievement

2009 and 2010 Gallup Polls

Building a Culture of Hope



Culture of Hope:

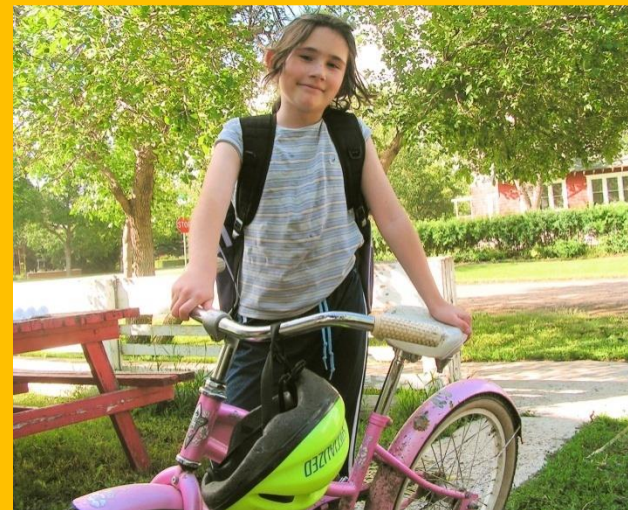
The Four Seeds of Hope

- **Sense of Optimism:** I can do this...
- **Sense of Belonging:** I have a safe place of support and acceptance
- **Sense of Pride:** I am a worthy person, I am proud of my family, I can succeed
- **Sense of Purpose:** I will learn and find a pathway out of poverty

Seeds of Hope

◦ **DEVELOPING A SENSE OF
OPTIMISM**

A Sense of Optimism



Sense of Optimism

1. Welcoming Atmosphere
2. School-wide Consensus
3. Working Together: The Power of We
4. School-wide Can Do Attitude
5. School-wide High Expectations and Positive Reinforcement
6. Monitor student attitudes

Sense of Optimism

1. Welcoming Atmosphere

- Students are greeted and welcomed by name at school and classroom
- Schools use signs, posters & murals expressing welcome and optimism
- Every effort is made to help each family feel “this is my school”

Sense of Optimism

2. School Wide Agreements:

- Believe ALL students can & will learn.
- Ensure ALL students learn
- Respond when students struggle
- Monitor students' progress
- Hold high expectations for all

Sense of Optimism

3. Working Together: The Power of We

- Informal grassroots effort
- Meet regularly
- Share and compare
- Build teacher leadership

Sense of Optimism

4. Can Do Attitude

- **Contagious**
- Optimistic school-wide attitude
- **No Excuses!**
- Help students believe they can achieve a better life

“You can do this!”

Sense of Optimism

5. High Expectations/Positive Reinforcement:

- High Expectations for All Students
- Treat All Students as Gifted and Talented
- All Students Take College Prep/ Advance Placement Courses

Sense of Optimism

6. Monitor Student Opinions and Beliefs:

- Use anonymous student surveys
- Repeat surveys later in the school year
- Monitor changes/progress
- Survey results lead to school goals
- Surveys show respect for students

“We were so surprised by what students said in the surveys”

Staff/Student Surveys: Optimism

- Staff Survey: Optimism
- Student Survey: Optimism

Self-Assessment & Reflection

How is your Sense of Optimism?

- Do you have school wide atmosphere of optimism?
- Do your students believe they can learn & find a pathway out of poverty?
- Have you asked your students what they think and how they feel about their schools?

Reflection Questions

Seeds of Hope

◦ **DEVELOPING A SENSE OF
PLACE & BELONGING**

A Sense of Belonging



A Lower Lake Leopard is Responsible, Respectful, and Safe.

On Jan. 23, [redacted] saw [redacted] being a model of Responsibility. After the bell rang and the other students hurried away, he stayed to close out computers and tuck in chairs. Thank you [redacted] for taking care of the Library! You are a Leopard!



Student Belonging

To learn effectively, every student must feel:

- Safe and accepted
- Free from intimidation and bullying
- Positive relationships with supportive friends
- Connected to caring adults

Ensure Student Belonging

- Ensure that every student finds a place where they belong
- Create a “surrogate” family atmosphere/small learning community

“I have gone from the invisible man to the family man”

Challenge: School Size

The greatest challenge to poverty level students is school size. Rather than finding a place where they belong, they too often feel isolated and alone

“No one knows my name. No one cares if I come to school. I feel invisible.”

The Greatest Challenge

Sense of Belonging at the Secondary Level:

1. Improve Transitions
2. Ninth Grade Academy
3. Student Advisory Groups
4. Extra Curricular Activities
5. Learning Communities

Sense of Belonging: High School

1. Improve Transitions:

- From Elementary to Middle School
- From Middle School to High School
- From High School to Post Secondary Training/Education

“I felt lost and alone when I started middle school”

Sense of Belonging: High School

2. Ninth Grade Academy

- Helps develop a “sense of belonging”
- Organized as small Learning Community
- Emphasis: basic skills, personalized support, career education

Sense of Belonging: High School

3. Student Advisory Groups

- Key to success with low-income students
- **Small group of students**
- Meet daily or weekly over years
- **Emphasis on building relationships**
- Topics: problem solving, careers, mentoring, student advocacy...

Sense of Belonging: High School

4. Extra Curricular Activities

- Help every student find “their place”
- Effective high schools have dozens of clubs/activities
- Leads to better achievement & attendance
- Provide opportunities for responsibilities & career exploration

90% Involved in Activities?



Sense of Belonging

5. Learning Communities

- A few students and teachers from each content area work exclusively together
- **Surrogate family atmosphere**
- Most effective high schools are small optional programs/career themes

“Its easier to move a cemetery than change a large school”

Staff/Student Surveys: Place

- Staff Survey: Place & Belonging
- Student Survey: Place and Belonging

Self-Assessment & Reflection

How is your Sense of Place & Belonging?

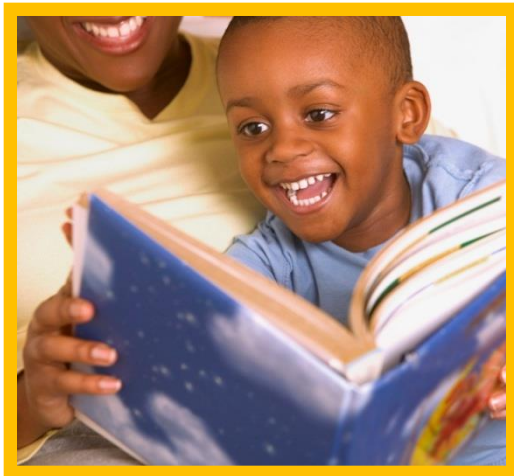
- Do students from all demographics belong in your schools?
- Are you taking a stand against bullying, gangs, and divisions among students?
- Have you surveyed your students about belonging and connection?

Reflection Questions

Seeds of Hope

◦ **DEVELOPING A SENSE OF PRIDE,
SELF-ESTEEM, AND SELF-
CONFIDENCE**

Self-Confidence and Pride...



A Sense of Pride, Self-Esteem, and Self-Confidence

“It’s not that students from low-income families cannot learn. It’s that they have such low self-esteem that they feel they cannot learn. They have had so few experiences that help them build their self-confidence. So we start our instructional program with a concerted effort to build the personal pride and self-esteem of each of our students. We have found that if we can build pride and self-esteem, the learning will all but take care of itself.”

-Middle School Principal, Iowa

Sense of Pride and Self Esteem

1. Master Basic Skills
2. Monitor Learning/Interventions
3. Organize Learning Into Small Units
4. Career Exploration/Education
5. Experiences and Responsibilities
6. Rigorous Curriculum & Advanced Placement

Sense of Pride and Self Esteem

1. Basic Skills/Personalized Learning

- Students master basic skills early
- Basic Skills Center with trained professionals for high school students
- Intensive summer support
- Schools/Teachers identify students in need

Sense of Pride and Self Esteem

2. Ongoing Monitoring & Interventions

- Ongoing Assessment identify students
- **A System of Intervention provides support**
- Continuous Progress Monitoring ensures steady growth
- **Counseling Program**
- Regular “Check In” with struggling students

Sense of Pride and Self Esteem

3. Reorganizing Courses into Small Units of Learning

- Manageable units facilitate learning
- **Students can work at own pace**
- Students encouraged to help one another

*“We want our students to be successful,
one small step after another”*

Sense of Pride and Self Esteem

4. Career Exploration/Education

- Organize school into career themes:
 - Health, Science, Technology, Education, Performing Arts...
- **Hold Career Fairs**
- Create mentoring programs
- **Establish job-shadowing and service learning programs**

Sense of Pride and Self Esteem

5. Success Through Experiences and Responsibilities

- Students assume **real** responsibilities in schools and communities
- **Students build self confidence**
 - **Voluntary service projects: River Guides, Science Circus**
- Students do the work of scientists, authors, researchers, etc.

Sense of Pride and Self Esteem

6. Rigorous Curriculum and Advance Placement Courses

- All students must complete a challenging curriculum
- NO watered down courses, NO “Opportunity Math”
- All students should have access to advance placement courses

“ Hey, I can do college level courses!”

Staff/Student Surveys: Pride

- Staff Survey Pride & Self-Esteem
- Student Survey: Pride and Self-Esteem

Self-Assessment & Reflection

How is your Sense of Pride & Self Esteem?

- Do students experience high expectations from all staff?
- Has your staff been trained in strategies for reaching/teaching high-poverty populations?
- Do students have real responsibilities?

Reflection Questions

Seeds of Hope

◦ **DEVELOPING A SENSE OF
PURPOSE**

Real Work, Real Purpose



Purpose/Relevance

Goal of education: to provide a solid educational foundation that springboards students to success beyond high school

- Courses must connect to the world outside the classroom and school.
- Courses must relate to students' talents, interests and dreams.
- Learning must have purpose beyond a grade

Purpose/Relevance

- Student motivation is directly related to purpose
- Finding a personal purpose encourages focus, effort and even sacrifice
- Purpose leads to understanding the relevance in studies

Sense of Purpose

Developing a Sense of Purpose Demands:

1. Combining academic work with experiences
2. Exploring career possibilities and making decisions
3. Developing a personal plan for the future

Sense of Purpose

1. Combine Academic Work With Experiences In The Community

- Service Learning
- Career Exploration
- Volunteer Projects

“ I am going to nursing school”

Sense of Purpose

2. Explore Career Opportunities:

- Career Fairs
- Community Experiences
- Career Clusters
- Studying Careers/Job Requirements
- Mentoring/Counseling
- Making Personal Decisions

Is There Life After High School?

- Every high school student and family needs help in considering the future.
- Every student needs support in considering a wide variety of possible career possibilities
- This is especially important for poverty level students

Parade

SUNDAY, APRIL 13, 2014 | PARADE.COM



LOOKING FOR A JOB? ENTER TO
A RÉSUMÉ MAKEOVER FROM
EXPERT AT LINKEDIN. SEE PAGE



DAWN HOOVER
FAIRHOPE, ALA.
RELIEF VETERINARIAN



JOE BIDEN
VICE PRESIDENT
OF THE UNITED STATES



GLORIA ROSS
ST. LOUIS
OBITUARY WRITER



GIL RODRIGUEZ
MURRAY, UTAH
FIRE CHIEF



SANDY



BRUNO MARS
SINGER-
SONGWRITER



KARLA TURNEY
NORTH LIBERTY, IOWA
CLINICAL PHARMACIST

WHAT PEOPLE EARN!



In our annual salary survey



MICHAEL
COACH



BEYONCÉ, 32 * POP MUSIC SUPERSTAR

\$57 million (est.)

Beyoncé was the fastest-selling album ever on iTunes, with no pre-publicity. **Fun fact:** She earned an estimated \$6,507 per hour last year.



DONNA DEFORBES, 41
Warwick, R.I.
Writer and Designer
\$30,000

This work-at-home mom blogs at *eco-mothering.com* and contributes to kids' magazines.



RANDY KAYE, 61
Trumbull, CONN.
Voice Actress
\$90,000

Kaye's voice is heard everywhere from commercials to video games to audiobooks.



VALERIE LEFFLER, 50
Richland Center, WIS.
Cheese Worker
\$46,800

"I work in 'The Cookers.' The small curds take a ride in a hot bath and—voilà—it comes out as cheese."



CRAIG WHIPPLE, 61
Barre, VT.
State Parks Director
\$73,749

Whipple directs 52 Vermont parks that together attract 900,000 visits every year.



CHARLEY VANNICE, 62
Molalla, ORE.
Railroad Conductor
\$120,000

Vannice hauls 6,000- to 7,000-foot freight trains in the Cascade Mountains. "The views are incredible."



GIL RODRIGUEZ, 58
Murray, UTAH
Fire Chief
\$110,000

After 30 years as a firefighter, Rodriguez now supervises 64 employees.



BETSY CHAPMAN, 36
Oxford, MISS.
Communications and Marketing Manager
\$20,800

One perk of her job at a community-supported farm: getting to dig in the dirt outdoors.



KRISTIN SCHUETT, 42
Loveland, COLO.
Riding Instructor
\$18,000

Schuett teaches students ages 4 to 84 to be "safe and confident" on horseback.



JANETTE MCCALVY, 44
Cottage Grove, MINN.
Before- and After-School Supervisor
\$25,000

Though the pay is "minimal," McCalvy says, "I've met some wonderful families."



DONALD RICKLIN, 65
Worcester, MASS.
Museum Exhibit Builder
\$29,000

Ricklin constructs exhibits for a wildlife, natural history, and science museum.

Maion, Ark.
Short-Order Cook
\$19,000

Proctor works in the kitchen at Waffle House, where her pork chops are a customer favorite.

North Canton, Ohio
Fisheries Biologist
\$56,000

"Even if I come home half frozen or covered in fish slime, if I know I put in a hard day's work, I'm happy."

Lost Creek, N.Y.
Library Director
\$8,840

Serving a community of just 496 people, the Lost Creek library was voted America's Best Small Library in 2013.

Sense of Purpose

3. Personal Plan for the Future

- Every student develops a “Personal Plan” for life after high school
- Faculty monitor progress and help students make adjustments during high school
- A “Personal Plan” may be **the most important activity** of the secondary years

Sense of Purpose

High schools become more like community colleges

- Blend high school/community college
- Much greater emphasis on careers and making personal decisions
- Much greater emphasis on career planning/counseling

Pathways To the Future

Career Decisions Lead to Life Planning

- How do I get to where I want to go?
- **What do I have to do to get there?**
- What do I need to do right now to help achieve my goals?
- **What pathways are open to me?**

Possible Pathways to the Future

- Leave school and enter the work force
- **Become an entrepreneur**
- Graduate from high school and enter the work force/military
- **Complete post secondary education or training**
- Complete College/Graduate School

Staff/Student Surveys: Purpose

- Staff Survey: Purpose
- Student Survey: Purpose

Self-Assessment & Reflection

How is your Sense of Purpose?

- Do students develop long range personal plans?
- Do teachers connect classroom learning to the world of careers, training, and work?
- Do all students receive career/college counseling?

Reflection Questions



Transforming Schools



WHAT NEXT?

The Power of We: A Culture of Hope for Teachers...





Instill Optimism and Hope

Hope is always an option

Focus on the Positive

Celebrate

Survey Staff and Students

- Create surveys for each Seed of Hope.
- See www.cultureofhope.com/seeds for sample surveys.
- Follow steps for Building Consensus found in Chapter 8.
- Take Action on results of surveys.

Steps Toward Consensus

- Survey of School Staff and Students
- Summarize responses
- Discuss diverse perceptions and beliefs
- Resolve differences
- Come to consensus on school goals
- Collaborate and monitor
- Refine interventions
- Survey to view progress/areas for improvement

Strategies for Building the Power of We

- Support with Professional Development
- Building Consensus—Intentionally
- Focus on Needs of the Students
- Assess the Institutional Culture
- Gathering Data for Early Warning System
- Monitor and Maintain School Culture
- Engage Parents

The Collaborative School

“ Some changes are very hard to make alone. Developing and locally adapting a challenging new curriculum... or mode of teaching is an extraordinarily difficult task that requires collaboration. It can energize participants, expose them to new ideas, and encourage them to take risks.”

--David Tyack and Larry Cuban



Power of We

- Get staff working together, collaborating together.
- Provide instructional leadership & support, i.e. instructional coaches.
- Have teachers teach each other and observe each other.

Next Steps Planner

Self-Assessment & Reflection

What are Your next steps?

- How is your school's level of optimism?
- Have you surveyed your students, staff, and families on any of the Seeds of Hope?
- Does your staff work together and support each other?
- How is the level of trust and safety between staff members and administration?

Reflection Questions



Compelling Conclusions



We must combat hopelessness

**And instill in every child the
self-confidence that they **can**
achieve and succeed in school.**



Any school can overcome the debilitating effects of poverty and a dysfunctional family...

Demographics do not equal destiny!



**Both students and school
professionals need to be
surrounded by**

Hope

and

Optimism!

Hope...



**Never underestimate the
power of one person to
change the world....**

You can make a difference!



Open the door to their futures!

Internet Resources

- Website: www.cultureofhope.com
- Blog: <http://cultureofhope.blogspot.com/>
- Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/cultureofhope>



Solution Tree

professional development
that builds schools where
all children learn

