

# Principal and Teacher Exposure to Dame-Dame Schools: Did it Make a Difference in Student Achievement in Hill District Elementary Schools?

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**D**AME-DAME SCHOOLS are predominately Black ( $\geq 75\%$ ) low-income ( $\geq 75\%$ ) public schools that have nearly closed or actually reversed racial, socioeconomic, and Black male gender gaps in reading and math<sup>3</sup>. There are no special admissions requirement to these schools that typically are located in neighborhoods challenged by high crime, gang violence, teen pregnancy, alcohol and drug dependency, and the like.

In the Historic Hill District, Pittsburgh's predominately Black community once legendary for its production of musicians, artists, businesses, and professionals in every field, many years have passed since its celebrated days of Dame-Dame Schools. Principal Doris Brevard of Vann Elementary School was the forerunner dating back to the late 1960's. For years, students in her school rivaled or surpassed district-wide, state-wide, and national averages in reading and math. Indeed one year student scores were so high that the central district ordered re-testing of her students who performed even more spectacularly the second time around. Subsequently, Hill District students of Principal Janet Bell had an impressive record of achievement at Madison Elementary which is now closed.

There has been an absence of Hill District Dame-Dame Schools in recent years. By bringing principals of Dame-Dame Schools to Pittsburgh and making them accessible to the Hill District principals and teachers along with community residents, leaders, and activists, we hoped to rekindle neighborhood-by-neighborhood expectations of equity in achievement outcomes. Moreover, we wondered: *Will Hill District exposure to Dame-Dame principals have positive implications for student achievement in the Hill District?* We acknowledge straightaway the primary challenge facing a competent answer to this question: this initiative was not structured as a formal research project where we obtained access to individual student background along with achievement data by school and year. We only had access to achievement gain and proficiency levels published by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This source provided average trends and nominal

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<sup>2</sup> We dedicate this report to celebrants of this day who believe in the basic premise of our nation's founders: *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness* (United States Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776). In large measure this work is directed toward actualization of this premise albeit 235 years later: *A right delayed is a right denied* (Martin Luther King, Jr.).

<sup>3</sup> We are deeply grateful for support of this development effort by Neighborhood Partners Program, McAuley Ministries, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, and RK Mellon Bank of New York.

classifications but not variations in individual differences or details of individual student background which would have opened the way to formal statistical analyses that bear upon the question of interest. Therefore our informal analyses to be described lack the robustness and generalizability we would aspire for. With this caveats in mind, we attempted to examine possible changes in academic gains and achievement proficiencies in the first two sections which follow. In section three, we attempt to evaluate the extent to which proficiency attainments in Hill District Schools approached equity. In the fourth and last section, we offer seven recommendations for achieving and maintaining equity in achievement outcomes. These recommendations are examined in relation to a theory of educational justice which we have introduced and a Children's Educational Bill of Rights which Peter Cookson has proposed.

## Achievement Gains

For the academic year 2006-2007, two years before our introduction of Dame-Dame School principals to elementary school principals and teachers, all three Hill District elementary schools—Miller, Vann, and Weil—were in AYP Warning status, meaning that in 2006-2007 all three of these predominately Black low-income schools failed to meet achievement gain standards stipulated by Pennsylvania's Department of Education. In 2007-2008, the year before our Dame-Dame School principals came to town, Miller and Weil had actually slipped down a notch from Warning to School Improvement I status while Vann achieved overall AYP status in the year 2007-2008 just preceding our Dame-Dame intervention.

During academic years 2008-2009 and 2009-2010, we invited to Pittsburgh a total of six Dame-Dame principals whose low-income predominately Black schools had actually reversed racial, socioeconomic, and Black male gender gaps in reading and math, *i.e.*, all had exceeded both district and state proficiencies in reading and math. In each instance Dame-Dame school principals presented a public lecture Thursday evenings to which Hill District principals, teachers, central administration staff, community members, and academics were invited. Supported by a PowerPoint presentation, each Dame-Dame principal shared his or her story on policies and practices that led to gap reversals in such unexpected places—neighborhoods with elevated levels of poverty, crime, gang activities, teenage pregnancy, and alcohol and drug addictions. On Friday mornings, our research team administered a 90-minute protocol which provided an additional opportunity to examine similarities and differences in policies and practices associated with gap

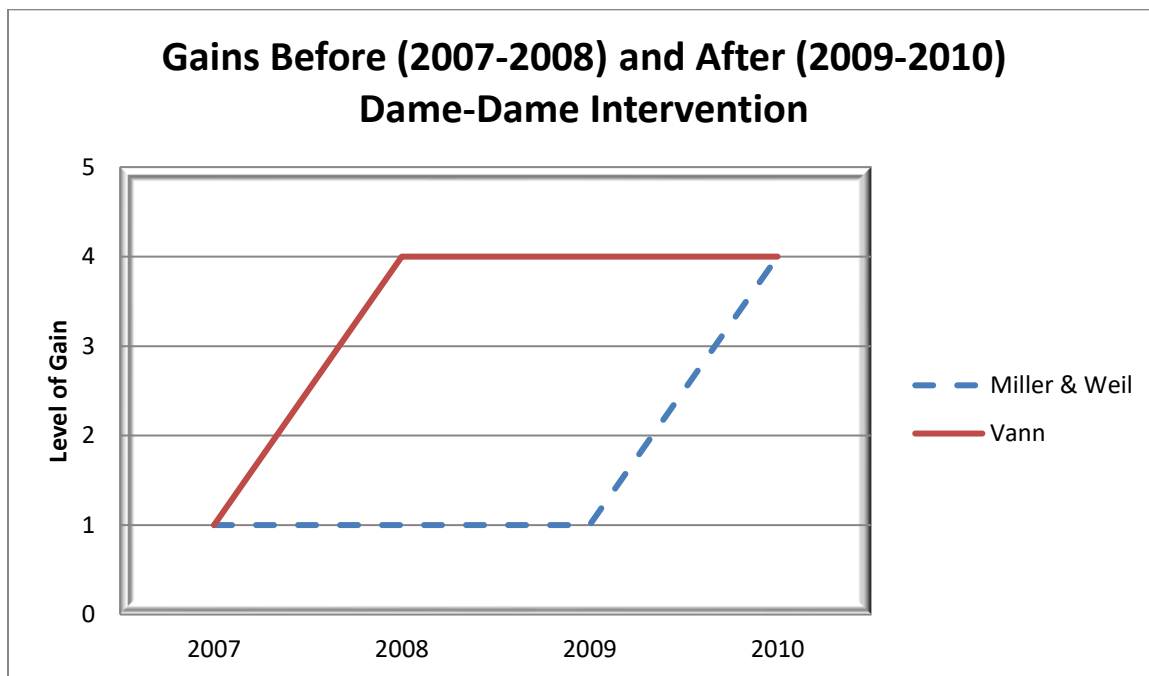
### Summon the Village!

In our Dame-Dame appropriation the entire village is called together on Thursday evenings to receive, honor, and draw hope and inspiration from Dame-Dame principals whose schools have closed or reversed achievement gaps. Not only principals, teachers, and central administration showed up but also parents, residents, pastors, agency heads, advocacy groups, community activists, and a broad range of professionals and academics.

Beyond Dame-Dame presentations, the Hill District Education Council, a community-based advocacy organization, convened monthly and sometimes community-wide meetings with the principals of these schools.

reversals. On Friday afternoons, elementary school principals, teachers, and district staff had private audience with each Dame-Dame principal. During this time they were provided full and unproctored opportunity to quiz, prod, and seek advisement or material review from each Dame-Dame principal. The total time of exposure to each Dame-Dame principal to school and district staff did not exceed four to five hours, thus exposure to Dame-Dame School principals for this group was in the range of 12 to 15 hours for each of two years.

*After two successive years of exposure to Dame-Dame School principals, all three Hill District elementary schools registered Overall AYP status for the year 2010. Although Vann achieved Overall AYP status the year prior to intervention (2008) which it maintained during the two-year period of intervention 2009 and 2010, Miller and Weil jumped three notches up from School Improvement I status prior to intervention (2007-2009) to Overall AYP status during the last year of intervention (2010). This pattern is revealed in the following graph.*



**1= School Improvement I; 2 = Warning; 3= Making Progress; 4= Overall AYP**

*Based on available archives we were able to access going back to 2003, 2010 was the first year on record since 2003 that all three Hill District elementary schools achieved Overall AYP status. Moreover, it was the first time Vann dating back to 2003 made Overall AYP for three years in a row 2008-2010.*

From the pattern of trends summarized, it is not possible to attribute these AYP gains (Miller, Vann, Weil) and maintenance of gains (Vann) to Dame-Dame principal exposure alone since changes in principals, curriculum, and school organization were made during this period. We note, however, that the following patterns may offer an extended context for evaluating these findings.

1. *Comparisons with Structurally and Academically Challenged schools.* The concept of structurally challenged is taken from economic studies which find that schools with high concentrations of minority and low-income students are at risk of academic underachievement. Academically challenged schools historically have demonstrated a problem in making requisite gains to qualify for Overall AYP. We examined the entire universe of 43 public schools in Pittsburgh to identify those offering the closest fit to structural and academically challenged elementary schools in the Hill District, *i.e.*, these schools were not cherry picked.

For PK-5 Miller and K-5 Vann, we located two organizationally similar schools that came closest to fitting identified structural and academic criteria: PK-5 Northview and PK-5 Fort Pitt. Principals and teachers of these comparison schools were not full recipients of our Dame-Dame intervention. Structurally, comparison schools were 89 and 93 percent Black and 96 and 97 percent low income, respectively, while both PK-5 Miller and K-5 Vann were 97 percent Black and 94 and 93 percent low income, respectively. Academically, in 2007 PK-5 Northview, PK-5 Fort Pitt, PK-5 Miller, and K-5 Vann shared one thing in common: all were in Warning status. *In 2010, only PK-5 Miller and K-5 Vann received Overall AYP status. In 2010, PK-5 Northview was in School Improvement I and PK-5 Fort Pitt was in School Improvement II.*

For PK-8 Weil, we were able to locate two organizationally similar schools: PK-8 Manchester and PK-8 Helen Faison Arts Academy. Structurally, these schools were 98 and 97 percent Black and 91 and 94 percent low income, respectively. PK-8 Weil was 98 percent Black and 91 percent low income. All three schools were in Warning status in 2007. *In 2010, both PK-8 Manchester and PK-Weil had achieved Overall AYP status, while PK-8 Helen Faison Arts Academy was in Corrective Action I.*

2. *Comparisons with Structurally More Advantaged Accelerated Learning Academies (ALAs).* In 2007, seven ALAs were launched in different neighborhood elementary schools: Arlington, Colfax, Fort Pitt, King, Murray, Northview, and Weil—our Hill District school participating in our Dame-Dame initiative. Based on the concentration of minority and poor students, we rank ordered these schools in terms of their relative structural advantage. In first rank was Colfax Elementary (32% Black, 37% low income) followed by number 2 ranked Murray Elementary (69% Black, 38% low income); and number 3 ranked Arlington Elementary (58% Black, 88% low income). In this comparison we examined the AYP status of these more structurally advantaged ALAs against the relatively less structurally advantaged Weil ALA in the Hill District (98% Black, 91% low income). We note first that that Weil Elementary along with

Colfax, Murray, and Arlington schools received AYP Warning status in 2007. By 2010, only the relatively less structurally advantaged Weil ALA received Overall AYP status. Rank 1 Colfax ALA received an AYP status of Making Progress in School Improvement II which also was shared by Rank 2 Murray ALA. Rank 3 Arlington ALA received Overall AYP Warning status in 2010. *Despite its relatively lower structural advantage, only the Hill District's Weil ALA, whose principal and teachers were involved in our Dame-Dame series, met Overall AYP status in 2010.*

3. *Comparisons across School Reforms.* The two PK-5 Hill District elementary schools—Miller and Weil—that achieved Overall AYP subsequent to our Dame-Dame intervention used strikingly different reform models to promote student achievement. At Weil ALA, scripted and coached instruction was featured, and at Miller an African-Centered reform was featured. At PK-8 Vann, a character development reform was featured. *Is it possible that exposure to Dame-Dame principals as a value-added reform carried incremental benefits over and beyond primary effects of featured reforms in the attainment (Miller, Weil) or maintenance (Vann) of Overall AYP?*
4. *Comparisons across Different Exposure Levels.* Principal and teachers of the Hill District's University Prep (grades 6-12), did not participate fully in scheduled 2009-2010 sessions provided by Dame-Dame principals, although they did participate more frequently in monthly meetings or community-wide sessions scheduled by the Hill District Education Council (see text box on p. 3). *For University Prep which opted out of consistent participation in our Dame-Dame series, they were in AYP Warning in 2010—the same status as Hill District elementary schools in 2007.*

Although achievement gains at Hill District Schools seemed to have been larger than those document in three of four comparison schools; although 2010 achievement gains in all three Hill District was unmatched in any year going back to 2003; although gain patterns for the more structurally challenged Weil ALA elementary school seemed to be greater than gain patterns reported for less structurally ALA elementary schools; although it seemed that our Dame-Dame intervention may have added incremental value to different 'house brands' of reform; and although Hill District elementary students of principals and teachers participating in our Dame-Dame intervention seemed to gain more than Hill District middle and high school students whose principals and teachers were not consistently involved in our Dame-Dame intervention, we stress that these patterns of associations are suggestive but still remain correlational—not causal.

## Achievement Levels

In 2010, the percent proficient in reading was higher in Hill District elementary schools than in three comparison schools (Faison, Fort Pitt, Northview) Manchester reading proficiency exceeded that of each of the three Hill District schools. Math proficiencies at Hill District schools exceeded proficiencies at Faison, Fort Pitt, and Northview but not Manchester.

In relation to the structurally more advantaged Accelerated Academic Academies (Arlington, Colfax, and Murray), 2010 reading and math proficiencies at Weil ALA were higher than those reported for Black students at Colfax ALA and Murray ALA but not Arlington.

We note two trends that need to be probed further:

- *Black Male Proficiencies:* In comparing Hill District Black male proficiencies against our four comparison schools (Arlington, Faison, Northview, and Manchester), there was no noteworthy trend for reading. However, math proficiencies for male students in Hill District elementary school tended to be higher than those at Arlington, Faison, and Northview but not Manchester.
- *Low-income Student Proficiencies:* In reading, Black student proficiencies for low-income students were highest at Manchester, followed by Hill District schools and then by Northview and Faison. For math proficiencies, Black students of low-income tended to be served best by Hill District schools with Manchester running neck-in-neck.

## Equity Matters

Our overall goal is to achieve educational justice for Hill District students—parity in achievement outcomes, graduation rates, and disciplinary actions. Because we believe that parity influences all the rest, our focus here has been on strategies for accelerating the rate of achievement parity and maintenance. On the matter of parity, we recognize we have a long way to go in the Hill District.

To highlight the challenge of equity, we examine equity percentages in reading and math for Black 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at Miller, Vann, and Weil. Although we note that Vann is scheduled for closure in 2010-2011, we examine equity ratios for all three schools because students from these schools will be part of the feeder pattern for University Prep starting with the year 2010-2011. The question here is to what extent are Black students at these three elementary schools performing at levels which approach statewide performance levels of Black and White students. To estimate equity percentages we take the percent at or above proficient for Black students at each Hill District school over the percent at or above proficient

for Blacks statewide and then Whites statewide.<sup>4</sup> At Miller, for example, the percent at or above proficiency in reading was 23.3 relative to a Black statewide proficiency of 41.3 and White statewide proficiency of 70.8. The ratios 23.3/41.3 and 23.3/70.8 multiplied by 100 give percentages of 56 and 33 percent, respectively, meaning that the proficiency of Black 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Miller was about 56 percent of Blacks statewide and 33 percent of Whites statewide. The next two tables provide our complete compilation of equity percentages for Miller, Vann, and Weil.

### PSSA Reading 2010

Comparison Units	% At/Above Proficiency	% Equity Relative to Blacks across the State	% Equity Relative to Whites across the State
Black 5 <sup>th</sup> Graders in PK1-5 Miller	23.3	56%	33%
Black 5 <sup>th</sup> Graders in PK1-5 Vann	34.5	84%	49%
Black 5 <sup>th</sup> Graders in PK 1-8 Weil	47.8	116%	68%
Black 5 <sup>th</sup> Graders across the State	41.3		
White 5 <sup>th</sup> Graders across the State	70.8		

### PSSA Math 2010

Comparison Units	% At/Above Proficiency	% Equity Relative to Blacks across the State	% Equity Relative to Whites across the State
Black 5 <sup>th</sup> Graders in PK1-5 Miller	40.0	78%	50%
Black 5 <sup>th</sup> PK1-5 Vann	37.9	73%	47%
Black 5 <sup>th</sup> Graders in PK 1-8 Weil	44.0	84%	55%
Black 5 <sup>th</sup> Graders across the State	52.1		
White 5 <sup>th</sup> Graders across the State	80.7		

Although we counsel caution in interpreting equity percentages because they are based on relatively small number (30, 29, and 22 for Miller, Vann, and Weil, respectively), the overall pattern suggests that whatever causative factors were associated with achievement gains (Miller, Vann) and gain maintenance (Weil), they were not nearly sufficient in bringing about achievement equity—educational justice for students of the Hill District. These results provide the pretext for the section which follows—seven recommendations for accelerating the achievement of educational justice. We continue to place high emphasis on Dame-Dame Schools as a leading element of the way forward with significant modifications which we point out. As well, we identify six additional ways of promoting policies and practices that complement and extend our commitment to educational

<sup>4</sup> While these schools are overwhelmingly Black, average proficiencies include NonBlack students. Our decision to examine Black students only was intended to throw into relief the educational challenges they face.

justice. Together these recommendations counter Einstein's concept of insanity: *doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.*

## Plans for Achieving Equity

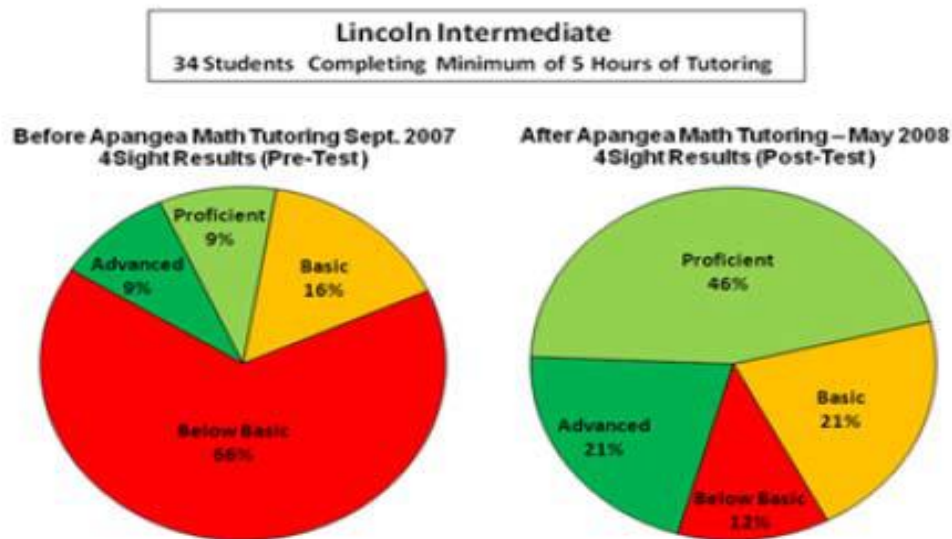
We identify seven interventions which together offer promise of closing and even reversing racial, socioeconomic, and Black male achievement gaps.

1. ***Ramp up our Dame-Dame interventions.*** Exposure and dialogue with Dame-Dame principals falls in our opinion at the minimum level of things we can do. Although this minimum intervention may be associated with salutary changes in gain and proficiency (perhaps a low-intensity comparison standard in future studies?), we feel now is the time to step up this intervention if we are to accelerate attainment of equity in achievement outcomes. We are now preparing a National Institute of Education grant that would take our Dame-Dame school intervention to the next level. Our September submission of this grant will be directed toward: (a) extending the exposure by offering summer training and certification of principals serious about incorporating gap-closing and reversing methodology of Dame-Dame principals; (b) providing in-field shadowing and mentorship of principal trainees in the home environment of Dame-Dame school principals; (c) linking each principal aspirant with a Dame-Dame principal for ad hoc mentoring and consultation; (d) creating a virtual community of Dame-Dame principals and Dame-Dame principal aspirants where information can be sought and received and school and classroom data posted and evaluated—to be structured around implications of Bayes Theorem which offers critically important clues on how to structure feedback that makes a transformative difference cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally; (e) offering a portal within the virtual community a dashboard for downloadable videoclips where gap-closing instructional or administrative policies and practices can be accessed; (f) providing specialized access portals where teachers, students, and parents can share overcoming or success stories along with materials or strategies instrumental in achieving these outcomes; and (g) providing an annual community-forming event (perhaps in conjunction with one of our national education conventions) where Dame-Dame principals and their aspirants get together to share challenges, successes, and failures along with corresponding plans for meeting challenges, reinforcing successes, and countering failures.

The overall goal here is to create a viable real and virtual community capable of sustaining and spreading its culture of educational equity across the nation. We fully expect that learning how to produce excellence in places least expected will bring substantive and methodological innovations that will help lift educational fortunes of all students—Latinos and American Indians as well as Whites.



2. **Ramp up our numeracy campaign by providing specialized science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) instruction.** Labor economists are projecting that more than two-thirds of the jobs over the next generation will require skill sets which entail competencies in one or more component of STEM instruction. In this regard, we have made our share of mistakes, among them our assumption that the local school district would embrace and implement two high-end STEM applications—one involving an online math tutoring program and the second an engineering and robotics program which included all elements of STEM. In the final analysis, neither recommendation was implemented within Hill District schools. We were disappointed over the district’s inaction because Lincoln Technology in Homewood had nearly achieved Dame-Dame school status within three years following implementation of our recommended math tutoring program. This school also received national attention within two years following implementation of our recommended engineering and robotics program. The following graph and textbox profile a sample of our experience with these initiatives at Lincoln Technology then under the leadership of principal Dr. Regina Holley.



**Lincoln Technology Students  
at Hampton University**  
The New Pittsburgh Courier 5/22/08

*Given the impression these seventh- eighth- and ninth-graders made on the students and faculty at Hampton’s Robotics Lab, recognition shouldn’t be far behind. The eight Lincoln students not only built and programmed robots—starting with a box of parts and a manual—but did so while politely refusing all assistance from their college supervisors. Not only did the group complete the assignment—which staff said incoming freshmen are not expected to finish—one of them found and corrected an error in the assembly manual that, if not corrected, would have made building working robots impossible.*

sites within the community.

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Our goal here is to get ahead of the trend line in preparing students who are career ready for 21<sup>st</sup> Century job markets.

3. ***Ramp up our literacy campaign by exploring funding possibilities for two high-end online tutoring programs—Lexia for reading, Apangea for writing. Both offer high promise of accelerated achievement in these critical components of literacy.*** As we have noted under the section Equity Matters, African American students are not doing as well in reading as they are in math. Although not examined in this report, the same pattern obtains for writing and math. For an extended period of time, the challenge to literacy has been documented on state and national assessments. It's past time to provide corrective here. Most likely it will be possible to do so in after-school sites.

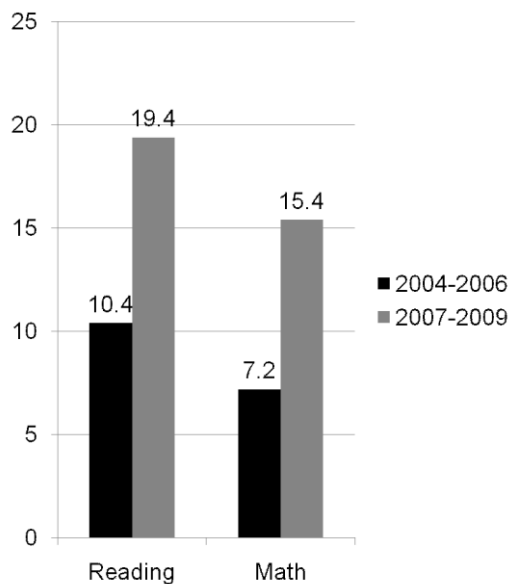
In polls and interviews with national corporate leaders, writing and communication skill always make the top five as important attributes for success in local and global job markets.

4. ***Ramp up our Community Empowerment (CE) training and certification initiatives designed to accelerate the attainment and maintenance of racial equity in achievement outcomes. These ecosystemically structured initiatives mobilize schools and communities along with state and national policy makers, advocates, activists, and enablers in support of our goal of educational equity.***

- ***CE 101 Target—Schools:*** Families, churches, schools, advocates, activists, and enablers will be trained and certified in how to (a) access internet and other resources to identify and interpret student achievement trends in neighborhood schools; (b) assess the extent to which policies and practices associated with gap closures and reversals are being implemented in neighborhood schools; (c) evaluate the extent to which the local school board and its central administration embrace and enact policies and practices that close and reverse racial and socioeconomic achievement gaps; and (d) develop action plans that accelerate the adoption of gap closing and reversing policies and practices by the local school board and its central administration.
- ***CE102 Target—Community (Under Development):*** Families, churches, schools, advocates, activists, and enablers will be trained and certified in how to (a) negotiate with owners of local bulletin boards who agree to post the names of academic strivers and achievers on local bulletin boards in the community; (b) negotiate with local businesses and organizations to post the names of academic strivers and achievers in public areas of their establishments; (c) work with local churches to create display places for student literary or science projects which are reviewed

by parishioners and hosted by students following worship service; (d) work with churches and organizations in recognizing strivers and achievers after each grading period; (e) work with churches and organizations in sponsoring spaghetti dinners or special recognition of principals and teachers whose students are high strivers and achievers; and (f) work with churches and organizations to help and encourage parents implement procedures that promote their students' school engagement and achievement.

- **CE 103 Target—State (Under Development):** Families, churches, schools, advocates, activists, and enablers will be trained and certified in how to network with local and state advocacy organizations and administrative and legislative policy makers to encourage and recognize their support of policies and practices that foster educational equity.
- **CE104—National (Under Development):** Families, churches, schools, advocates, activists, and enablers will be trained and certified in how to network with national advocacy organizations and with federal administrative and congressional policy makers to encourage and recognize their support of policies and practices that foster educational equity. CE 101-105 reflect and extend our experiences in mobilizing community around achievement equity.



In suburban Monroeville, PA we have tracked how gap closure has been associated with partial implementation of objectives identified for CE101 and 102<sup>5</sup>. At Gateway Middle School G7-8, PSSA proficiency gains in reading and math for Black students nearly doubled the rate for White students from the period prior to intervention (2004-2006) to the period following intervention (2007-2009). Particulars of this gain are represented in this graph. This initiative led by Epryl King has been the recipient of three regional and state awards: 1 of 50 Community Champion

**Awards** (*The Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, The Pittsburgh Foundation, The Heinz Endowments); 1 of 7 Jefferson Awards (same sponsors named for the Community Champion Award); and The Human and Civil Rights Award (The Pennsylvania State Education Association). Also, Epryl King made a

<sup>5</sup> Organizers of this initiative have also added a volunteer tutoring initiative.

presentation on this initiative which was well received at a conference convened by Dr. Ronald Ferguson of Harvard University.

The overall goal of our training and certification initiative is to (a) create an informed and skilled network of support for educational equity at local, state, and federal levels; (b) provide bottom-up and top-down support of policies and practices that foster educational equity; and (c) gain access to new and continuing sources of funding for the work of achieving and maintaining educational equity.

5. ***Ramp up our cultural infusion projects that (a) include people of color in reading, math, and science curricula; (b) provide a four-step pedagogy that promotes advanced proficiencies in reading and math; and (a) instill values associated with accelerated learning and social, emotional, and cultural resiliency.***

Although (a) requires special access to people of color within the disciplines of reading, math and science, few schools of education equip teachers or principals with this knowledge (examples of what infused curriculum would look like can be obtained by writing the author). If the reform portfolio of most urban schools is examined closely, the money trail would reveal that specialists within this domain (e.g., history, Black studies, or Latino studies) are rarely if at all represented although the majority enrollment in these districts are drawn from these minority populations which soon will be minority no more. The needed shift in policy will be slow or unlikely to come without community pressure coupled with strong administrative and board leadership.

Our strategy for promoting advanced proficiency (b) is outlined in the following textbox which introduces a conceptual template for accelerating depth of learning by stimulating students' analytic and creative competencies. This proposal should *not* be interpreted as supporting a scripted methodology; here teachers implement concepts, not scripts.

**Math—Four Pedagogical Levels to Promote Advanced Proficiency—Examples Only: Teacher Encouraged to Work through These Levels in Every Lesson Plan in Every Discipline**

1. **Objective Learning.** *What is  $2 \times 3$ ?*
2. **Active Learning.** *Jason, what are your two favorite pair of socks at home? Let us say that Jason puts \$3.00 in one favorite sock and \$3.00 in the other. Who can show me how to use multiplication to determine how much money Jason has?*
3. **Meaningful Learning.** *Sheba has 3 DVDs and Tanisha has 3 DVDs. Who can show me two ways of figuring out how many DVDs they have together?*
4. **Mindful Learning.** *Who can explain the relationship between  $3 + 3$  and  $2 \times 3$ ? Yes, that's right Akela. Teacher then writes on the board and explains the expression  $(3 + 3) = (2 \times 3)$  which is another way of writing Akela's answer. Then teacher writes  $(3 + 3 + 3) = (? \times 3)$  and gives students a moment to figure out the value 3 for '?'. When students understand the nature of '?', teacher assigns teams (named after a famous Black mathematician) to make up 3 problems using sets of 4 ( $4 + 4 + 4$ ), 5 ( $5 + 5 + 5$ ), and 6 ( $6 + 6 + 6$ ) and three problem sets of their own*

### *Relationship between Values for Life and Academic Achievement*

We found that teacher ratings of the behavioral expression of Values for Life are associated with performance on standardized measures of reading and math achievement. On the math section of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, we found that 2nd and 3rd grade students rated at or above the median on self-persistence, self-esteem, *or* self-reliance were 5 to 8 times more likely to score at or above the 50th percentile relative to students rated below the median on the behavioral expression of these values. On the reading component of the Stanford Achievement Test 9, students rated at or above the median on love and respect, interpersonal skills, learning orientation, *or* self-confidence were a minimum of 6 times more likely to score at or above the 50th percentile (Taylor & Kouyaté, 2003)

**We note also that at Urban Pathways Charter School (90+% Black and 90+% low income), where our Values for Life initiative is being implemented, 100% of its graduates were *accepted* into college in 2010—the only public or charter school in the district where this was so. We also have documented remarkable upswings in achievement proficiencies over two years of intervention.**

**A careful review of proficiency data reveals that achievement gaps are especially pronounced in advanced proficiency attainments in reading and math. It's not unusual to find that Whites are between 3 and 20 times more likely to fall in advanced proficiency than Black students on both state and national exams. Recommendations identified here stress creative and analytical skills (b) along with social and cultural identifications (a) and (c) that together support advanced proficiencies in reading and math. Failure to focus on how to achieve advanced proficiencies overtly undermines and damages future prospects of Black students—their college and career readiness—and trashes the Declaration of Independence premise *that all men are created equal*.**

- 6. *Ramp up efforts to decrease the cultural wounding of Black students who have unconsciously absorbed anti-Black and pro-White racial stereotypes that undermine academic engagement and achievement.***

**7. Ramp up efforts to prevent cultural wounding by diminishing unconscious anti-Black and pro-White attitudes that undermine academic engagement and achievement.**

The goal of 6 and 7 is to create school environments supportive of educational equity by emancipating teachers and students alike from stereotypes that undermine the capacity of teachers to teach and students to learn (an outline of our three-part training and certification initiative in support of this goal can be obtained by writing the author).

In our theory of educational justice, we identified four Justice Achieving and Maintaining Strategies—4 JAMS: A new freedoms suite for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In the following table we identify how our set of 7 recommendations maps onto our prior proposal of 4 JAMS.

**How Our Recommendations Relate to 4 JAMS: A New Freedoms Suite**

<b>4 JAMS</b>	<b>7 Recommendations</b>
<i>Normalize Excellence</i>	Dame-Dame Interventions (1); Community Empowerment (4)
<i>Safeguard Excellence</i>	Literacy Campaign (2); Numeracy Campaign (3); Community Empowerment (4); Cultural Infusion (5)
<i>Heal Wounding</i>	Cultural Infusion (5); Heal Wounding (6)
<i>Prevent Wounding</i>	Prevent Wounding (7)

In the attachment, you will find a two-page introductory statement of our reform *Justice Works* which provides a fuller description of each JAM.

We conclude by examining our seven recommendations in relation to Peter Cookson’s (2011)<sup>6</sup> recommendations for a Children’s Educational Bill of Rights which stipulates how the nation *should care for, educate, and prepare...young Americans to thrive and lead in an uncertain and challenging world (p. 1)*.

**How Our 7 Recommendations Map onto Cookson’s 10 Educational Bill of Rights**

<b>Children’s Educational Bill of Rights</b>	<b>7 Recommendations</b>
The right to a neighborhood public school or a public school of choice that is funded for excellence.	Dame-Dame Schools (1); Community Empowerment (4); Cultural Infusion (5a) and 5b); Heal Wounding (6), Prevent Wounding (7)
The right to physical and emotional health and safety	Cultural Infusion (5c), associated with student perceptions of safety in school; Dame-Dame Schools (1) linked to emotional and physical health
The right to have his or her heritage, background, and religious differences honored, incorporated in study, and celebrated in the culture of the school	Cultural Infusion (5a and 5c obviously as well as 5b which requires use of culturally relevant materials and processes)

<sup>6</sup> Cookson, Jr., Peter W (2011). *Sacred Trust: A Children’s Education Bill of Rights*. Corwin, A Sage Company: Thousand Oaks, CA.

The right to develop individual learning styles and strategies to the greatest extent possible	Connected primarily to Cultural Infusion (5a) which entails use of small student groups where a range of learning styles are encouraged in solving challenging tasks and projects which stimulate creative and analytical thinking that move students toward advanced proficiencies.
The right to an excellent and dedicated teacher	Dame-Dame Schools (1); Heal Wounding (6); Prevent Wounding (7)
The right to a school leader with vision and educational expertise	Dame-Dame Schools (1); Heal Wounding (6); Prevent Wounding (7)
The right to curriculum based on relevance, depth, and flexibility	Cultural Infusion (5a, 5b, 5c)
The right of access to the most powerful educational technologies	Numeracy Campaign (2); Literacy Campaign (3)
The right to fair, relevant, and learner-based evaluations	Heal Wounding (6) and Prevent Wounding (7) for fairness and relevance
The right to complete high school	Dame-Dame Schools (1), Numeracy Campaign (2); Literacy Campaign (3); Community Empowerment (4); Cultural Infusion (5);

Although our remedies both overlap and differ in minor to major ways from Peter Cookson's, we believe overall that our seven recommendations derived from our theory of educational justice comport quite well with his ten Educational Bill of Rights. We stand with him in asserting that level of success in actualizing these rights for children can and will be taken as *the measure of our national soul* (p. 1). As well our national success would bequeath new life to our founders' vision: *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...*(United States Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776).

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