

# Overcoming Low Expectations for ELLs

Council of Great City Schools  
Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee  
Education Director's Meeting

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School District of Palm Beach County, Florida



# 2009 MetLife Survey of the American Teacher

- 9 in 10 teachers (86%) and principals (89%) believe that setting high expectations for all students would have a major impact on improving student achievement.
- Most teachers (84%) are very confident that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to enable all of their students to succeed academically.



# Yet...

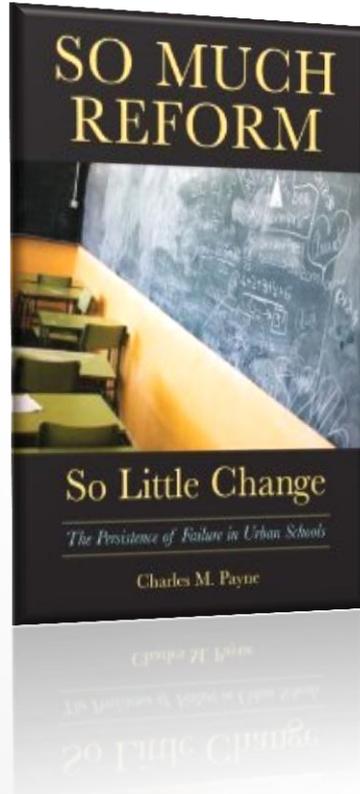
- Only 36% of teachers and 51% of principals believe that all of their students have the ability to succeed academically...

*MetLife, 2009, p.3 as quoted in Equitable and Excellent Teaching,  
by Skrla, McKenzie, & Scheurich, 2009*



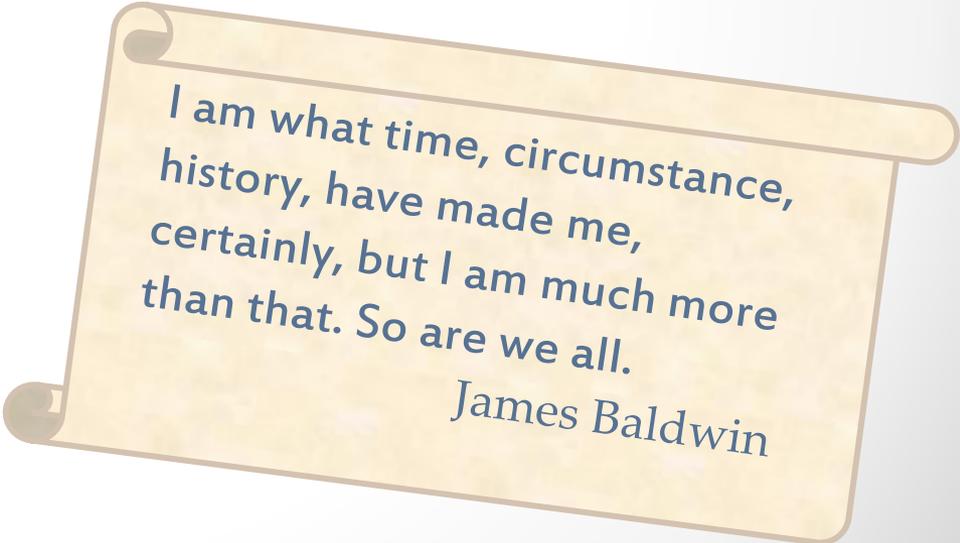
# The Sorting: The Chosen and the Lost

- *So Much Reform So Little Change*, by Charles Payne



# Every ELL has a Story...

- Ethnicity and cultural implications
- Time in the country
- Literacy in first language
- English language proficiency
- Socio-economic status
- Quality of prior schooling



*I am what time, circumstance,  
history, have made me,  
certainly, but I am much more  
than that. So are we all.*

*James Baldwin*

# Academic Expectations

- High School Story 1
  - *A story of incredible survival skills...*



# High School Story 2

- What are the real numbers?
- The problem with perceptions...



# March 2013 Report- NTBM High School- 1821 total student population- 15% ELLs

Student Name	Cur Gr	DOB	Std Lan	COB	ELL Entry Date	ELL IM Code	ELL Curr ELDC	ELL Begin ELDC	M /F	LGL C	TR	TPGLC
Confidential	09	11/04/96	SP	GT	01/22/13	S	B	B	M	4	n	3 or less
	09	05/26/96	SP	GT	01/18/13	S	B	B	M	3	y	3
	09	06/29/97	HC	HA	01/15/13	S	B	B	M	8	n	2 or less
	09	11/09/97	HC	HA	01/10/13	S	B	B	M	7	y	
	09	08/08/97	HC	HA	01/09/13	S	B	B	M	9	n	5 to 3
	09	11/09/97	SP	GT	01/09/13	S	B	B	M	7	n	5 to 3
	09	05/01/97	HC	HA	10/29/12	S	B	B	F	8	y	pre-K
	09	06/12/97	HC	HA	10/01/12	S	B	B	M	6	y	5 to 3
	09	07/16/97	HC	HA	10/01/12	S	B	B	M	8	y	5 to 3
	09	01/21/98	HC	HA	10/01/12	S	B	B	M	8	y	5 to 3
	10	03/01/95	HC	HA	09/19/12	S	B	B	M	9	n	1
	10	11/18/94	HC	HA	08/22/12	S	B	B	M	9	n	5 to 3
	12	11/09/93	HC	HA	08/21/12	S	B	B	F	11	n	3
	09	04/27/96	SP	GT	08/21/12	S	B	B	M	6	y	3 to 1
	09	02/24/97	HC	HA	08/20/12	S	B	B	M	9	y	5 to 3
	10	04/12/96	HC	HA	08/20/12	S	B	B	M	9	n	5 to 3
09	10/19/96	SP	MX	08/20/12	S	L2	B	M	5	y	5 to 3	
10	08/27/97	EN	UY	08/20/12	S	L2	L1	F	9	n	4 to 3	

All Bs, 1 D  
Passed ACT



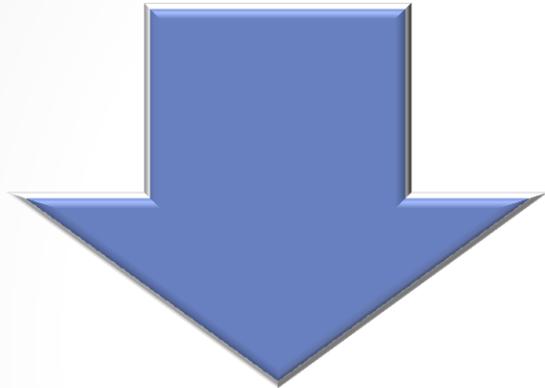
Pre-Calc-B  
AP French  
All As and Bs

# Social Expectations

- Middle School Story
  - “*Juan had a little Farm*”
    - Who is the business man?



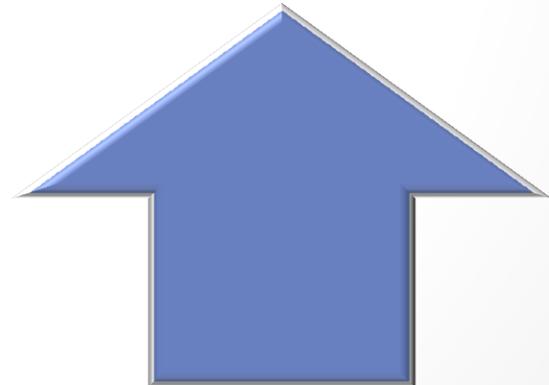
# Impact on ELLs



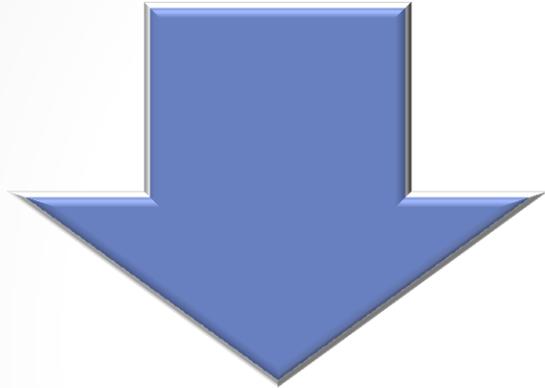
*Rigor & Relevance*



*scaffolding  
&  
Support*



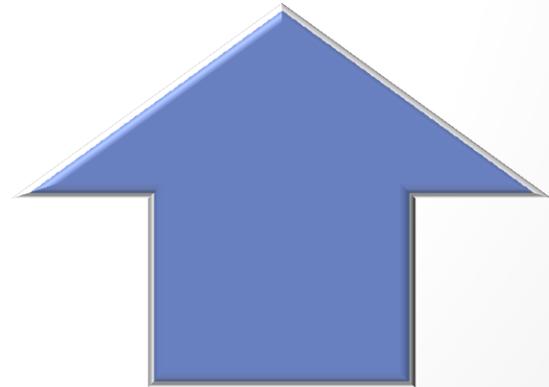
# Impact on ELLs



“niceness gone amok”



“accountability gone amok”



# Truth or Consequences

- Possible Implications
  - Ethical-Moral
  - Erosion of Community Trust
  - Economic Stability
  - National Security
  - Legal Consequences



# Palm Beach County School District

## Department of Justice Agreement 2013

### Agreed Steps

- Policy Changes
- Increase translation and interpretation services

### Self Initiated Steps

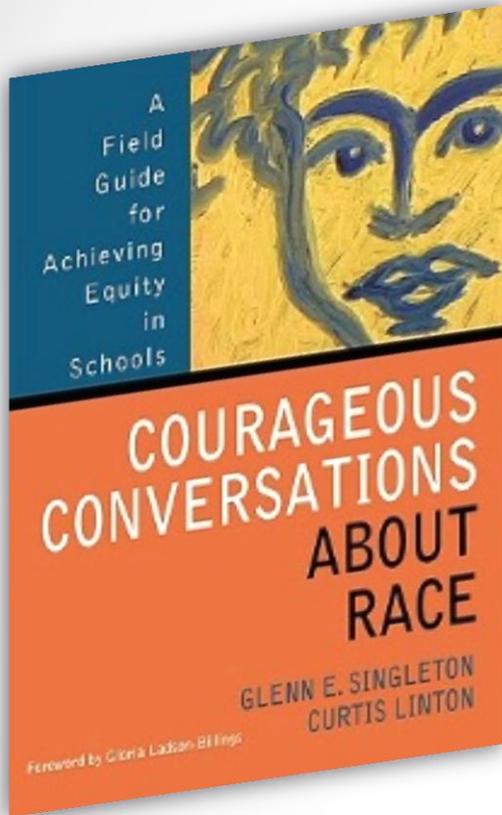
- Social/Emotional Support
  - Bilingual Bicultural Guidance Counselors
- Academic Support
  - 2014- Initiative- 4 Pilots

# 2014 Initiatives

- Project Based Learning (PBL)- Buck Institute Model  
(9<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy)
- Partnership with Continuing (Adult) Education and Higher Education
- Native language support
- Extended day



## *I Dream*



*I dream of a place of glory and freedom,  
Of losing the weight of oppression on my back,  
I dream of the enlightenment of people,  
Of the opening of their eyes.  
I dream of acceptance,  
And for the blessing of feeling special just once.  
One moment of glory...for the true virtue in my life.  
For the glimmer of freedom, and a rise in real pride.*

*Authors' Note:*

*-Used with permission of Pablo Vega, Junior Chapel Hill High School, Chapel Hill, NC*