



2005 SYMPOSIUM REPORT **INFORM** **INSPIRE** EMPOWER

Symposium 2005: The Fifth Annual Meeting of BAEO
March 10-12, 2005 • Detroit, Michigan



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LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Symposium 2005: the Fifth Annual Meeting of BAEQ was a tremendous success. Just over 800 parental choice advocates traveled to Detroit, MI ready to be informed, inspired and empowered.

The weekend program highlighted efforts by parental choice advocates to be visible, forthright and passionate in their efforts to develop, sustain and expand quality educational options for our children.

- Detroit schools opened their doors for participants to see first hand the hard work of sustaining quality educational options. As a result of the Quality Educational Options School Tour hosted by BAEQ, one local parent transferred her child to a featured school.
- During a powerful welcome keynote, Bishop Cheryl Brown reminded us that this is a revolution and like any revolution we need foot soldiers who are ready to respond to the divine call for faith, action, and quality.
- Workshop topics such as State and Local Campaigns to Transform Education, Grassroots Parent Organizing, Teacher Empowerment for Student Achievement, and Grassroots Fundraising 101 presented participants with examples of effective approaches to curriculum and instruction, leadership development, education reform and grassroots organizing.
- At the closing dinner, Howard Fuller left the crowd wanting more with references to Ralph Ellison, Hip Hop, and Social Revolution. He urged us to resist invisibility and silence – no longer should we sit back and allow failing schools to serve our children.

For the attendees and those who missed the weekend, this report offers a glimpse of the emotion, learning, and empowerment experienced at Symposium 2005.

Mark your calendars! Symposium 2006 will take place March 16-18th in Philadelphia, PA.

The struggle continues.



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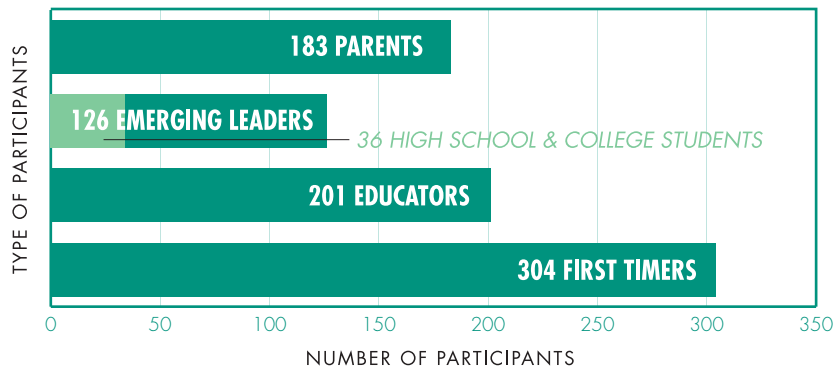
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MEASURE OF SUCCESS HIGHLIGHTS

With a program satisfaction rating of 93% very good to excellent, Symposium 2005 lived up to its objectives to inform, inspire and empower participants. This report includes reflections and comments shared by Symposium participants. The reach and impact of the event can be seen in the diversity of participants and the growth in membership.

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

(from 802 Registered participants)



MEMBERSHIP AND CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT IMPACT



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PROFILES OF DETROIT QUALITY EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

By Danielle Wright

Aisha Shule/WEB DuBois Preparatory Academy

The mission of Aisha Shule/DuBois Preparatory Academy is to develop students in a nurturing, violence-free, k-12 African-Centered learning community, where each student will be prepared for academic excellence, cultural integrity, creativity, entrepreneurship and social responsibility. Over thirty years after its founding in 1974, Aisha Shule/DuBois Academy continues to elevate a high standard of learning and achievement. Each year, the Academy graduates an average of 98% of high school seniors with 94% of those graduates matriculating to two and four-year colleges and universities.

Cornerstone Schools

Cornerstone Schools opened in 1991 with the belief that an excellent education grows within a learning community; that lets a student realize his or her fullest potential in life. The students at Cornerstone consistently outperform the national averages on the SATs. Today, Cornerstone has grown to having four schools serving grades k-12 in three locations. The alumni at Cornerstone have a 90% graduation rate from high school, and 80% of those students go on to attend a college or university.

Timbuktu Academy of Science and Technology

Timbuktu is a k-8 charter school established in East Detroit. Timbuktu has an African-centered curriculum, beckoning cultural awareness of African ancestry and the contemporary contributions of African Americans. Timbuktu maintains small class sizes, with low teacher to student ratio of 1:7. Core subjects – Math, Science, Social Studies and Language Arts – are complemented with courses in African and African American culture and history, French, music, art, dance and athletics.

YMCA Service Learning Academy

YMCA Service Learning Academy (YMCA SLA) is a charter school servicing grades k-8. The YMCA SLA offers a challenging Edison model curriculum, designed to empower students to be active and contributing members of their respective communities. It incorporates the core values of wisdom, justice, integrity, love, compassion, respect, and courage. To ensure the Service Learning Program is meaningful and engaging, teachers coordinate projects, research and measure community contributions. In the winter of 2004, both the 4th and 7th graders showed a 17.3 gain in reading. Additionally, the 4th and 8th grades outperformed both the State and District in math.



“Having a good mix of parents, charter and regular public school representatives, attorneys, journalists, researchers, children’s services folks, clergyman, politicians,

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF PLYMOUTH EDUCATIONAL CENTER

By Lakiya Emerson

A group of 20 Symposium attendees received a pleasant surprise as they entered Plymouth Educational Center for a school tour. Four students wearing business clothes and large smiles greeted and escorted them to the school's music room, where jazz wafted gently through the air and mixed with the smell of grits, sausage, eggs and biscuits.

The food, though excellent, was not as satisfying as the experience of seeing this school in action.

"If I were a student and came here, I'd love it," said BAEO member Rhett Taylor.

Plymouth Educational Center (PEC), which was chartered in 1995, has a 20-year history that has seen its transition from a day care in a church basement to serving 890 K-8th grade students in a state of the art building.

The school has become a model for striving to achieve excellence. On the 2004 Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) scores, PEC 4th and 8th grade students made significant gains in math. Fourth graders improved by 25 percent and 8th graders improved by 68 percent. The school's 7th graders improved in reading by 58.6 percent and in English Language Arts by 68 percent.

These scores have put the school's performance well above that of their neighboring school district – Detroit Public Schools.

Though these successes were celebrated, the school's Chief Academic Officer, Jesse Kilgore Jr., said PEC has a lot more work to do. In some sections of the MEAP, grade level scores saw significant decreases. Seventh grade writing scores dropped by 28.5 percent and 5th grade science scores dropped by 7.6 percent.

PEC's forward-thinking board and staff are not daunted by the pressures of MEAP scores. They operate under the belief that all students can learn and for the past three years PEC has used ATLAS, a school reform

program, to support the professional development of faculty, "teaching for understanding, authentic assessment of students and the inclusion of parents and community in the education of students," according to the school profile.

However, test scores are not the only focus of this school. School leaders and staff have built a culture tuned to the development of the whole child—a culture which permeates the building and shines from each student.

PEC uses a program called TRIBES to instill "community building and peaceful conflict resolution." The program's core beliefs include mutual respect; the right to pass; attentive listening; and appreciation's/No Put Downs. It focuses on students helping each other with tasks, setting goals and solving problems; monitoring and assessing progress; and finally celebrating achievements.

The affects of the school's efforts are highly evident in the students of the W.E.B. Dubois Society, the school's honor society, who spent the day escorting Symposium attendees through the school hallways and gladly discussing their pride in being a part of the school's talented tenth.

The visitors were able to peek in on the English lesson of a group of seventh graders studying the perceptions of wealth and class in the media. They watched an all girls' class of fifth graders learning how to do research on the internet and they interacted with the all boys' fifth grade classroom, where students eagerly pulled out chairs for their female visitors and chattered about the day's activities. The visitors were able to see the school's resourceful use of reconstructed computers and online testing systems to meet the school's technology and evaluation needs.



makes for a great brain teaser/think tank.... A good mix of backgrounds from people who want the same thing for our children is VERY powerful. Excellent job, BAEO! "

PLYMOUTH SCHOOL SONG

PEC IS Excellent
Extra Ordinary
Magnificent
Can't You See?

We're Exceptional
Wonderful,
Educational
We Have Principles

Jr. Varsity
And Technology
Equality,
And Respect.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T
Find out what it
means to me
R-E-S-P-E-C-T
Respect at P.E.C

Oh, We Got Respect
Oh, We Got Respect

We're Victorious,
Diamonds In the Rough,
It's Unanimous.
P.E.C's the Best

P.E.C We're The Best

But nothing was as exhilarating as seeing the love and pride for their school that students exhibited during an assembly showcasing PEC's extracurricular activities.

The band, gospel choir, cheerleading squad, and the PEC Panthers volleyball team joined in the school gym to celebrate their achievements, showcase their talents, and celebrate the camaraderie they had built in the course of the year.

The master of ceremonies, a fifth grader, opened the assembly by saying, "If you can't respect PEC, you can't respect nobody." Throughout the assembly, the student audience gave loud applause and support to their fellow performing classmates. The gospel choir sang Oh Happy Day to the visitors delight. And the audience watched with silent amazement as one small girl gave a gripping monologue, with the lesson of how blessings come in disguise.

The assembly left the visitors with warm and excited hearts, and as the ceremony closed, students, staff and school leaders sang and danced to the Plymouth School Song.

BAEO Principles for Quality Educational Options

- **Equitable Achievement Outcomes.** Students meet or exceed the performance of their peers – local, national and international – at the k-12 and post-secondary level, and are prepared to become a contributing member of society.
- **Responsive Educational Environment.** The teaching and learning process meets the needs of each student integrating real life experiences of students and strategies to develop their cultural, community and environmental awareness.
- **Solid Foundation and Sustainability.** The educational program has the human, administrative and financial resources to fulfill its mission and maintain a positive reputation within the parental choice movement and the larger community.
- **Shared Leadership, Decision-Making and Accountability.** Accountability for student performance and program effectiveness rests with all stakeholders – students, parents, instructors, educational leaders and community members.
- **Healthy Relationships and Culture.** The learning community is open, engaging and reflective with respectful and supportive interactions among stakeholders.
- **Continuous Learning.** Opportunities to learn and develop are used by all members of the learning community.
- **Contributes to Parental Choice Movement.** The educational option is a model program in which families choose to enroll their children.



BSLI SEMINARS GIVE ASPIRING LEADERS A JUMP START

By Tarra Taylor and Nicole Johnson

Bailey & Sullivan Leadership Institute kicked off Symposium 2005 with a Leadership Development Program that focused communicating with the media, leading a prosperous non-profit organization and knowing the ins and outs of inspiring others. The program featured trainers, Kim Freeman, Kelly Lewis and June Perry, and keynote speaker Cory Booker, a BAEO National Board Member.

Crazy Vision, Crazy Love and Crazy Action

Cory Booker, a National Board Member from New Jersey, delivered a lunchtime keynote on what it takes to lead change weaving together stories of “crazy” black women, like Deirdre Bailey and Lisa Sullivan, who exemplified “Crazy Vision, Crazy Love and Crazy Action.”



Booker’s first story described an African American woman he met while organizing in the Brick Towers Housing Development in Newark, NJ. She was the tenant council president of the housing development, and when he approached her door one day while organizing in the neighborhood, he said to her “I’m here to help you.” Booker recalled her response “Boy, follow me.” She then took him outside and asked him to look around [in the projects] challenging him to “tell me what you see around you.”

Booker learned from this ‘crazy black woman’ the importance of vision when leading change. “If you choose to be a leader, first look within, analyze your thoughts and what you believe... and then ultimately what you see.” He shared that this taught him to look beyond the decaying neighborhood to the possibilities for children, youth and the community.

“We have to take responsibility for our communities,” he said. “We fail because of internal corruption ... we have to continue to be the people that never gave up.”

Booker preached that crazy love without crazy action will not sustain the movement. He concluded with this call to action:

“Education is our last major battle. There is no savage imprisonment like that of ignorance.... Our challenges are made greater by the global society we live in... The very future of America relies on our ability to fight and win this battle. So I ask you right now ‘Are you crazy enough to see something different? Are you insane enough to have the kind of love that is necessary? [And,] will you make that completely loony, day after day, tedious and tireless action to make the impossible possible?’”

Media Messaging and Interview Skills

The BSLI session, “Media Messaging and Interview Skills” was just in time for those who have been fighting for school choice. The session gave a clear understanding of how to be a good messenger, how to shape a good message and how to prepare for an interview with a reporter.

“I am part of a revolution, and I am glad to fight!”

At the beginning of this three-part session, Kimberly Freeman, a public relations professional and presenter for the session explained that a good message should be clear, concise and true. To craft good media message, Freeman shared the following tips:

- Reflect a clear understanding of the public discourse on an issue.
- Clearly state the problem, the cause of the problem and presents a solution
- Have supporting evidence that backs up the information given by the interviewee
- Be presented in a convincing manner to the target audience
- Call the listener to action

In all cases of maintaining relationships with reporters, the panel stressed the importance of knowing reporters' deadlines for the sake of preparing for the interview, give reporters more credible sources to help them shape the story properly and let the reporter know when you are happy or unhappy with the story.

"Prior to this session I was unaware of the tricks of the trade that can be used when interviewing with reporters," said Lartigue. "This was extremely helpful!"

Personal Transformation: Know Thyself to Inspire Others

Kelly Lewis, a clinical psychologist and leadership consultant with KM Lewis Consulting in Atlanta, GA, presented the BSLI session "Personal Transformation: Know Thyself to Inspire Others." Take a risk, mix and mingle were set up for a session of dialogue, personal planning and fun.

Through a series of written activities and small group discussion, participants explored their personal aspirations and goals. She stressed the importance of setting goals that are specific, measurable and time specific. To explore in detail the goals, participants used the "WAVE" framework to expand their planning.

- W – Why is it important to achieve this goal?
- A – Action necessary to achieve this goal?
- V – How does this goal look when you visualize it?
- E – Who can help you achieve this goal?

Participants dispersed into teams of two for a paired coaching exercise to practice how to support others to evaluate and accomplish their goals. In pairs, they explored the following questions:

- How will you push yourself?
- How will you build on your strengths to achieve your goals?
- What can I say or do immediately to help you achieve this goal?

Participants reflected on the session exercises stating "it forced you to think about the resources I have... I was able to see if the goals are realistic based upon how much work is required and how much work I really want to do."



Leading a Successful Non-Profit Organization

June Perry, founder of New-Concept Self-Development Center presented the BSLI Leadership Program session, "Leading a Successful Non-Profit Organization," which dealt with some of the details for running a nonprofit organization.

Perry talked about what a non-profit organization is, explaining as "an organization that has received governmental designation based on a 501(c)3 not for profit entity." She went on to explain that no one owns a non-profit organization, but that it belongs to the board who oversees the operations of the organization, also that a non-profit does not compete with any other organizations because it is not in business to make money.

Moreover, Perry stressed the imperativeness of knowing "exactly what you're getting into" when starting a non-profit, adding tips on the importance of working honestly with people in and outside of the organization. Perry gave an example of a man who was taking kick back funds and ended up going to prison. Being ready for anything that could go wrong is the best way to go when running a non-profit.

"You can have great success," she said. "But it's not always permanent."

YOUTH DEMAND VOICE

The youth of BAEO are not waiting for the baton to be passed. More than leaders of tomorrow, they are eager for BAEO to recognize the contribution they can make today. High school youth arrived for Symposium 2005 as participants, presenters and volunteers ready to contribute and to demand more space in the event for youth leadership.

The feedback they shared during the weekend demonstrates just how much they took away and how much they are prepared to give back:

- Recommendations for Future Symposia
 - Students need opportunities to practice and develop skills at BAEO Symposium.
 - Have more youth speakers and more programming that is youth led
 - Define youth roles in BAEO
 - Host a Youth Roundtable
 - Develop a stronger youth component
 - Include Hip-hop learning strategies
- Emerging Leader Reflections
 - The students want to be included in processes that affect their future.
 - They [session presenters] presented information in a way that me, a 16 year old, can understand.
 - This Symposium was the best I attended. From the pre-registration process to the hospitality of hotel, beginning to end, it was exceptional. Every speaker was outstanding, especially Bishop Cheryl Brown and Dr. Howard Fuller. As an emerging leader, I feel courageous to change/reform educational practices in my school.



BROWN PROCLAIMS ‘WELCOME TO THE REVOLUTION’

To an audience of over 500 attendees, Bishop Cheryl Brown delivered marching orders for parental choice leaders committed to transforming education. Brown, a founding member of BAEO, let the audience know that the Symposium is more than a conference. “This is a revolution,” she proclaimed.

Brown was interrupted only by audience shouts of ‘amen,’ laughter and rousing applause. After the

Symposium, she shared this reflection on the work ahead of us.

“We are in the midst of orchestrating a full scale revolution in education one child and one school at a time. Everyone needs to be aware of it and tell the world something good about their efforts and our children’s successes.

We are a powerful people and we are making an impact from the White House to the State house, north and south, east and west. All children and all of education is being positively impacted by the revolution in education delivery.”



“Quality is the most important challenge facing the choice movement.”

CELEBRATING BAEO LEADERSHIP

By Tarra Taylor

How does a mother tell the world how proud she is of her son?

Raynona Patrick did it at Friday's President & CEO Luncheon in the hotel's Ambassador Ballroom when she told the more than 500 in attendance, of her son Lawrence Patrick III, his intelligence and leadership.

"Lawrence is every mother's dream," she said about her son, BAEO's president & CEO. "It is a pleasure for me to introduce him."

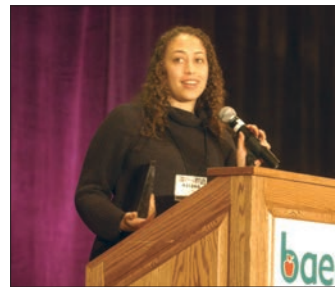
Patrick approached the stage bobbing his head and swaying to the booming lyrics of Public Enemy's, "Fight the Power," which emphasized what Symposium 2005 was about. He then took a moment to recognize Pastor Cheryl Brown's presentation, saying he was "still on fire" from her speech.

He went on to explain the significance of the gathering and efforts to recognize BAEO leadership.

"I think it's important when we come together to take a second to stop, step back and put people on a pedestal and really hold up our heroes and cherish them," he said.

With hugs and a few tears, Patrick recognized several BAEO leaders for their contributions and commitment.

Dwight Evans, National Board Member and Pennsylvania legislator was presented with the "Most Valued Player" award, while two "Unsung Hero" awards were given to BAEO National Board Member Mashea Ashton and Keisha Hegamin, President & CEO of BAEO's Philadelphia chapter. K. Miata Fuller, BAEO's Director of Operations, received the "Vision Award."



"No excuses can be tolerated when it comes to our children."

GRASSROOTS PARENT ORGANIZING

By Ingrid Patrick

While most people in the school choice fight know the importance of organizing parents, many may struggle with the reality of building a base of dedicated parents who are ready to make a stand for the children.

In the Grassroots Parent Organizing session at Symposium 2005, three parent-organizing experts shared some of the strategies they use to connect with and organize parents.

Texas tactics

Marcela Garcini of Hispanic CREO/Project CREO got involved in the school choice fight in Texas when her oldest son was in school. He had been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, or ADHD, and his school was not working for the family. She was able to obtain a voucher for her son to attend a private school that worked for him. Soon, she learned about the broader school choice movement and realized that she felt a duty to share the information she learned with other parents.

"It's amazing, the way that when you provide information to your parents, it's like discovering a new world," Garcini said.

Garcini's mantra is "No parents, no movement." The following are some of her strategies for getting and keeping parents in the fight:

- Always keep troops informed through seminars and workshops. Remember to address the "What's in it for me?" question, and keep the meetings productive, fun and not too long.
- Keep parents and children engaged. Make children active participants, not just bystanders. "You are going to have the parents if you invite the children," she said.
- Give parents the opportunity to participate as volunteers. They can help with mailing campaigns, phone drills, booths, speaking at town hall meetings and childcare at your meetings.
- Always remember that the movement is about children.
- Your own family sets an example. Garcini brings her husband and children to events.

Garcini also said it is important to understand the particular needs of your community. Garcini, who was born in Mexico, encounters many parents who do not speak English, so she provides materials in Spanish. She found that many of the parents she works with are just unfamiliar with how school systems work in this country, so she helps them learn to navigate by introducing them to the PTA and giving them information on No Child Left Behind, for example.

"Every single child in this country, including all the minority children, they deserve for their parents to be very well informed," she said.

Lifting the Cap in Milwaukee, WI

Felice Green of School Choice Wisconsin and Milwaukee BAE0 discussed the struggle in Milwaukee to "Lift the Cap" on the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, in which 14,500 students currently participate. Green said parents have been key players in saving this 15-year-old voucher program, and have been in the forefront with businesses, churches, school communities, BAE0 and other organizations. And although Milwaukee has many forms of choice, and the voucher program has been around for 15 years, "really, our fight is not over."

The issue in the "Lift the Cap" campaign is that the number of students who can participate in the voucher program is limited to 15 percent of the district's enrollment. The goal of the campaign is to persuade the governor of Wisconsin to lift the cap or raise it to a high enough number that the program can function for the next decade. Green said the cap hinders new schools getting involved in the program, hinders parents being able to enroll new children in the program, and especially hinders low-income parents.

Green said the strategy in this campaign was to first get core supporters together to form a work group, and expand from there. Teams had team leaders and participated in weekly team meetings. Team members would carry out different assignments, such as talking to different people to help spread the word.

"Not only did I return with a wealth of knowledge to enable me to better assist my children with their education but a network of telephone numbers to keep in contact with friendly, educated different people from different places and to

Parents and other supporters received instructions on how to call or send mail to the governor and legislators to tell them they want the cap lifted.

Life the Cap supporters are focusing on the next steps for organizing, which include empowering parents to become politically active and developing more ways to get parents involved in the movement.

Success in the District of Columbia

Virginia Walden Ford of D.C. Parents for School Choice and DCBAEO recounted her hard-won fight for a voucher program in the nation's capital in 2003. Even though Walden Ford's children had already graduated, she knew D.C. had a school system that was not serving the needs of the children.

Walden Ford started a coalition of supporters who discussed how to make a voucher program happen. It was not easy getting parents organized. Although she had a core group to work with, they needed to expand, and parents were often skeptical.

So Walden Ford and members of the core group attended over 100 meetings in the community, and with each meeting, interest grew. In a few months they had an army

of around 1,000 parents, Walden Ford said, but they hadn't actually done the work yet.

For the first hearing on the issue on Capitol Hill, Walden Ford said she "sat there, really nervous, wondering if anyone would show up." She said about 50 parents showed up, but it was a small room and it looked like much more. The press perceived it as a large group, and "we let them think we had hundreds and hundreds of parents."

"We realized that with this little group we could do incredible stuff," Walden Ford said. "Even though it's wonderful to have three or four thousand parents and support from everybody, sometimes a small group of people can do just amazing things."

So, for 11 months, they took 25 parents (along with children) to the Hill every day in DCPSC T-shirts. They would spread out and, again, be perceived as a much larger group than they were. The end result of the effort was the passage of the D.C. School Choice Incentive Act of 2003.

Walden Ford said when things get too tough, it is important to look at the children for inspiration. But it is also important to remember that the fight will not be easy.



"It takes heart, it takes sacrifice, it takes a lot of spirit, a lot of prayer," she said, "and you got to be willing to get out there and fight for real."

For information on HCREO, visit <http://www.hcreo.org>.

For more information on the Lift the Cap campaign, visit

<http://www.liftthecap.org>. For more information on

DCPSC, visit <http://www.dcparentsforschoolchoice.com>.

continue my search for the best way to help me, help my children with school work that is fun and fulfilling for them and for me."

FULLER INSPIRES ACTION AND COURAGE

By Tarra Taylor

The Board Chair Dinner was filled with energy and inspiration. Though the Marriott set out a nice spread for the hundreds of participants who gathered in the Ambassador Ballroom for Saturday night's Board Chair dinner, it wasn't the meal they were looking to sustain them.

Basimah Abdullah of Clara Mohammed Academy in Milwaukee opened the evening with a prayer. And Dwight Evans presented a leadership award to Rod Paige, former U.S. Secretary of Education, who delivered a short, but powerful speech.

"Thank you for the fight in which you're showing America - you're winning and we are going to win! Paige exclaimed. "We're going to keep on stuffing success down their throats until they choke on it - America's going to wake up and find out that our children can learn, there's nothing wrong

with their DNA, they just need us," he added.

K. Miata Fuller introduced her father with a poem that described him as a father and a prominent leader in the school choice movement.

"We are all aware that he is a blessing from above," she said.

Fuller approached the stage bouncing his shoulders and pumping his hands to Kirk Franklin's, "Revolution," which seemed to be the foundation of Symposium 2005- starting and maintaining a revolution for Black children. Everyone was enveloped in the moment of welcoming Fuller and celebrating BAEO's mission.

The following is an excerpt from Fuller's speech:

My remarks tonight are dedicated to the memory of one our most dedicated and unrelenting warriors – Rev. Eddie Edwards. It is fitting that our 5th Annual symposium is being held in his town. A town where he gave his heart and his soul to help those who needed help the most. His ministry through Joy of Jesus blessed the lives of many people. His efforts to get vouchers for families in Michigan in the face of so much opposition from his peers was an indication of his courage and his commitment to our cause. We miss him but his spirit lives on within us and his fire continues to burn fiercely within our hearts and souls....

Our children continue to be miseducated, under-educated and not educated at all because they are invisible. They are invisible because those who are supposed to educate them don't see them. They see only their surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination—indeed, everything and anything except our children.

But, in truth it's deeper than that. Our children are invisible because WE are invisible. It follows that if children's parents and/or the adults from their community are invisible then of course the children will be invisible.

... Making revolution is difficult work and any revolutionary movement must always reassess itself and keep returning to the core principles that touched the hearts of the people at the beginning of the movement..

Our core principles are clearly captured by our mission, which is to actively support parental choice to empower families and increase quality educational options for Black Children.



We must be clear to ourselves and everyone else—we are for empowerment of parents. But our theme for this symposium is “inspiring parental choice with quality options.” It is incumbent on us to fight for both choice and quality.

We cannot sit idly by and support schools anywhere no matter who runs them that do not provide quality education for our children.

We value the fact that if we create institutions in our community they will provide jobs and other forms of economic development, but with all due respect to brothers and sisters and others who may not agree with me, jobs and business opportunities can not be our main focus when we create schools. Our main focus must be our children’s education and their well being.

We must not support places that do not have the proper learning materials, have people teaching our children who do not know what they are doing, folks who are in it trying to make a quick buck. This is wrong and we must have the courage to say so.

If we use choice as one mechanism to take control of our children’s education, then we must be better than what others have done for them. It is immoral for us to treat them in ways that are no different than the places we have been complaining about for years.

But we also have a responsibility to support our brothers and sisters who have undertaken the task of educating our kids but have always been under resourced.

... I have focused on the need to have a revolution in education in America. But we must also clearly focus on the reality of the impact on our children’s lives of the existence of differential power and access to resources in the larger society based on race and class.

Children who are hungry cannot concentrate on learning.

Children who are abused and neglected are not going to be able to concentrate in school.

Children need to see people in their immediate families working in order to understand the value of work and the connection between education and work.

Children must see a society where their race will not be an impediment to advancement and respect.

Children must interact with adults who have not already reached conclusions about their capabilities because of the color of their skin, or the clothes they wear.

We must walk a delicate line here because although race and class clearly have an impact on our children’s perceptions and their life chances, we can not allow these conditions to be an excuse not to educate them.

The task before us is formidable. But, no revolution is easy. But, there is no more important fight than the fight for our children. We must leave here tonight with a renewed sense of HOPE. A hope based not on fantasies. A hope based not on slogans and words. Rather a hope based on a commitment to our children and a commitment to Act. A commitment to struggle.



DISCOVERING WHAT MAKES YOUR CHILD TICK: UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIORAL STYLE

By Lakiya Emerson

In *Discovering What Makes Your Child Tick*, presenter Shree' Medlock taught attending parents and teachers how personality styles affect child/parent and student/teacher relationships.

Through colorful stories of her experiences with her own children, Medlock described the DiSC theory, which categorizes child personalities into four dimensions—Direct and active, Interested and lively, Steady and cooperative, or Concerned and correct.

"No one knows your child's personality better than you," she said. "Don't wait for a teacher to call you - call them."

Direct and Active or "D" children enjoy problem solving and gaining quick results. They are blunt and tend to question the rules. They also prefer to be in charge. They like direct answers, variety, independence, and like to test themselves with new knowledge.

Interested and lively or "i" children are very talkative, enthusiastic and persuasive. They enjoy working in groups as opposed to working alone, and particularly like entertaining people with stories. They do not like dealing with details.

Steady and cooperative or 'S' children like organization. They are patient, good listeners and reliable. They like helping people, prefer following to leading, and like to be with people who "get along." These children are often overlooked. They are the children in the classroom who do not ask questions and may feel threatened by change.

Concerned and correct or "C" children have high personal standards. They think deeply before making a decision and like clear rules and assignments. Medlock said "C" children are "the processors or compliant-oriented people." They enjoy figuring things out, are very sensitive about their work and don't take criticism well because they believe they are right.

To learn more about child personality styles and practical methods for addressing them, contact Shree Medlock, at shree@baeo.org.



*"As a new member, I feel comfortable and energized
by the BAEO mission and intent."*

TEACHER EMPOWERMENT FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

By Nicole A. Johnson

The “Teacher Empowerment for Student Achievement” concurrent session featured Larita Henry and Sharnissa Dunlap-Parker. Henry and Dunlap-Parker shared strategies for working with teachers as partners in educational change and excellence.

Student Achievement is Everyone’s Responsibility

Henry opened the session describing the approach taken at her school, the Chicago International Charter School, a k-5 charter school managed in partnership with Edison Schools.

“A school-wide culture of achievement is the responsibility of the entire school,” Henry stated. Administrators, teachers, parents and students have a role to play in improving student achievement. Examples from the CICS approach to teacher empowerment included:

- Allow teachers to explore creativity and be free to introduce innovative teaching techniques in the classroom.
- Offer rewards and incentives such as financial bonuses based upon performance and “staff of the month” recognition
- Engage in teambuilding, mentoring and shadowing to support new teachers and introduce parents to classroom techniques and expectations
- Use monthly “benchmark assessment” as a tool for teaching to the individual needs of students and modifying instruction accordingly
- Communicate curriculum standards and instruction strategies to parents to ensure they understand what skills their child will learn during the year

The road map for parents, teachers and administrators would be a whole school “Student Achievement Plan” to define goals, objectives and implementation plans for completing the school’s vision in areas such as reading, math, special education, technology and testing. Henry stressed the importance for all stakeholders to participate in the creation, implementation and evaluation of the plan.

“An effective plan,” she shared, “is an explicit, living document that allows us to align, realign and restructure curriculum...we look at it and say this is something we did last year and it did not work.”

The next step according to Henry is to identify new strategies for accomplishing school goals.

Student Achievement is a Non-Negotiable

Dunlap-Parker stepped to the microphone sharing her experiences as the founder and principal of the Truth Institute for Leadership and Service, a public charter high school.

At the Truth Institute, the focus is on the relationships and needs of teachers and students. For Dunlap-Parker, maintaining high standards for students requires effective instruction, sound school management accountability and continuous capacity building.

When working with teachers, she maintains an open door policy. “Teachers command the classroom and [they] know their role is vital. If you [a teacher] tell me you need something for the classroom, I will get it for you.” She also stressed the importance of selecting teachers who will maintain high standards by coming in early and staying late.

Before opening questions and answers, Dunlap-Parker reiterated her theme of power with a group chant – “P-O-W-E-R.” “Give up your power,” she urged the group of educators, parents and others. Students respond when you give them all the need to succeed... Communicate with your students and they will respond. With passion, she espoused to the group “We can close the achievement gap, but we must demand more.”



WELL-KNOWN EDUCATOR, HARRIET BALL WOW'S THE CROWD AGAIN

By Tarra Taylor

Harriett Ball has taken full advantage of the opportunity to educate teachers, parents and adults on how to reach children in the classroom.

"Repeat after me," Ball said as she dazzled adults at Symposium 2005, using song, dance and rhythm to demonstrate how she teaches her students in Houston. "Numbers don't scare me."

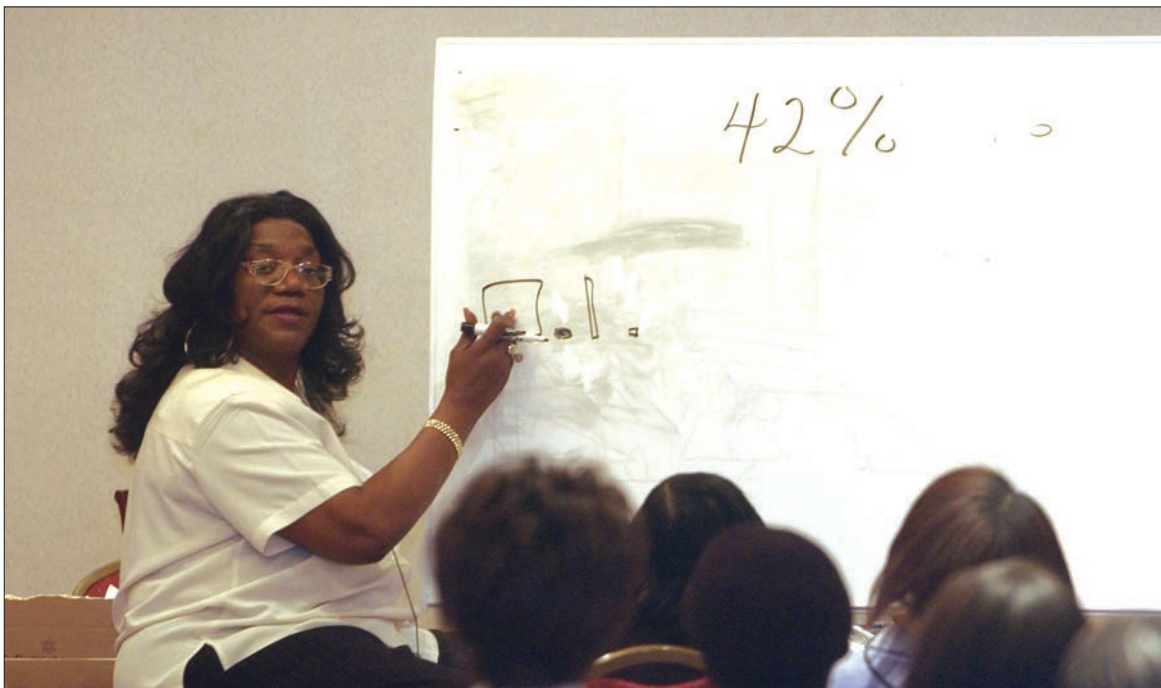
During the session, Ball explained how using games keep students interested in learning. She says students are learning and don't realize it because they're having such a good time, rather than sitting behind a desk all period.

Ball uses a game called 'ZAP' to help students with their multiplication tables. The object of Zap is for students to go through a set of multiplication tables without making a mistake. The game is played with two students. Each student has to continue the sequence of numbers in a set,

for example one student will start with eight, and then the next student will say sixteen and so on. If one student misses the sequence it is then the next student's turn. Ball says this is a game that students can play during breaks and at lunch, which essentially means they are continuously learning. During her presentation, Ball matched a 13-year old against two adults in the game. The teen beat them both soundly.

"As teachers, we have not been taught to change our teaching style to accommodate today's students," she said. "Yet we blame and label them as un-teachable for not understanding what we teach."

"Harriett Ball has taken education to another dimension," said Junell McCray, a special education instructional assistant at the Detroit Advantage Academy. "She has truly been crowned with creativity from the most high."



"I will no longer allow myself and my students to be 'invisible' in my surroundings."

PREPARING THE MIND FOR KNOWLEDGE

By Nicole A. Johnson

Many educators talk about the importance of critical thinking skills. At Symposium 2005, Dr. Bob Pavlik and Denise Pitchford from the Institute for the Transformation of Learning were able to deliver concrete examples to parents and educators attending the session Mastering Subject Matter 10x10. According to Pavlik and Pitchford, educators and parents must pay attention to the “what” and “how” of student learning.

“Textbooks emphasize information not the language of knowledge,” argued Pavlik. “We must introduce labels to students so that they can have a hook for information.”

Absent from many textbooks is the language of knowledge asserted Pavlik. To help students transform information

into knowledge, he distributed a glossary of terms and concepts every student needs in order to be active in their own learning. During open discussion, he challenged participants to reflect on how much of this language they shared with students.

From this critique of fact-driven teaching, Pavlik transitioned to how students learn. In a series of skits, he introduced the importance of brain functions. He reviewed how stress, rote instruction like worksheets, and poor nutrition can cause the brain to shut down. As one participant shared, she left the session understanding that “the brain and body do work in tandem with each other and definitely effect each other.”

What Language Do You and Your Students Need?

These words and terms were part of a glossary of terms compiled by Dr. Bob Pavlik to provide teachers and their students with starter definitions for the vocabulary of knowledge.

Language of Knowledge

- behavior (n): expected actions of animate and inanimate objects
- hypothesis (n): well-reasoned idea prepared for testing and discussion
- zone (n): continuous area of land whose characteristics or purposes differ considerably from the surrounding areas

Descriptive Terms

- Belief Systems: agenda, code of ethics, creed, declaration
- Dimensions: area, breadth, capacity, circumference, depth, diameter, length, magnitude
- Deeds: accomplishment, achievement, execution, exploit, feat, transaction
- Phases: class, classification, cycle, degree, draft, edition, grade, level, origin, phase, position, state



POLITICS OF CHOICE

By Lakiya Emerson

Political veterans Kevin Chavous, Alvin Williams, and Anthony Williams shared their knowledge about driving the school choice movement with politics as the vehicle. For these men, the bottom line is momentum towards an ideal educational system — using parent mobilization, the cultivation of new political leadership, and opening minds to the change that is on the horizon.

It's hard to determine where politics begins and ends, they agreed, but relationship building is one of the most essential aspects of reaching a goal.

"We have to be strategic in targeting the right influencers," Chavous said after expounding on the importance of going door-to-door and reaching out to neighborhood leaders such as clergy members.

Chavous, who for six years served on the District of Columbia Council, was the Chairman of the Education Committee and has been known for his roll-up-the sleeves grassroots campaigning. His leadership on the Education Committee saw the realization of burgeoning choice opportunities in the District, which has 20,000 of its approximately 100,000 public school students in charter schools.

"If we are to sustain an environment conducive to school choice the most important constituency is parents," said Alvin Williams, who is the President and CEO of Black America's Political Action Committee. "If we can reach parents, then they will mobilize their voting power to elect for school choice."

Pennsylvania Senator Anthony Williams encouraged the audience to be prepared to sit at the decision table regardless of the people who sit there as well. A staunch

Democrat, he brought the audience to raucous laughter by describing people's reaction to a picture of himself and President George W. Bush hanging on his office wall.

"There are no permanent enemies," Anthony Williams said, "just permanent interests."

Supporting parental choice has brought Anthony Williams and Chavous, also a democrat, some criticism. Like many choice leaders today, both men began as detractors of school choice. But sound convincing brought them both across the taboo path of adopting an issue seen as "Republican."

"No one can argue with the logic of preserving the status quo," said Chavous who had to develop an "internal bullet proof vest" to weather attacks for his support of school choice.

To ensure that the movement remains viable, all three men pressed on the importance of cultivating young leaders.

"We spend a lot of time on state legislators," Chavous said, "but we should channel our focus on up-and-coming state and local councilmen and mayors."

Alvin Williams said BAMPAC isn't the kind of committee that will just "write checks and keep going." BAMPAC cultivates candidates with strategic assistance to ensure their campaign success.

"This is about leadership," he said. "You have to provide leadership in a form where they are easy to identify with."

"I am 90 years old...strong and never thought I'd live to see our children locked into an education of death. I was there then and God has let me

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION: THE PHILADELPHIA STORY

By Nicole A. Johnson

The children of Philadelphia face a better future thanks to the work of Anthony Williams, State Senator of Pennsylvania, Dwight Evans, State Representative of Pennsylvania, and local parents whose fight and determination paved the way for charter schools, vouchers and public/private partnerships to exist in Pennsylvania. The Philadelphia School District is one of the first in the nation to implement a “multiple provider” model for the management and delivery of public education. The University of Pennsylvania, Temple University, Edison Schools and Victory Schools are just a few of the outside managers, for-profit and non-profit organizations, contracted by the district to manage low-performing elementary and middle schools.

The Philadelphia education reform story was the case study for the session State and Local Campaigns to Transform Education. Throughout his presentation, Evans shared several important factors that influence campaigns to create and sustain an environment for parental choice to flourish in Philadelphia.

- Recognize that education is a state right governed by state and local policymakers and bureaucrats. State and local education agencies are responsible for the collection and redistribution of education funds and manage the education code that structures education.
- Many education reformers want public education to be better, but they don't want it to change. Teachers unions, education advocates and policymakers alike are stuck in a system not designed to educate all children. Real change demands a transformation of the system.
- External and internal pressure is needed to transform systems. Democrats and Republicans must see parental choice as a vital component for education change. Parents must be at the forefront of the reform, and we should not be fearful.
- The educational choices and options must be quality. Black owned and operated does not let you off the hook. Students must be able to compete.

At the end of the session after a question and answer period, Evans reminded participants that “fundamentally, we are talking about democracy and educating all of the children.”

*see it now, and our children are locked in, not locked out as before.
I love my wife for involving me in this ‘struggle.’”*

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[What was the most important new idea(s) you will take home with you?]



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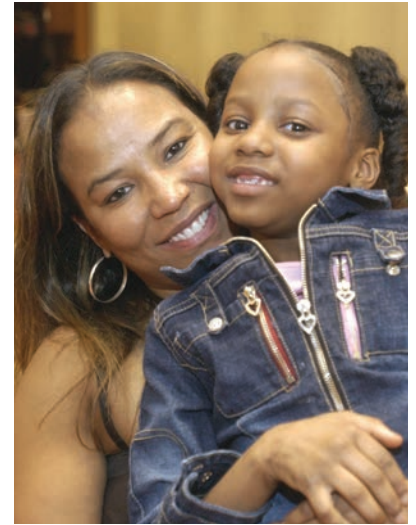
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"Just being here witnessing such a large group of African Americans who care about our youth and continue to fight for them."



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—	BA0501a	Welcome – M. Ashton / BSU Luncheon Keynote: C. Booker / Wrap-up & Evaluation
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—	BA0501b	Media Messaging and Interview Skills – L. Tucker / K. Freeman
—	BA0501c	Leading a Successful Non-Profit Organization – D. Dzhuparev / J. Perry
—	BA0501d	Personal Transformation: Know Thyself to Inspire Others – A. Smith / K. Lewis

FIRST-TIMER'S ORIENTATION

—	BA0502	FirstTimer's Orientation – K. Glean / H. Fuller, D. McGriff, L. Patrick, III
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FRIDAY, March 11, 2005

GENERAL SESSIONS

—	BA0503	Welcome Breakfast: A Tribute to Parents and Emerging Leaders – C. Brown, C. Higgins
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—	BA0504	President & CEO Luncheon – L. Patrick, III
—	BA0505	Conversation with Board Chair and President & CEO – J. Joyner Cissell / H. Fuller, L. Patrick, III

CONCURRENT SESSIONS - 10:00-11:45am

—	BA0506	Say It with Pride! Effective Strategies for Sharing Your Success – L. Tucker / L. Adams, A. Tucker, O. Watson
—	BA0507	Grassroots Parent Organization: Keeping Parents Informed and Active – Z. Courtney / M. Garcia, F. Green, Y. Weldon-Ford
—	BA0508	Financing Public Charter Schools – D. Hardy / L. Sorden, J. Williams
—	BA0509	State and Local Campaigns to Transform Education – R. Ellis / D. Evans, M. Pittman
—	BA0510	Teacher Empowerment for Student Achievement – A. Morgan / S. Dunlap-Parker, L. Henry
—	BA0511	School Design: Near Work – B. Horton / T. McDaniel, R. Lockwood
—	BA0512	Mastering Subject Matter... 10 x 10 – U. Smith / B. Powell, D. Pittman

CONCURRENT SESSIONS - 2:00-3:00pm

—	BA0514	Youth and Young Adult Leadership in the Parental Choice Movement – M. Mason / D. Chevaux, E. Moore
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Qty	Tape #	Session Title/Speaker(s)
—	BA0515	Ready, Set, Success: Student Transition from High School to College – G. Robinson / D. Hance, M. Lassar, B. Taylor
—	BA0516	Learning Lessons from Social Venture Startup's – G. Greenwood / T. Fair, C. Anderson
—	BA0517	Discovering What Makes Your Child Tick: Understanding Your Child's Behavioral Style – D. Jackson / B. Medlock

SUNDAY, March 12, 2005

GENERAL SESSION

—	BA0518	Board Chair Dinner: 3 Anniversary Celebration – H. Fuller / E. Feig
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CONCURRENT SESSIONS 9:30-10:45am

—	BA0519	Parent Power: No Parent Left Behind – S. Medlock, D. Collaids-Curry, K. Montgomery
—	BA0520	Samurai vs. Goliath: Growcole Fundraising 101 – M. Fuller / D. Kligerman

—	BA0521	Clergy Roundtable: Delivering the Message of Parental Choice – R. Bryant / B. Jackson
—	BA0522	Politics of Choice – K. Johnson / K. Clemons, Allen Williams, Anthony Williams
—	BA0523	Volunteering Supplemental Educational Services (SES) – M. Miller / J. Elgers, M. Parilli, E. Wade, C. Ward, D. Hilson
—	BA0524	Lessons from the Field: BAEO-Gottas Small High Schools Project – C. Green / B. Abdullah, K. Hegamin, N. Jones, I. Walker
—	BA0525	Intergenerational Leadership for Change – J. Mitchell / A. Foggy-Paton

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