



# Reclaiming the Conversation on Education

Barnard College,  
Columbia University  
New York City  
May 4, 2013

## Stay Connected:

Let this conference be just the beginning of our collaboration on how to mobilize and resist the corporate assault on public education!

**Email:**  
reclaimingconversation@gmail.com

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ReclaimingtheConversationonEducation

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We are grateful for Barnard Education Program's sponsorship and support from an anonymous donor, the North Star Fund, PSC/CUNY, and Shirley Chisholm Project.

Videography support provided by the Educational Video Center

Design by Kathryn Moore & Shao-yu Liu

Teachers, parents, students and scholars from around the country

Building coalitions and supporting resistance against the corporate education "reforms" that are privatizing public education and reducing teaching and learning to test scores.

## May 4, 2013 Agenda

9:00 AM Registration / Breakfast

9:30-10:00 AM Opening Remarks

10:00 – 11:45 AM **Panel 1: Overview of Current Educational Landscape**

Arnold Dodge: Moderator, Susan Ohanian, Barbara Bowen, Carol Burris, Zakiyah Ansari, Juan Gonzalez, and Barbara Madeloni

12:00 – 2:00 PM **Facilitated Lunch Discussion about People's Experiences with what has been Presented in Overview.**

2:00 – 2:15 **Kris McBride (Garfield High School, Seattle)**

2:20 – 3:30 **2nd Panel: Alternatives and Activism. Moderated by Julie Gorlewski/Janet Miller**

Ceresta Smith, Brian Jones, Nikhil Goyal, Ann Cook, and Shino Tanikawa

3:30 – 5:30 **Second Facilitated Discussion: Action plans**

5:30 – 6:00 PM **Small Group Report Sharing in the Plenary**

6:00 – 6:15 PM **Closing Remarks**

6:15 – 7:00 PM **Reception and Discussion**

Susan Ohanian is a longtime teacher whose 300 articles have appeared in periodicals ranging from Parents, USA Today, and The Atlantic to Phi Delta Kappan and Substance. She has written 25 books on education policy and practice, giving a teacher view of reality. With the passage



of No Child Left Behind, she started a website of resistance and has found no reason to stop. The website received the NCTE George Orwell Award for Distinguished Contribution for Honesty and Clarity in Public Language.

Juan Gonzalez has been a professional journalist for more than 30 years and a staff columnist at the New York Daily News since 1987. He is a two-time recipient of the George Polk Award for commentary (1998 and 2010), and the first reporter in NYC to consistently expose the health effects arising from the September



11, 2001 attacks and the cover-up of these hazards by government officials. He is a founder and past president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, and a member of NAHJ's Hall of Fame. Gonzalez created the Parity Project. He also spearheaded a successful movement among U.S. journalists to join other citizen groups in opposing the Federal Communications Commission's deregulation of media ownership restrictions. A founding member of the Young Lords Party in the 1970s and of the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights in 1980s, Gonzalez has twice been named by Hispanic Business Magazine as one of the country's most influential Hispanics and has received Lifetime Achievement Awards from the Hispanic Heritage Foundation, the National Council of La Raza, and the National Puerto Rican Coalition. Gonzalez has written four books.

**Carol Burris** was named 2013 New York State High School Principal of the Year.

She has served as principal of South Side High School in the Rockville Centre School District in NY since 2000. Prior to becoming a principal, she was a teacher at both the middle and high school level. She received her doctorate from Teachers College, Columbia University, and her dissertation, which studied her district's detracking reform in math, received the 2003 National Association of Secondary Schools' Principals Middle Level Dissertation of the Year Award. In 2010, she was named Educator of the Year by the School Administrators Association of New York State, and in 2013, she was named SAANYS New York State High



School Principal of the Year. Dr. Burris is the co-author and author of numerous publications and has a new book, *On the Same Track: How Schools Can Join the 21st Century Struggle against Re-segregation*, which will be available from Beacon Press in the spring of 2014.

**Zakiyah Ansari** is the Advocacy Director with the New York State Alliance for Quality Education (AQE) the leading statewide organization that has been working to fight for educational equity for the last decade. Residing in Brooklyn, she is the mother of eight children, all of whom have or are currently attending public school. Zakiyah was a parent volunteer with AQE for over 6 years before she became employed by them. She was an active parent volunteer in her children's PTAs and is a founding parent leader with CEJ. Zakiyah has been invited to speak before parents, educators, elected officials and administrators about the importance of organizing parents and communities in schools. She is one of the parent voices in the film *Parent Power* produced by the Annenberg Institute for School Reform. Zakiyah is one of the co-initiators on a recently formed national grassroots movement "Journey for Justice." Recently, she was featured on MSNBC.



**Barbara Bowen**, a professor of English at Queens College and the Graduate Center of The City University of New York (CUNY), taught for fifteen years before becoming president of the Professional Staff Congress/CUNY. A scholar of 17th-century English literature and African-American studies, Bowen earned her Ph.D. at Yale and has published numerous works in her field. Throughout her academic career, she also worked in progressive political movements and as a labor organizer. Bowen's election as president of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC) in 2000 was as part of a collective of faculty and staff with deep roots in progressive politics. Bowen began her union career on assignment as a VISTA volunteer. She also spent several years as a community organizer. Bowen is a member of the NYSUT board of directors and the executive board of the New York City Central Labor Council.



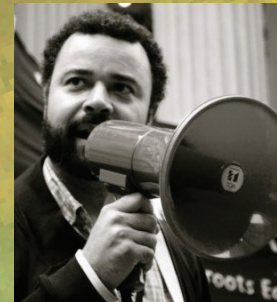
**Nikhil Goyal**, lauded by the Washington Post as a future U.S. Secretary of Education, at age 17, Nikhil Goyal is the author of *One Size Does Not Fit All: A Student's Assessment of School*, by the Alternative Education Resource Organization. His work has appeared in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, MSNBC, NPR, FOX and Friends, FOX Business, NBC Nightly News, The Globe and Mail, Huffington Post, Fast Company, Psychology Today, and Education Week. In 2012, Goyal was named one of the "World Changers" for Dell #Inspire 100. He is also 2013 Forbes 30 Under 30: Education and ORIGIN Magazine: The Nation's Top Creatives. For his efforts in education, Goyal accepted the 2013 Freedom Flame Award. Past winners have included Dr. Martin Luther King and John Lewis. An international speaker, Goyal has spoken at NBC, M.I.T., Dell, SXSW, Cisco, Fast Company, Florida International University, College of the North Atlantic, and other conferences around the world. He is also a guest lecturer at Baruch College. Goyal serves on the board of FairTest and is an education advisor to Hill Krishnan's 2013 campaign for New York City Council. He is also leading a Learning Revolution movement to transform the American school system. Goyal lives with his family in Woodbury, New York.



**Ceresta Smith** is a 24-year veteran teacher who earned her National Board Certification in Adult/Young Adult English/language arts in 2002. As a 2009 – 2010 recipient of a \$10,000 Jordan Fundamental Grant, she implemented Text Titans, a literacy building initiative designed by her and funded by Brand Jordan, a private foundation created by basketball great Michael Jordan, which honors teachers who motivate and inspire students toward achieving excellence. She is a staunch advocate of quality and equitable education reform that maintains a decorum of respect and reverence for the teaching profession and its need for strong collective bargaining. She currently serves on the National Steering Committee of Save Our Schools, an organization dedicated to the preservation of quality and the establishment of equity in public education. She is also a co-founder and administrator for United Opt National.



**Brian Jones** is a teacher, actor and activist in New York. He has taught elementary grades for almost a decade in New York City's public schools, and is pursuing a PhD in Urban Education at the City University of New York Graduate Center. He is a member of the Movement of Rank and File Educators: the social justice caucus of the United Federation of Teachers. Brian co-narrated the film, *The Inconvenient Truth Behind Waiting for Superman*, and has contributed to the book *Education and Capitalism: Struggles for Learning and Liberation*. Brian has also lent his voice to several audiobooks, including *The John Carlos Story: The Sports Moment That Changed the World* and Howard Zinn's one-man play, *Marx in Soho*. Brian is the recipient of a 2012 Lannan Cultural Freedom Fellowship. He is currently writing a book about the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement.



**Shino Tanikawa** became involved in education through her older daughter's elementary school. She started with face painting at a fundraiser, and moved up to serve as Treasurer then Co-President of the PTA. Shino has since served as PTA co-president of a middle school, a member of the SLT for elementary, middle and high schools, and an officer of the District 2 PTA Presidents' Council. Shino was also a member of the Parent Commission on School Governance, a volunteer parents group developing legislative recommendations as alternatives to the Mayoral control law. Since March 2009, Shino has served on the Community Education Council District 2 and is currently the President.



**Barbara Madeloni** is a teacher educator and former high school English teacher. After voicing concerns about the TPA and supporting students who refused to participate in the Pearson-Stanford field test of the edTPA, she received a letter of non-renewal from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Students and community members organized to protest her non-renewal and the education activist group Can't Be Neutral (CBN) was born. CBN is now organizing beyond Barbara's job loss to lead workshops and teach-ins about resisting the corporatization of education. Barbara blogs at @thechalkface.



**Anne Cook** is the executive director of the New York Performance Standards Consortium, a coalition of New York State public high schools that has developed and implemented a performance-based system of assessment that is used to fulfill state requirements for graduation in place of high stakes tests. Ms Cook is co-founder of Urban Academy Laboratory High School, the award-winning anchor school located in the Julia Richman Education Complex in New York City. She writes on educational issues and is an author and is a mother of three children who graduated from New York City public schools.

