A Campaign for Equity

Equal expectations, equal opportunities and equal outcomes for all students—in our neighborhood and around the world
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The title for this essay comes from Leo Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*, specifically from a debate between the brothers Levin over social responsibility. Sergei, visiting his country sibling, argues the importance of hospitals and schools. “Can there be any doubt of the usefulness of education?” he asks. “If it’s good for you, it is good for everyone.” Konstantin counters, “Maybe all that is good, but why should I worry about setting up medical centers that I will never use and schools that I won’t send my children to...?” Sergei changes the topic.

Konstantin’s question looms larger today than ever before—indeed, it stands at the center of the education debate in our society. This year, rather than expressing my own views in this space, I will seek to discuss it on behalf of the Teachers College community—trustees, faculty, students, administration and staff.

Last spring, the College completed a two-year strategic planning process. The overriding conclusion was that Teachers College should focus its efforts—teaching, research and service—on a single issue: educational equity, or what is often referred to colloquially as “the achievement gap.”

With the enthusiastic endorsement of our Board of Trustees, the TC community is now embarking on a major effort—which we call The Campaign for Educational Equity—to close the gaps in educational access, expectations and outcomes between the most advantaged and disadvantaged populations in society.

Today our country has two education systems, separate and unequal. One chiefly serves our more affluent, suburban white children, while the other primarily serves low-income, urban children of color. There are great disparities between the two in teacher quality, curriculum, resources, facilities, funding, student achievement, graduation rates and college attendance. And these, in turn, reflect broader societal inequities. Consider these realities:

- Thirteen percent of African-American children are born with low birth weight—double the rate for whites.
- Median black family income is 64 percent of median white family income—and median black family net worth is only 12 percent of white family net worth.
- Twenty percent of low-income children are without consistent health insurance, versus 32 percent of all U.S. children. Thirteen percent of black children are without health insurance, versus 8 percent of white children.
- Black pre-schoolers are one-third less likely than whites to get standard vaccinations.
- Twenty percent of black children suffer from anemia versus 8 percent of all children.
- Low-income children have dangerously high blood levels of lead at five times the rate of middle-class children.
- African-American students are three times more likely than whites to be placed in special education programs, and only half as likely to be in gifted programs in elementary and secondary schools.
- By age three, children of professionals have vocabularies nearly 50 percent greater than those of working-class children, and twice as large as those of children on welfare.
- By the end of fourth grade, African-American and Latino students, and poor students of all races, are two years behind their wealthier, predominantly white peers in reading and math. By eighth grade, they have slipped three years behind, and by 12th grade, four years behind.
- One in three African-American males will be incarcerated in state or federal prison at some point during their lives, and the rate is significantly higher for black men who do not finish high school. For Hispanic males, the rate is one in six; for white males, one in 12.
- Heroin use has been the leading cause of death among African Americans aged 15 to 34 since 1978. The lifetime risk of violent death for young black males is one in 27, and for black females, one in 17. By contrast, one in 303 young white males and one in 496 young white females are murdered.
- Among 18 to 24 year-olds, about 50 percent of whites have either completed high school or earned a GED. Among blacks, the rate is 81 percent, and among Hispanics, 63 percent. However, a much larger share of blacks earn GEDs than whites, and only about 50 percent of black students earn regular diplomas, compared with about 75 percent of whites.
- Fewer black than white eight graders eventually enroll in college the year after high school graduation (44 percent vs. 56 percent), and fewer 28-year-olds earn a bachelor’s degree (17 percent vs. 35 percent). Black students are only about half as likely as whites to have earned a bachelor’s degree by age 29, and Hispanics are only one-third as likely.

These disparities cannot be permitted to continue. As an institution, Teachers College has resolved to turn our energies and our efforts to a campaign to reduce them. The following are some of the questions we’ve asked ourselves as we embark upon this mission.

Why Should I Worry About Schools My Children Won’t Attend?

by Arthur Levine, President of Teachers College
Why Educational Equity?

We are well aware of the enormity of the challenge we have embraced. We do this neither as naïve Pollyannas nor latter-day Don Quixotes. At Teachers College, we view educational inequity as the greatest challenge facing education today and a powerful threat to our country. It is a moral threat: In an age when good jobs require higher levels of skills and knowledge than ever before in history, children are denied the education to acquire them, simply because of their parents’ skin color or income. It is an economic threat. In an era in which employers cross national borders in search of talented workers, the children in our cities lack the skills for gainful employment. It is a social threat: As the numbers on the previous page illustrate, inadequately educated children are more likely to be arrested, become pregnant, use drugs, experience violence and require public assistance. And it is a civic threat, because our children’s overall enfranchisement—their personal stake in society—so clearly mirrors their educational level.

Why Teachers College?

The TC community has embraced the issue of educational equity because, first and foremost, this always has been at the heart of what we do. The city mothers of New York in the late 19th century, alarmed at the plight of immigrant children who were unable to break the bonds of poverty, found that the schools were unprepared to help those children. The women created instead an institution to prepare a new breed of teacher capable of educating the disadvantaged. The founding mission of TC, then, was educational equity. Each year I remind new students of this. I explain that TC’s mission and purpose is best described with two Hebrew words: “Tikkun Olam”—to repair the world.

We embrace the issue of educational equity because our community believes it to be imperative in a time when education is declining as a national priority. The Baby Boomers, who make up over 60 percent of the American electorate, put school reform on the national agenda because they wanted good schools for their children. Today their children are largely through school and the Baby Boomers’ concern has shifted to their parents, who are aging and growing more frail. The Baby Boomers are no longer trumpeting the need for school reform. They want health insurance, social security and elder care. The result is that education dropped from being the first or second priority on the national agenda during the 2000 election to number five in 2004.

I believe that trend will only continue as the needs and wants of the Baby Boomers further shape public policy. The result will be that the most disadvantaged children in our country will be left even further behind. Our nation has been through more than 20 years of attempts to reform and improve schools. Suburban schools are indeed better today, but no urban school system in America has yet been successfully turned around. The Campaign for Educational Equity is intended to change that and to ensure that the children who attend poor schools are not forgotten. The TC community believes the equity issue should be as important to education schools as AIDS or cancer is to medical schools.

What Will The Campaign Do?

There will be three components to the Campaign for Educational Equity. The first is research. The Campaign will serve as a clearinghouse for research on educational equity by bringing together TC faculty who work in the area and by acting as a convening authority for our Columbia colleagues, experts from around the globe, and organizations that focus on equity issues.

The Campaign will engage in targeted research; that is, it will identify priority areas, such as preschool education, that are ripe for action and where there is genuine capacity to substantially close the gap. The Campaign will spotlight the best existing research in the area, supplement it when necessary and assemble the best minds from within TC and outside to reach a consensus on what works and how that should be translated into policy.

The Campaign will also engage in opportunistic research. For example, if a TC faculty member’s research has the potential to make a significant contribution, the Campaign will run with it.

The Campaign will also generate two signature products: a report card and a symposium. Every other year, a report card will be issued on the condition of educational equity in each of the 50 states. Consisting of a bushel of equity indicators that are currently being developed by Laurie Tisch Visiting Professor Richard Rothstein, the report card will be designed to educate the public and stimulate state action.

The symposium will be an annual event in which the Campaign brings together policy makers, practitioners, scholars and the media to discuss what we know and what we should do in priority areas. The inaugural symposium, organized and chaired by Henry Levin, TC’s William H. Kilpatrick Professor of Economics and Education, will focus on the social costs of inequality—that is, the economic, social and political price we all pay for inadequate education. It will be held at Columbia University’s Lerner Hall on October 24 and 25.

The second component of the Campaign is dissemination. The Campaign will reject the traditional peer-reviewed journal as its primary means of reaching the public. While this method has its strengths, speed is not one of them. In an age of instant information, it takes, on average, well over a year for academic research to be published. The writing style of academic journals is not accessible to the public; the Campaign is seeking to affect. And the impact

The Baby Boomers put school reform on the national agenda. Today their concerns have shifted to their aging parents.”

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of the research published in these journals is not as powerful as it needs to be; citation rates are far too low. Certainly we will vet our publications with leading experts in the field. But the Campaign’s priority will be to target its research at the actors needed to implement it, including the media, government, school boards, school administration, teachers and funders. For instance, to prompt the legislature in a given state to act on its research, the Campaign might translate that research into lay-friendly English, create a Web site, brief key office holders and staff, and arrange for hearings and testimony, locate a sponsor for legislation and even develop model legislation itself.

The third component is demonstration projects. Our goal is to implement Campaign research in the field—to test and adopt it in real communities, families and schools through programs that have the potential to become national models. The nucleus of this effort already exists in the form of the TC Education Zone Partnership, a commitment the College has made to working with our neighborhood schools in Harlem and other underserved areas of the city. To date, the Partnership comprises an arts-inclusive high school, the Heritage school, that was founded by a TC faculty member; a reading and writing curriculum created at the College that has been adopted citywide; an initiative to increase new teacher retention; establishment of a prototype professional development program designed to replace the existing model; a reading program in which TC students work with children in neighborhood schools; and much more. A special report on many of these activities begins on page four of this Annual Report.

How Will Success Be Determined?
The Campaign is not an academic exercise. Its success will be measured by our ability to:

- Keep educational equity on the national agenda;
- Increase understanding of the issue by the public, policy makers, practitioners and funders;
- Serve as the primary convening authority on the issue for experts in the field and organizations working in the area;
- Become the principal source of information on equity for policy makers and practitioners of the press;
- Point to actions taken by policy makers and practitioners as a consequence of the Campaign’s work;
- Reduce the equity gap for some children.

And finally, to return to Konstantin Levin:

Why Worry About Schools our Children Won’t Attend?
The Campaign for Educational Equity epitomizes the historic legacy of Teachers College. Those of us who work at TC today stand on the shoulders of giants—faculty who served as the leading scholars, advocates and developers of educational policy and practice in this country and around the world. Their careers and their corpus of work were devoted to answering Levin’s question. Again and again, over the course of a century, they demonstrated the logic behind bringing the benefits of education to all members of society, and again and again they showed us how it could be done.

In doing so, they made a statement of profound importance about the mission of Teachers College and ultimately, of all colleges. They took a clear stance in a debate that has raged for as long as TC has existed, namely: Should universities be havens for detached scholars interested in knowledge for knowledge’s sake, as educator Abraham Flexner and economist Thorsten Veblen suggested early in the last century? Or should they be engaged actors concerned with the most critical issues facing society, as former University of Wisconsin president Charles Van Hise championed?

Of course, real institutions are neither as detached nor as engaged, neither as scholarly nor as activist, as these polarities suggest. However, from its earliest days, Teachers College has committed itself to Van Hise’s view of the university. And it is that view that guides us again now.

Consider that, at the turn of the last century, Van Hise attempted to build an “engaged university” in Madison, his initiative became known as the Wisconsin idea. Van Hise’s model sought to engage in high-quality research on the most pressing issues facing an agricultural state. When asked by the state legislature what he saw as the university’s contribution to Wisconsin, Van Hise replied that the university had “invented the cow.” And, in a manner of speaking, it had, by improving cattle breeding, herd size, milk production, and animal health and weight.

Beyond this, Van Hise’s university developed a demonstration farm where it could show the best in animal and crop practices. It went on the road to disseminate successful models, such as high-yield seed, to working farmers.

It offered instruction during lunch hour and on weekends—times when the public could actually attend. Faculty made instructional visits around the state, traveling to the far reaches of Wisconsin by train. It was said that one was as likely to meet a professor in a coach as on campus. Scholarly expertise was translated into legislative proposals, as professors served as members of state commissions and policy bodies, and as advisors to the governor and legislature. The university became the government’s preferred source of knowledge and counsel.

In a very real sense, in focusing on an equity and actively seeking to improve conditions for the most disadvantaged in society, TC is reaffirming its allegiance to the Wisconsin idea. We recommit ourselves to both scholarship and action. TC will engage in objective research of the highest quality and application of the research to address what the TC community believes to be the most important issue facing education.

Indeed, in my experience, the reason most TC faculty and students chose education as a career, even though other careers would have been far more lucrative, is the opportunity it provides to apply what we learn and truly make a difference. In my senior year of college, I found a pamphlet in the Brandeis University library entitled “Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order?” It was written in 1932 by Teachers College Professor George Counts and probably had more to do with my choosing education as a career than anything I have ever read. Upon becoming president of the College in 1994, I asked the Gottesman Libraries if they could locate a copy. It turned out that Counts’ book, a Depression-era tract by then more than half a century old, had read better when I was 22 than 46. However, the challenge it presented has never diminished in importance or urgency. Our hope is that TC and those who will join us in the years ahead can indeed create a new social order, which promises equity in educational access, expectations and outcomes for all.

“Today our country has two education systems, separate and unequal.”
2004 at TC: The Year in Review

It was a year when the College rolled out a new mission, took steps to position itself as a leading education policy center, made dramatic improvements in student life, launched or enhanced major programs to support working teachers and principals, and strengthened its outreach to New York City, the nation and the world.

January 2004

Brown v. Board of Education at 50

TC’s celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Supreme Court’s landmark decision to strike down school desegregation included:

• A visit from Bill Cosby. TC and New York City public schools’ Region 10 brought 500 ninth graders to Riverside Church in February to hear the entertainer and educator.

• A major study. The first-ever look at the effects of Brown from the students’ perspective was released in March by TC Professor Amy Stuart Wells and colleagues at UCLA.

• A conference. TC Professor V.P. Franklin coordinated a graduate student conference that assessed the decision’s long-term impact on education and society.

• An appearance by Ruby Bridges. The TC Medal for Distinguished Service was presented in April to the desegregation pioneer (pictured above, left, with Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean Darlyne Bailey), who as a young girl was escorted to school by federal marshals in New Orleans.

• An evaluation of No Child Left Behind. TC’s Institute for Educational Leadership and Educational Policy Fellowship Program held a joint panel in April to explore whether the federal education program is in harmony with the ideals embodied in Brown.

Teachers College on the Record. A special online issue of the TC Record in May chronicled Brown as a social movement.

February 2004

The Maxine Greene Chair

The Maxine Greene Chair for Distinguished Contributions to Education was established for outstanding educators and researchers on TC’s faculty. Greene, Professor Emeritus in the Arts and Humanities Department, was the College’s William F. Russell Professor in the Foundations of Education. She is currently Philosopher in Residence at the Lincoln Center Institute for Arts in Education. Nancy Lesko, Professor of Education, is the first holder of the Maxine Greene Chair.

March 2004

A New Direction for the College

The Board of Trustees formally approved TC’s new strategic plan, reflecting nearly two years of work by staff, faculty and students. The plan commits the College to a focus on educational equity—closing the gap in academic expectations, opportunities and outcomes between the nation’s wealthier students and their poorer, chiefly non-white, inner-city peers.

April 2004

Associate Deans Named

Sharon Lynn Kagan, Virginia and Leonard Mark Professor of Early Childhood and Family Policy, was named Associate Dean for Policy and head of the new Office of Policy and Research. Donald Martin was named Associate Dean for Enrollment and Student Services, with responsibility for marketing, admissions, student aid, student life, registrar and career services.

May 2004

Medallists Honored at Convocation

At its ceremonies for graduating master’s degree students, the College presented its Medal for Distinguished Service to:

• Lee Bollinger, President of Columbia University. As President of the University of Michigan, he led a fight for affirmative action that affected higher education and American society as a whole.

• Jane Goodall (right), anthropologist. Her groundbreaking studies of chimpanzees have expanded the fields of primate research and human development while raising issues of environmental and humanitarian concern.

• Vartan Gregorian, President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. As President of Brown University, the New York Public Library and now the Carnegie Corporation, he has been a leading progressive voice in education and learning.

• Jonathan Kozol, author and activist. The National Book Award-winning author of Death at an Early Age and Savage Inequalities, he has portrayed the struggles of America’s poor.

• George Mitchell, chairman of the Walt Disney Company and former U.S. Senator. A recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the UNESCO Peace Prize, he chaired a committee to examine the continuing crisis between Israelis and Palestinians and oversaw the relief fund for victims in the 9/11 attacks.

• Claude M. Steele (above, left), the Lucie Stern Professor of Social Sciences at Stanford University. He has written widely on prejudice and stereotypes, influencing policy on both education and the workplace.

At its doctoral ceremonies, the College presented its Cleveland A. Dodge Medal—given to non-educators who have made a difference in education—to William Ruane, founder of the The Carmel Hill Fund. The fund supports research and initiatives in health, employment, housing and education that benefit children in Harlem.
June 2004
Supporting New York City’s Finest
The 15-month Cahn Fellows Program for outstanding New York City principals brought new members together for its two-week Summer Leadership Institute. Funded by Charles Cahn (left) and his wife, Jane, the program is unique in supporting the growth of exemplary school leaders.

Class and Schools
TC and the Economic Policy Institute jointly published Tisch Visiting Professor Richard Rothstein’s Class and Schools, a consideration of how social, economic and educational factors interact to produce the education achievement gap.

July 2004
A Gathering of the Nation’s Superintendents
The 63rd annual Superintendents Work Conference, chaired by former New York State Education Commissioner Thomas Sobol (TC’s Christian A. Johnson Professor of Outstanding Leadership Practice), explored the federal No Child Left Behind program’s potential to promote educational equity given disparities in students’ family income, health care and housing.

August 2004
Bringing Quality Teachers to the Inner City
The Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation and Teachers College gave $50,000 scholarships to Erin McCrossan (left) and nine other incoming TC students—the Petrie Fellows—committed to teaching in New York City for five years after graduating. Another 10 students received $10,000 scholarships in exchange for a year’s commitment.

September 2004
A New Direction for TC
In his annual State of the College address, President Arthur Levine outlined trends that are challenging the relevance of education schools and said the school must work “to keep education on the national agenda.” TC’s focus on educational equity—the result of a two-year strategic planning process—is its answer to that challenge. Darlyne Bailey, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College, described TC as a “multiversity” that must continue to focus on recruiting and maintaining a diverse population of students, faculty and staff.

The Elaine Brantley Award
TC established the Elaine Brantley Memorial Award for Community and Civility. Brantley, a much-beloved cashier in the TC cafeteria, passed away in June 2003. Her daughter, Eboney, presented the first awards to Anthony Bonano, Director of Student Accounts, and Amy Pabarue, Telephone Operator.

A Model for Teaching Literacy in High Schools
Douglas Wood (right), former Executive Director the Tennessee State Board of Education, joined TC to head the National Academy for Excellent Teaching (NAfET). NAfET, which is developing national models for teaching literacy in high schools, is funded by Gerry Leeds (left) and his wife, Lilo.

A New Home for Students
Jack Hyland (left) and Bill Reuckert, co-chairs of TC’s Board of Trustees, cut the ribbon at a celebration of the opening of TC’s new residence hall on West 121st Street.

Adding Muscle to the Mission
TC’s New Office of Policy and Research
To help close the nation’s educational achievement gap, Teachers College must influence school-related laws and policies. To that end, the College’s new Office of Policy and Research has a simple but unequivocal goal: To make TC America’s education policy mecca.

So what needs to change? The focus, in the short-term, is to do a better job of broadcasting TC’s capacity in educational policy, more forcefully communicate research findings to those who might implement them (legislators, school leaders, the media and other key players), and provide stronger guidance to other TC faculty who want to make an impact with their research. Tactically, that means that the Office of Policy and Research will bring a new aggressiveness to pursuing grants, encourage more policy-relevant research, seek to attract more students to TC who are interested in doing policy work, provide stronger mentoring to faculty, forge ties with other institutions, and help all students navigate the school’s rich policy options. Down the road, TC might also establish a presence in Washington, D.C., Albany and other state and local seats of government.

It’s an ambitious agenda, but if it succeeds, the beneficiaries will include not only TC and its students and faculty, but schoolchildren all across America.

Now, that’s sound policy.
October 2004
TC Partners with Say Yes to Education
Philanthropist George Weiss, founder of the Say Yes to Education Foundation, announced a $50 million program to provide more than 400 kindergartners in five Harlem schools with full college scholarships, as well as ongoing support throughout their K–12 schooling. TC is a full partner, providing project space, staff and accounting services.

Toward a Multilingual World
Scholars, teachers and policy experts from 22 countries convened at TC to share research findings on multilingual schooling. Organized by TC faculty members María Torres-Guzmán (left) and Cristina García, the conference called for recognition of traditional minority and indigenous languages.

The Marx Lecture
Linda Darling-Hammond, the Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education at Stanford University, delivered TC’s annual Virginia and Leonard Marx Lecture. Darling-Hammond, a former TC faculty member, decided high-stakes testing and other features of the federal No Child Left Behind education program.

November 2004
A Library for the Future
The College dedicated its Gottesman Libraries, home to the world’s premiere collection of materials on the educating professions, to a ceremony attended by donors Ruth (left) and Sandy Gottesman.

December 2004
Development Continues, Post-Campaign
The College reported it had raised an additional $33 million in gifts and campaign pledges since the official close of the Capital Campaign in August 2003, consisting of $5 million in pledge payments, $6 million in faculty generated grants and $22 million in “new” money.

The Enid W. Morse Fellowship for Teaching in the Arts was awarded to four TC students. Established by Douglas Morse, Leslie Nelson and Andrew Morse in honor of their mother, TC Trustee Enid Morse, the Fellowship assists students interested in teaching music, visual arts or dance.

The annual Virginia and Leonard Marx Lecture has returned, on average, $250,000 in prevented welfare and crime costs and increased productivity.

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Research in 2004
The following were some of the diverse research contributions of TC faculty during 2004:

- “Closing the Academic Achievement Gap: A Charge to the Nation,” a report chaired by Edmund Gordon (above, center), Emeritus Professor of Psychology and Education, called for the deliberate, early fostering of “pro-academic behavior” through teaching, socialization and environmental supports.
- A study in Education Researcher by Madhavi Chatterji (above, right), Associate Professor of Measurement, Evaluation and Education, argues that education programs should be evaluated over an extended period using mixed methodologies, rather than through randomized field trials.
- A study in Social Sciences Quarterly, co-authored by Jeremy Hong, Professor of Political Science and Education, found that for-profit charter schools often replicate the size and top-down decision-making of public schools.
- A study of a remote Amazon tribe, published in Science by Peter Gordon (above, left), Professor of Speech and Language Pathology, shed light on a long-standing debate about the power of language to shape cognition.
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“Educational equity.” It sounds lofty—but what does it really mean?

At Teachers College, equity can begin in our own back yard with something as basic as helping a struggling child learn to read. It can take a village, to borrow a phrase—a school where committed teachers, involved parents and an innovative curriculum enable disadvantaged children to succeed. It can be a model for teaching literacy that is guiding an entire city—or it can be expertise in a court case that could reshape the way a state finances its schools. It can be research that tells the entire nation why it’s worth it to invest in helping the most at-risk students graduate from high school. Or it can be a project to rebuild the school system in a war-torn country halfway around the world.

These are just a few of the many activities going on at TC that are part of our new mission. Read about them in the following special report on A Campaign for Equity.
Pulling Up a Chair

In Our Back Yard

Every day, Vickie Ndibo and 39 other TC students sit and read for two hours with kids in neighborhood schools.
Ndibo has also learned that when you’re working with struggling students, success must often be measured in tiny increments—sometimes as small as a single word.

“One day, I had a student who kept having problems reading a word,” she says. “The next day he came back in and announced, ‘I know that word now!’”

Ndibo isn’t a teacher—she’s a TC Reading Buddy, one of 40 students the College deploys to local schools every day to read with six children for 20 minutes each. The way she sees it, it’s the “each” that accounts for the warm welcome she gets from her kids.

“You get to actually listen to students, so they don’t fight for your attention,” she says. And because there’s no set curriculum, Ndibo says, she can tailor lessons to the children—or even let them lead the way.

Ndibo and the other Reading Buddies have been paired with students who tested in the bottom quartile of their class on the English Language Assessments. The four Harlem schools currently participating in the program (P.S. 125, P.S. 127, P.S. 154 and C.S. 200) were selected in part because they operate in an area of the city that has one of the highest rates of “educational neglect” and child abuse.

“We’re trying to interrupt the failure cycle,” said TC’s Dawn Arno, who directs the program, which was funded by Trustee Arthur Zankel. “When someone reads to you one-on-one, the feedback mechanism is there, immediately. You don’t have to wait until you test the students in fourth grade to get that information.”

The four schools have quickly taken to the program. P.S. 125 recently had a breakfast so that parents of children working with TC students could meet with the school’s assigned Reading Buddies. Meanwhile, the teachers are delighted.

“How could it not be wonderful?” says Sarah Wunsdh, a teacher at P.S. 125. “I need all the help I can get!” And Zenola Cadlett, a parent coordinator at P.S. 125 who assists the Reading Buddies program there, says the top request from the school’s teachers is simply, “Give us more!”

But the Reading Buddies’ partnerships are about more than reading. Teachers College is giving the teachers at the four schools full access to the College’s own library. The College also is planning a series of education seminars for parents of children working with the Reading Buddies.

Ultimately, the goal is to keep the children excited about reading, learning and the more distant future. But the Reading Buddies are finding themselves inspired by the experience, too.

“I started the first two weeks of Reading Buddies by sharing some of my culture from Alaska,” says Tonio Verzone, a student in TC’s International Education department who is a TC Reading Buddy at P.S. 125. “We read books about dog sledding, life in rural Alaska and wildlife of the Arctic. Afterward, I asked the kids what kinds of books they would like to read next. ‘Alaska,’ was their reply. So you really feel you’re opening doors.”

Or as Ndibo, who is from Kenya, puts it, “You end up being role models for the children.”
In the Neighborhood

Theory...Meet Practice

A high school founded by TC uses the Whitney Museum and other city cultural institutions as primary "texts."
I think they’re really beautiful." says Ramirez, who also happens to lead tours at the city’s Whitney Museum and conducts interviews with featured artists. “They make you notice how Central Park itself is an artwork.”

If you’re wishing your own kid could offer a critique like that, you might consider checking out the Heritage School, the tiny public high school in East Harlem where Ramirez is completing his senior year.

Heritage—created by Teachers College and run as a partnership between TC and New York City’s Department of Education—has a total enrollment of 300 students in grades nine through 12, mostly from poor black and Latino families. Ninety percent of incoming ninth graders are performing below grade level in math and English, yet by the end of 10th grade, 85 percent of Heritage students pass the Math A Regents Exam with a score of 65 or higher. By the end of 11th grade, 85 percent pass the English Regents Exam with a score of 65 or higher. And in 2005, 42 of the 44 graduating seniors went on to college—70 percent to four-year institutions, including Columbia, the Honors College at Baruch and SUNY Binghampton.

The school has many strengths that account for this success, including an extended day program (7:30am to 5:30pm), extracurriculars that range from theater and dance happenings to a class in Japanese, and parent workshops on everything from discipline to teen pregnancy. As a result, Heritage routinely draws upwards of 400 parents to its parent and community events. The school also boasts an impressive array of grants that support a summer program, a psychologist, a full-time college counselor and an orientation program for ninth graders. Many faculty members from Teachers College provide curriculum guidance to Heritage, and most of Heritage’s teachers have scholarships that are enabling them to earn master’s degrees at TC.

But what really distinguishes Heritage is the full parity it accords the arts with math, English and other core subjects. That’s immediately evident to any first-time visitor to the school, which is located in the Julia de Burgos Latino Cultural Center on Lexington Avenue between 105th and 106th streets, and is also home to several Latino arts groups. A large, bright mobile by artist Marina Gutiérrez hangs in the downstairs lobby. Upstairs, the hallways brim with student art. Bulletin boards overflow with drawings and collages, and there is a life-size paper-mâché sculpture called ‘The Art of Gossip,’ which depicts the moment before a whispered insult results in a fight.

On a more pragmatic level, "parity" means using the arts, wherever possible, as a kind of glue to help motivate students in other subjects where their interest might not yet be adequately stimulated. It also means using New York City’s art and cultural institutions as primary “texts” to help students learn. >
“My vision is really that any kid from the Heritage School could walk up those august steps at the Metropolitan Museum and know they own it,” says Judith Burton, Professor of Art Education at TC, who founded the school in 1997 after being unable to find city schools for student teachers where art was “entrenched” in the curriculum. “For them, it’s not an elitist museum, for them it’s not something foreign, for them it’s full of objects and artifacts made by other human beings for their delight and learning.”

True to that vision, students from Heritage now intern at the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum. As the culminating assignment in an art history class taught by Kimberly Lane, students are required to go to a museum they haven’t been to before and pick three pieces of art, research them and then bring someone to the museum—often a parent—and lead a discussion with that person about the pieces.

“I had one girl say, ‘I went with my Mom and I’d never gone with my Mom to a museum and she had such interesting things to say and now we’re going back to museums together,’” Lane says.

Which is not to say Heritage has reached all its goals. The school is working to share its model of arts integration nationally, as well as to achieve a higher graduation rate, lose fewer students along the way, improve students’ Regents scores and send more graduates on to competitive four-year colleges. Another long-term goal is to extend the school downward to include sixth, seventh and eighth grades. “If we can get our kids in sixth grade, by the time they get to ninth grade, they’ll be ready to fly,” Burton says.

Overall, though, there’s a growing sense that Heritage is a success story—and a model to be emulated. “From my perspective, it’s no big trick to get high-achieving kids to perpetuate their high achievement,” says Principal Peter Dillon. “The big trick is to take kids who are low-achieving and turn them into middle to high achievers. How do we do that? Our approach isn’t to blame kids for where they are, but to meet them there and to look at what’s happened to them before they got here.”

And then turn them loose on the world. Heritage sent virtually its entire student body to see The Gates—some with their English teacher, others with their art teacher and still others as part of a Saturday brunch program that included parents. The high point was when a ninth-grade class encountered the artists, Christo and Jeanne-Claude, and one student engaged them in a spirited, if brief, discussion about their choice of color.

Dillon couldn’t have hoped for more. “Teachers College was founded on this promise of addressing the needs of the city,” he says. “So this is the most pragmatic thing you can do: run a high school in East Harlem that serves 500 kids. And that nicely balances out the theoretical stuff. People talk about it as ‘praxis,’ the intersection of theory and practice. I think we’re a very good example of that.”

“My vision is really that any kid from the Heritage School could walk up those august steps at the Metropolitan Museum and know they own it.”

Judith Burton, Professor of Art Education at TC
Around the City

Spreading the Words

Lucy Calkins and TC’s Reading and Writing Project are changing the world, one workshop at a time.
Calkins—TC’s Robinson Professor of English Education, and the author of classics such as The Art of Teaching Reading, The Art of Teaching Writing and Raising Lifelong Learners—has in all likelihood provided more professional development to educators than anyone else working in America today. Her organization works with schools and school districts in over 40 cities nationwide.

Calkins’ approach falls into the camp known as “balanced literacy”—reading for meaning, using real texts rather than artificial ones, providing young writers with a simpler version of the workshop experience adults might encounter in an MFA program. Yet she brings to it a fervor uniquely her own.

“When you teach people to read or write, it’s a profound relationship,” she says. “You get close and it gives the work its heart. Especially with very young writers—you ... their lives.” With reading, Calkins says, the trick is “to hook into beautiful literature that takes your breath away.”

If that sounds somewhat open-ended, it’s because Calkins absorbs as much from her clients as they do from her.

“Lucy uses this phrase in one of her books—‘Welcome, trouble’—and that’s truly how she works,” says Cathy Torres, co-coordinator for the Centers for Learning in ... it teaches her. And I think that’s brilliant, because there’s nothing in education that works all the time.”

As one of the major providers of literacy professional development for much of the New York City school system, Calkins and her team are now in step with what the city’s teachers are working on in their classrooms on any given day. It’s an enormous task, which is why the Reading and Writing Project has 65 staff developers and separate divisions that focus on English language learners and middle schools. The Project bills for its services, but virtually all of the money is put back into the operation itself.

“Our aim isn’t to put a doughnut shop on every corner,” Calkins says. “We simply want to support literacy reform on a large scale. We think we’re changing the world.”

For Calkins, the key to achieving that goal is teaching good literacy skills through a workshop approach. “What makes for workshop teaching?” she asked a breakout group of principals and superintendents who had gathered one morning last fall to absorb her ideas about teaching fifth-grade social studies. “I’m not a social studies expert, but in any subject, the teacher must launch work that kids are invested in, and on which they keep working over time. And the teacher must explicitly teach skills that students accumulate and continue to draw on.”

Take geography and the teaching of strategies that skilled map readers use. “Start with an analogy to reading,” Calkins said. “When reading a book, you don’t just dive into the main text, but instead you look first at the title and the table of contents. Just as, with a map, you start with its compass, its legend, its key.”

Of course, soon you’ll need to teach kids that different kinds of maps demand different skills. Just as, in reading, a mystery requires the reader to look for clues while a novel may require more reflection on one’s own experiences. Once kids possess that kind of repertoire, they can combine knowledge of a place from maps, photographs, charts and graphs. Then they can develop theories about their observations and defend them with supporting evidence. “It’s always about bringing higher-level skills to the same work,” Calkins said.

Later, striding back and forth across the stage of TC’s Milbank Chapel with microphone in hand, Calkins urged all of the morning’s attendees to think about creating a similar culture of learning among their faculty. She exhorted them to establish a community of practice in which teachers meet across grade levels to jointly plan curricula in all areas. And she told them how her own work has been shaped over the years by “dissonant voices that ask hard questions.”

“If we listen to the people who cause us trouble,” she said, “we’ll find they have much to teach us.”

They’re a fixture at Teachers College: the hundreds of superintendents, principals and teachers who stream into Main Hall in the early mornings and then fan out to conference rooms, cups of coffee in hand. Their destination: Lucy Calkins and the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project.

“When you teach people to read or write, it’s a profound relationship.”

Lucy Calkins, Director of TC’s Reading and Writing Project
Across the State

The Man in the Billion-Dollar Suit

Michael Rebell and the Campaign for Fiscal Equity are finishing what Brown v. Board of Education started. Come to TC and take his class.
Suppose you could take a course with Clarence Darrow and hear firsthand how he fought the Scopes trial? Or with Thurgood Marshall to learn about the strategies in Brown v. Board of Education?

The handful of TC and Columbia students who took Michael Rebell’s Tuesday evening law class last fall did something very much like that. Rebell, an adjunct professor at TC, has led a decade-long lawsuit aimed at bringing New York City billions of dollars in additional school funding. He co-founded the plaintiff organization in the case—the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE)—and also fashioned its legal strategy, ushering in a new era in school finance suits nationwide. In the 1970s and ’80s, these suits had contended that underprivileged schools and their students were entitled to the same dollar amount of funding as those in wealthier districts. Many courts—including New York State’s—emphatically rejected that argument. Rebell, in contrast, decided to base CFE’s case on the notion of “adequacy,” which holds that the state constitution guarantees all children a “sound, basic education.” Though adequacy had been employed in a few other cases, Rebell refined the concept, formed a national network aimed at promoting its use, and has set down his wisdom and experience in two books, *Equality and Education* and *Educational Policy Making and the Courts*.

In June 2003, New York State’s highest court found for CFE, and this past November, after the state repeatedly failed to increase education funding to the city, a state appellate court agreed. In a decision that the state’s highest court later reversed, the panel ordered the city to give you guys over here the resources to function in society, and the rest of you, well, good luck, life is hard.”

Students at TC have their pick of faculty members who have made major contributions to the CFE case. They can start with Sobol, who, as New York State’s Commissioner of Education from 1987 to 1995, quietly gave CFE a major leg up through his approach to writing state standards for student learning and achievement. In the early 90s, we were working on a document called ‘A New Compact for Learning,’ which was among the first to codify achievement standards, including key concepts and competencies kids had to know at different grade levels,” Sobol recalls. “I was sitting on my porch one weekend when it occurred to me that you could write those standards in a way to buttress a law suit. Because think of it. You’re a plaintiff, and you say you’re not getting a sound, basic education. The judge can say, ‘What’s a sound, basic education? And who are you to tell us?’ But if you can show that poorer kids aren’t meeting codified targets, then you can say, ‘Your Honor, they’re getting the short end of the stick—by the standards of the Board of Regents.’”

Yet when CFE filed its case, Sobol—simply by virtue of his position—found himself named as a defendant. “I hadn’t done any studies, but I did have nearly six decades of experience in schools,” Sobol says. That proved useful during a courtroom clash in which the two sides presented conflicting studies on the value of reducing class size. “I said to Justice DeGrasse, ‘Look, all I have to go on is all my years in schools. And all I can tell you is that no one ever came to me and complained that classes were too small.’”

“The CFE case doesn’t have the spiritual depth that Brown had, but it may ultimately achieve more for children’s education.”

Thomas Sobol, TC professor and former New York State Education Commissioner
Others at TC who have been integral to the CFE case include:

* Gary Natriello, Professor of Sociology and Education, and Director of TC’s Gottesman Libraries. Early on, CFE used a report he’d written detailing the costs of equipping schools with the physical resources necessary to enable students to meet new learning standards. Currently, Natriello is creating a digital archive at TC of the entire CFE case, and he has also participated in a CFE-sponsored planning exercise that included most of the major political and education voices in the state.

“The CFE people understand that in all of these cases, winning in the courts is only the beginning of a multi-stage battle of getting the legislative or executive branch to comply,” he says. “In the end, no matter the verdict, you’re always going to wind up with an out-of-court settlement.”

* Luis Huerta, Assistant Professor of Education. He was a star witness in California’s recent school finance suit, and CFE has used many of his ideas in its proposal for accountability—how schools and school systems should be held responsible for achieving results with the money they receive.

“For too long, we’ve left it to the schools and school system to determine the wisest use of their funds—but there have been too many failures to continue in that mode, and we lack the necessary school-level data to understand why,” Huerta says. He points to California’s well-intentioned but ultimately ill-fated drive to reduce class size. “The state has allocated billions of dollars to provide the new facilities and additional staff necessary to support the new measures, but can’t fully account for the effect that’s been realized,” he says. Meanwhile, seeking better working conditions, teachers have filed underserved schools that lack resources to meet the soaring costs of reform—and some communities are simply swapping smaller class sizes entirely.

* Henry Levin, William H. Kilpatrick Professor of Economics and Education. He testified in the CFE case that students need higher-level cognitive and analytic skills to make it in today’s society. Without these skills, he said, young people will be consigned to lives of serving fast food, digging ditches, cleaning and other menial jobs.

* Jay Heubert, Professor of Education and Law. An expert on high-stake testing, he is credited by Rebell with helping CFE think through a number of its strategies and implementation ideas.

* Arthur Levine, President. Throughout the past year, he has co-chaired a special commission of the New York City Council that has held public hearings on how the city should ultimately use the CFE money. The commission has heard testimony from political leaders, academic experts, teachers, parents and children, on class size, teacher quality, pre-K and after-school programs, facilities and accountability. In April 2005, the commission released a report calling for sweeping changes aimed at placing and retaining high-quality teachers in every New York City classroom. The most highly skilled teachers who chose to work in low-performing schools would receive salary increases that would put them among the most highly paid teachers in the state.

All of which, of course, begs the critical question: Will New York City ever see any of the money, and if so, when?

“We’ll get the money,” Rebell says. “It’s taking longer than it should, and there’s been some incredibly unprecedented defiance by the state’s executive branch. But by next year this time, I think we’ll have it.”

He should know. He wrote the books.

“We’ll get the money.”

Michael Rebell, Director of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity
Throughout the Nation

Dollars and Sense

A TC study asks: Would the benefits of getting more young black men to graduate from high school outweigh the costs?
Perly Solomon is a 17-year-old senior at the School for Excellence, a small arts-themed high school in the Fort Apache section of the South Bronx. A lanky young man with a gentle manner and a quick smile, he ranks fourth in his class, is the starting shooting guard on a school basketball team that last year lost the B division city championship by a single basket, and has been accepted at several colleges for the fall. He wants to study filmmaking and business.

“I think Perly will make it, wherever he goes,” says Wade Fuller, the school’s principal. All of which makes Solomon, who is African American, a distinct anomaly. The high school graduation rate for black males is estimated at about 48% (at’s 83% for white males), and the prognosis for those who drop out is grim. The lifetime probability that a black man will enter the state or federal prison system at some point in his life is one in three—and the incarceration rates for those who drop out of high school range from 54% to 8% percent higher. Only 35% of black male high school dropouts are employed, while 47% percent simply aren’t counted among the labor force—that is, they’re not working and they’re not looking for a job.

To make matters worse, the average earnings for high school dropouts in general have declined from $35,000 in 1977 (in current dollars) to $24,000 in 2005, reflecting both a decreased demand for U.S.-based manufacturing and other blue-collar jobs, and an increased supply of cheap immigrant labor.

Four years ago, Solomon, too, seemed headed down the path toward dropping out. Though clearly intelligent, he got in fights, hung out with friends who robbed and took drugs, and was indifferent toward school. In short, he was no different from a lot of other kids at what was then Morris High School—one of the city’s worst and roughest schools, in a bleak neighborhood dominated by the Bloods and other gangs.

Then something changed. Morris High School became the first large New York City school to be divided up into smaller, themed schools. Fuller, who had been the school’s assistant principal, was named to lead the School for Excellence, and he was able to take Solomon and some of his other former students with him. The school was paired with an outside partner, the Institute for Student Achievement (ISA), which prepares underserved, at-risk students for college.

“We target schools where more than half the students are low-achieving,” says ISA President and CEO Gerry House, former superintendent of schools in Memphis, Tennessee. “We work with the principal and faculty to develop what we call ‘a culture of college,’ and because we believe that’s unlikely to happen in large, impersonal settings, we work exclusively in small schools or large ones that have been converted into smaller learning communities.”

ISA, which is funded by the philanthropist Gerry Leeds, has provided money for extra staff positions at the School for Excellence and made other monetary contributions. But its most important focus, House says, is to ensure that “every adult in school acts like a counselor—that they understand the kids not just as learners, but as people with aspirations and fears, whom they must build trust with and make feel safe—physically and emotionally.”

Perly Solomon confirms that this is real. “The best thing this school has done for me,” he says, “is be like my second family.”

Perly Solomon, student at the School for Excellence
What if the story of Perly Solomon could somehow become the rule rather than the exception? What if interventions like the School for Excellence and ISA were instituted on a national scale, and young black men began graduating from high school at the same rate as their white peers? Obviously that would be a great thing for the new graduates themselves—but what would be the economic impact on society? The costs would clearly be huge—but would the economic benefits outweigh them?

Those are precisely the questions that will be asked in a new study led by TC’s Henry Levin, William H. Kilpatrick Professor of Economics and Education, and Director of the National Center for the Study of Pre-segregation in Education (NCSPE). The study is also funded by Leeds and his wife, Lilo, who are dedicated to creating equal educational opportunities and outcomes for poor and minority students.

“It’s not enough, in this day and age, to tell people that helping underserved kids is the morally right thing to do,” says Levin. “You’ve got to show them what works—successes like ISA—and then you have to show them the dollar value of those successes. And that’s what we hope to do.”

As part of the study, Levin and his fellow researchers—Cecilia Rouse, a Princeton economist; Clive Belfield, of Queens College, who is associate director of NCSPE; and Peter Munnig, of the Columbia School of Public Health—are searching the literature for interventions that work. “We’re not going to end up saying, ‘ISA is the only answer,’” Levin says. “Instead, we’ll be trying to identify features that effective programs have in common.” Levin and his colleagues are all trained economists who have mined this kind of territory before. Levin himself did a national study in 1972 that the Select Senate Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity, headed by Senator Walter Mondale, used to generate federal legislation.

The team will estimate both the costs of scaling up such interventions nationwide and the economic benefits of achieving higher graduation rates. The latter are expected to come primarily from reduced costs—in the criminal justice system, the public health system and public assistance, as well as higher tax revenues and productivity.

Are the results a foregone conclusion? “We’ll produce a range of cost estimates—high, middle and low—because we want people to look at that and think, ‘They have followed reasonable procedures,’” Levin says. “If we find that the middle range of costs is only equal to the benefits, well, that’s not a very compelling case for increased investment on economic grounds. However, if we find that the benefits of intervening and boosting the graduation rate are five times or even a higher multiple of the expected middle level of costs—that would be big. In that case, even doubling investment in the education of the young would still save money for society in the long run.”

Perly Solomon, for one, needs no convincing. “Even my friends who have dropped out and are doing bad stuff, they tell me to go to college and stick with it, no matter what.” Will he go to school here in the city, or out of state? “I went away to basketball camp for two weeks once, and that felt like a really long time,” he says, uncertainly. “But my friends say get out of here and don’t come back, because there’s nothing here for me.”

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Wade Fuller, Principal of the School for Excellence

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“I think Perly will make it, wherever he goes.”

Wade Fuller, Principal of the School for Excellence
Winning Hearts Through Minds

In Afghanistan, the real war on the ground is about rebuilding the school system. TC is on the front lines.
A visitor to the Pul-e-Charkhi School in Afghanistan’s northern Kabul province would probably never think of it as a place of hope. Though in better shape than the many other Afghan schools that are simply tents littered with sandbags, it has no desks in classrooms that must hold more than 60 children, and no student artwork or writing adorning the walls—only pockmarks from bullets.

Yet it’s the promise of what’s taking place in such bleak settings that has many people excited. For Afghan parents, it’s “the belief that sending their children to school will help normalize their children’s lives and help them to move out of poverty,” says Barry Rosen, head of Teachers College’s Afghanistan Project. A team led by Rosen went to Kabul last fall to work with Afghanistan’s Ministry of Education to rebuild an education system decimated by years of conflict and Taliban rule. On the most immediate level, their goal was to create, within the context of the Afghan culture, ways of teaching that require critical thinking—a new concept for education in Afghanistan. But on a broader level, they have sought to overcome the deeply entrenched distrust of other cultures and religions that was seeded under the Taliban.

It’s a mission that has unique resonance for both Teachers College and Rosen himself. In 1954, the College also sent a team to Kabul to help develop Afghanistan’s education system. With support from the U.S. Agency for International Development, the partnership bloomed and lasted for nearly 25 years, as the College helped reorganize the Ministry of Education, created a process for providing textbooks and conducted ongoing teacher training. That effort was halted in 1979 during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, but when the Taliban fell in 2001, TC—in line with its redoubled focus on educational equity—began working to revive the project.

Rosen, a slim, intense man who most recently headed TC’s Office of External Affairs, brings a special passion to the task. From 1979 to 1980, he was one of the 52 Americans held hostage by Iranian students for more than a year. Since then, he has remained deeply interested in Islam and Islamic cultures, even appearing on panel discussions with some of his former captors to discuss strategies for bridging divisions with the West.

The current TC Afghanistan Project—which includes a contingent of Canadian Afghanis, as well as retired TC professor Margaret Jo Shepard—has worked toward the latter aim chiefly through its focus on creating new textbooks and curricula, and training teachers to use them. There is a “Life Skills” book that teaches first-, second- and third-graders about conflict resolution, and then becomes the basis for a fourth-grade course in Social Studies. And Rosen himself headed up the team when it tackled updating the religion book for first- and second-graders. The first part of the book contains suras, or chapters of the Koran, for the children to read aloud, in part so they can learn to pronounce words as their ancestors have for centuries. But it was the second half of the book, which discusses the history of Islam, that presented the greater opportunity—and challenge. The team created written narratives in which boys and girls speak about Islam as a religion of peace and respect. Sometimes this led to intense debates about whether cultural norms were being violated. For example, Rosen felt that young children didn’t need to know every step in preparing for prayer, such as how to clean one’s board. He was overruled. The team ultimately decided this information was too important to remove, and simply moved it to a later section. 

The team created written narratives in which boys and girls speak about Islam as a religion of peace and respect.
The team also faced the challenge of navigating a foreign culture in a war-torn and still volatile part of the world. Each day was an adventure. Rosen, who hadn’t been in the country since his Peace Corps days in the 1960s, says years of conflict have kept it frozen in time. Buildings have no heat in the winter, and electricity is spotty at best. The altitude and thick, dusty air made breathing difficult for some. Security was tight, and the days and nights were often punctuated by the sounds of rockets exploding. Afghan team members were frequently ordered by the United Nations authorities to stay at home during these emergencies.

Still, there were also lovely and heartening moments. One Friday, the team went for a picnic and met some Afghan families and their drivers. “It was a pleasant moment that gave me a small indication that people were feeling better and more secure,” Rosen recalls.

And then there was the day they all went for a walk on one of Kabul’s dusty roads and met a young boy playing in a rusting Soviet tank. Speaking in Dari, Rosen struck up a conversation with the boy, who sold gum for a living. The boy, who assumed Rosen was also a Muslim, pointed at the other team members and called them kafirs—non-believers. Rosen explained that they weren’t bad people, but simply held different religious beliefs. He asked if the boy would like to talk to them. The boy nodded, climbed out of his tank, and followed Rosen to where the others stood. Rosen asked each team member whether he or she believed in some sort of religion, then translated their answers. The boy was fascinated to learn that all non-Muslims aren’t also non-believers.

“It was one of those rare moments where you feel you’re making a difference, and you can actually see it happening,” Rosen says.

After months of discussing and writing the textbooks, it was time for the team to test them out in the field. First, they worked with the Ministry of Education to bring in teachers from 56 schools all over the country. They talked to the teachers about the books and acted out scenarios to show how the activities should be done. Following the training, the teachers returned to their provinces, and soon afterwards, the team visited them in their schools.

“We watched the students and noted their reactions,” Rosen says. “We were overjoyed that the textbooks were working, and that we were getting the opportunity to learn how to improve them.”

Of course, there is still a tremendous challenge ahead. Security has improved in Afghanistan, but many areas remain under hostile control, and the roads are often dangerous. Funding remains scarce. “There seems to be no international strategy for education,” Rosen says. “Donors care about providing pencils, pens, tents—something they can quantify, and that has public relations value—but they’re not interested in providing funds for curriculum.” And yes, the physical condition of the schools remains the same.

Except that now, the new textbooks are bringing a potent new light into Afghanistan’s bleak classrooms.

“There seems to be no international strategy for education. Donors care about providing pencils, pens, tents—something they can quantify, and that has public relations value—but they’re not interested in providing funds for curriculum.”

Barry Rosen, TC Afghanistan Project Director
Financial Statement Highlights

The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with standards established by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) for external financial reporting by not-for-profit organizations.

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

The statement of changes in net assets presents the financial results of the College and distinguishes between operating and non-operating activities. Non-operating activities principally include investment return in excess of the expendable amount determined by the College’s endowment spending policy, unrestricted bequests, and capital campaign contributions and related expenses.

The College experienced a net increase in unrestricted net assets from operations in its financial statements. The College’s net assets increased by approximately $10 million overall.

Unrestricted operating revenues totaled approximately $119.5 million. The College’s principal sources of unrestricted operating revenues were student tuition and fees,net of student aid, long-term debt, net of student aid, representing 35 percent of operating revenues, and gifts and contracts for research and training programs, representing 25 percent of operating revenues.

Investment return, auxiliary activities, government appropriations, and other sources comprised the remaining 40 percent of operating revenues. Operating expenses totaled $121.7 million.


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