



**Defining US**

# IT'S A REMARKABLE UNTOLD STORY!

Once a minority, students of color are now the majority of youth in our nation's public schools. And a powerful network of students and teachers are leading a movement to improve their lives. It is nothing less than a modern civil rights movement, and it's changing how all students think and feel about the issues that divide us. Few understand how a social mission led by the nation's most powerful school districts is defining a new generation that will forever define US.





65yrs

**Brown v.  
Board of  
Education**

Sixty-five years after the Supreme Court outlawed the segregation of schools, students of color out-number their white peers. They are now a majority, but still with minority status. Brown v. Board of Education changed laws and forced Americans to sit side-by-side – **but changing laws was not enough.**



**The United States is today more economically, politically, and racially divided** perhaps than at any time since the civil war. We criticize each other's world views. We ridicule perspectives that don't align with our own. And, in this climate of fear, hostility, and anxiety, we are more likely to succumb to our fear and bias.



Now, **thousands of educators in public schools across the nation are mobilizing a movement** to open minds and change hearts and eradicate the prejudice that we do not talk about and cannot see.

Many students of color are still growing up, separated, scapegoated, and trapped by inter-generational poverty. For example, compared to their white classmates,

**Black Students** are **40%** more likely to be **suspended**

**20%** more likely to be **expelled**

**36%** more likely to be **arrested at school**

**30%** more likely to be **sent to Special Education**

*(According to a 2018 report from the Government Accountability Office.)*

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**THIS IS A DOCUMENTARY ABOUT THE ONE AMERICAN INSTITUTION PUSHING FOR LONG TERM AND LASTING SOCIAL CHANGE.**

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Whether you are a "have" or a "have-not," the fabric of our communities is falling apart, and that's a bleak, unfair, and unsafe world for us all.

*"We conclude that, in the field of public education, the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place."*

*(Brown v. Board of Education)*





**Sharon Contreras, Ph.D.**

Superintendent of Schools,  
GUILFORD COUNTY, NC

*"Civil rights is about equality and that means seeing every person for his or her humanity and for their fullness as a human being. I still believe in human capacity to change and it gives me great hope."*

There is one American institution that has, on its own, ignited the next phase of the civil rights movement. It is our second biggest institution, it has unlimited access to children, and it is turning its 3.2 million employees toward an audacious vision of widespread social change.

**A NEW CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IS GATHERING MOMENTUM IN OUR LOCAL SCHOOLS.**

At the core of the movement are new programs with educational acronyms most have never heard of. But, what educators are really doing is teaching students to understand themselves and each other by

developing the skills that define humanity: empathy, self-awareness, regulating emotions, embracing diversity, respect for others and more. School systems are implementing widespread training programs to show educators how to teach these skills. They are implementing system-wide strategies to enhance equity, improve school culture, educate parents, and lift up students that have historically been denied opportunities to achieve and succeed. And, the results are unprecedented. For the first time we now have data that show these skills can be taught in the classroom and lives can be transformed forever.



**Darion Allen,**

King Drew Magnet High School,  
LOS ANGELES

*"There are just some things you don't have in a community like mine. You don't have security and safety granted to you at all times. If a police officer sees you, he's going to keep his eye on you. If I were another race that might not happen to me."*

In this premium 90-minute documentary we visit four school districts and explore the past, present and future role of education in changing hearts and minds. We follow courageous educators at the forefront of this civil rights movement and hear their personal stories of why and how they have dedicated their lives to shattering the stereotypes, changing the narrative, and improving the outcomes for students of color. We see the stories of students whose lives have been transformed and who now have new hope for the future.

**Meria Carstarphen, Ed.D.**

Superintendent  
ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*"Hope is a greater predictor of whether or not a child is going to be successful in school or life. It doesn't take a lot out of an adult to engage or project to a child, I have hope for you. I believe that you can do it. Never stop trying."*





**Paul Forbes,**

Exec Dir of Educational Equity,  
Anti-Bias & Diversity, Office of Equity and Access,  
NYC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

*"What I know is that when we do this work, we're creating and helping shape those future leaders and, for Black and Latino men specifically that need is great. We need to know that as they are becoming the majority in this country that they have the skill sets, academically, socially, emotionally, to compete with their peers in this country and around the globe."*



**Lester W. Young, Jr, Ed.D.,**

Regent at Large,  
NY STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

*"It is extremely important to understand that we are all connected, and really begin to talk about how to find solutions. Because what happens to my child happens to your child and what happens to you, happens to me."*



**Dr. Robert Whitman,**

Division of Access, Equity and Acceleration,  
LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

*"When you tell kids they are smart, when you tell them that they are capable, when you have high expectations for them and they see those expectations, they live up to those high expectations."*

There will be critics. Some question whether teachers should be influencing social skills and how our children think. Others do not believe that prejudice and privilege still exist.

They will have their time, but this documentary is animated by the belief that we as a nation have fallen short of our founding ideals. That something must be done and that school districts are answering the call. Districts are examining their shortcomings and rallying to at last lift up ALL the students in their trust.

This is a civil rights issue. The courageous efforts of countless, humble school teachers are finally righting the wrongs of our past, and may be the best predictor of hope. Students of color are now in the majority within American public schools. They are defining a new generation that will lead us into the future, and that will forever be...

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