

The ABC's of Reforming Our Education System

Students Reinventing Michigan Proposal Competition
“How All Students Entering College Can Be College Ready”

Andrew McLean
Grand Valley State University

South African Activist and Freedom Fighter Nelson Mandela once spoke the words “Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world”. My generation and those to follow will use education to do just that. With the lessons we are taught starting in pre-school, to the knowledge we take away from the different courses throughout our university and graduate school experience, we will develop plans that will reenergize our society. My generation will rejuvenate burned out cities on which society has turned its back. Medical students will use the knowledge they attain to find cures for the diseases that plague our people. Businessmen will focus on bringing jobs back to the United States and emphasize quality before quantity. We will work together to establish a new status quo for what it means to be a proud United States citizen. Once again, there will be an established American Dream. Sadly, I watch these visions slip away when I read statistics about young adults dropping out of school, students failing their classes, increasing crime rates in teens, and drug deals running record-high numbers. The fact that so many students are dissatisfied with their education is frightening. If statistics are true, only a marginal number of students entering college are ready for the coursework and the challenge of the next chapter of their lives. When did it become acceptable to cower to mediocrity? In the past, I have been enrolled in courses where the teacher did not hold his or her students responsible for the coursework. The most disheartening feeling in my mind is when a teacher says “Do your best; this assignment is graded on the basis that you completed it, not if it is right or wrong.” The only lesson this teaches a person is that as long as the bare minimum is met, you will pass. There is no sense of accomplishment with this style of teaching. How can we be raising the future leaders of our nation with this approach? Being able to confront a situation with a hands-on attitude allows for a quick and easy solution to any problem that may arise. If the system was reformed to better teach to the importance of the material rather than to the test, students will once again enjoy going to school, working for the “A”, and will gain a sense of accomplishment when the task has been completed. With three simple steps, we can change education as we know it. Reforming education in Michigan is as simple as ABC; if we hold students, parents, teachers, and the government accountable for progress, teach students how to develop a book smart and a street smart approach to learning, and restructure curriculums across the board, we will see a drastic improvement in the quality of the work and passion in our students.

Accountability (n): obligations and enthusiasm to admit personal responsibility for my actions.

From a young age, my parents taught me that the only person that can be held accountable for my actions is myself. This message has allowed me to stay out of trouble and establish who I am in my community, in my workplace, and at my university. I always approach situations with my best foot forward and work to make sure I can reach the best outcome. When unfavorable results are presented, I work my hardest to make sure that something like that does not happen again. Alas, not every student has this same outlook.

An issue afflicting today's students is that many think they are untouchable. It is "cool" to cheat your way through school and to not do the coursework. In my four years of high school, I witnessed numerous accounts of students asking their friends if they could copy down the answers on the homework. I was frequently put into a compromising position when approached by someone asking to copy. I always told them no because they did not deserve to reap the benefits of my effort. People were very offended when I did this, but I stood my ground. Though temporary success can be had, there is no long-term benefit or satisfaction in doing this. When it comes time for the instructor to test his or her students on the material, that student will probably complete the exam subpar to their true potential.

There are two reasons why I believe this happens. The most obvious reason is because the student does not want to do their work; they would rather be infatuated with extra curricular activities or play video games. While having a social life is very important to teen development, doing well in school is equally as important. The other, more serious reason is because the student does not genuinely understand the material, so they choose to seek the attention of someone who has done the work in the hopes that they might be able to learn it as well. A message needs to be sent to students that asking questions is okay. In fact, it is necessary to working your way to the answer! Creating a dialogue between the teacher and the student livens the class period. I dread going to a discussion-based class where student contribution is the lifeblood of the hour long period. Without the aid of ideas, we sit in silence. A discussion always benefits the student, especially those who may not be interested in voicing their questions and concerns. When a student sits down at home, without the distractions of the television, their cell phone, or other technological aids, and focuses on the work at hand, real results are accomplished. The purpose of homework is just that – home work; to be done outside of the

classroom to test the students' ability to pay attention and retain the lesson taught. A growing mind needs a quiet spot, free from the distractions of daily life, so they can concentrate on the paper, worksheet, or book they are working to complete. A new trend that select educators are implementing in the classroom is referred to as "Flipping the Classroom". Lectures, presentations, and readings are completed at home at the student's convenience. When the class meets again the following day, the students complete the homework alongside his or her peers with the guidance of the instructor. This tactic has been employed at Clintondale High School, in Clinton Township, Michigan, because it works! A physical science teacher named Rob Townsend was determined to fix the problem of his students not doing the homework for his science lab. He initially tried to point out the faults of the situation, but later realized that this would accomplish nothing; if he wanted to see real results, then a solution would have to be devised (Alvarez). In an article published by the Priority Schools Campaign, Townsend mentioned that the students were not completing their assignments because they did not know how to approach the material. Townsend was quoted saying, "One way to create more class time and not lose education time was to have them take notes at home and do the work in class." A year later, Townsend is partnered with a company called Techsmith, and has developed the "Flipped Classroom" online program allowing students to learn a portion of the curriculum at home, so he can work with his students on their homework during class. (Alvarez) This is a monumental step to better comprehension for students and has been proven to work in more than just this district. During adolescent years, it is fundamental that we teach our students accountability for their actions. If we can establish a new way to approach work to make it more enjoyable for the student, we will definitely see the success rates increase. Grades are not given; they are earned.

However, the whole situation of student accountability must be supported with two other resources in order for it to be successful – the interaction between parents and their children as well as teachers and their students makes the system work. Parents or guardians must monitor what their son or daughter does at home and make sure they complete the presented task. In today's society, many families are in a position where both the mother and father work until the late afternoon or evening. Parental nurturing needs to make a return in the twenty first century. Encouraging family mealtime when students return home allows parents to talk to their son or daughter about how their day went. Questions could be posed such as "What were the ups and

downs that made you happy or sad?” and “What did you learn today?” “Nothing” is an unacceptable response. Whether it is truly because nothing was learned, or the student does not want to communicate with his or her parent, further steps need to be taken to guarantee that children are grasping the material. Our teachers must also monitor their students. Instructors need to take proactive approach to making sure that their students are successful. Brazilian author Paulo Freire writes about the state of our schools in his work titled “The Banking Concept of Education”. Freire suggests that students are “‘receptacles’ that are to be ‘filled’ with the ‘content of the teachers narration’”. (Freire, 1) He mentions that the purpose of learning the material is to “regurgitate information given in class, on tests, quizzes, and anything that requires an answer that is “word for word” what the teacher says.” (Freire, 2) We must not portray this idea on young students any longer. The only way to keep learners in tune to what is happening is through frequent communication, reinforcement of ideas, and words of wisdom to keep their passions strong. Encouragement and reinforcement creates an environment where all ideas are shared, acknowledged, and discussed. If a teacher sees that one of his or her students is struggling with a concept or idea, they should try to discuss with that student ways to better understand the lesson. There have been times in the past where I have sought teacher assistance when I struggled with the material. It is heartwarming to know that nearly all teachers are willing to set aside extra time for a student that is struggling. A “one on one” approach helps me learn much more effectively when struggling with a concept. I estimate that over ninety percent of the educators in my life have stated at some point that they became a teacher because they want to contribute to the betterment of students, not for the paycheck they receive every other Friday. Regrettably, there are some who do not seem to care whether a student passes or fails. The administration needs to make a point in our schools that teachers must connect with their students on an individual level, and encourage them to ask questions, challenge the norm, and accept nothing less than one hundred and ten percent from each and every assignment. In doing so, students will be better prepared when it comes time to go to college. They will not fear asking questions and seeking answers from their professors. A final note is that extra credit should be given on a selective basis, not doled out like candy. In college and in the real world, there is no such thing as extra credit, however everyone has a bad day. If the student shows concern for improvement, seeks the guidance of the teacher frequently, and attends all of his or her classes, they deserve to earn a few extra points. This could mean the difference between a “B+” and an

“A-”. Giving a student more points than they earned is wrong because it inflates their grade beyond their capability. Teachers must stop offering extra credit opportunities to students; the grade they earn should reflect their honest efforts without the addition of superfluous points. If we hold parents and teachers accountable for staying active in their student’s lives today, our system will produce innovators, CEO’s, congressmen, presidents, and World Leaders of tomorrow.

Finally, it is up to our government to also contribute to the educational process. As with any contemporary issue facing our country today, the root of distress seems to be the financial aspect. Education is flat out the most important branch of our society, and every time the school year starts, it is announced that more cuts are made. I recall that in elementary school, our art, gym, and music classes were cut down severely. Music and art classes develop an appreciation for the humanities and worldly cultures. Gym is necessary to promote being healthy and in shape. Funding cuts to elective-style classes like these contribute to students becoming inactive and unconcerned with their studies. Exciting classes are needed to break up the day. Part of being a student is becoming well rounded across the entire curriculum. Our students have to study classes that cover all core subjects that include math-based studies, reading and writing, social and physical sciences, and the arts. If a lack of funding contributes to students not being able to take a grouping of these classes, then our students will fall behind. I acknowledge that funding business, the armed forces, and infrastructure are all very important parts of our progress, but without a cornerstone education, we will not have the man power to lead us in the future in those markets. More funding must be given to pre-school and early elementary schools. It is vital that we give our young learners the resources to read as soon as possible so as they travel through their educational journey, they learn to become proficient at reading and comprehending all material whether it be a set of directions, a worksheet, an index, a dictionary, a book, or an anthology. Building a strong foundation will root students in success and they will have confidence when pursuing more challenging classes. The lack of funding is an issue because the future of our country is being taught with old technology, books that are falling apart, and equipment that was purchased twenty years ago. The children that sit in classrooms, lecture halls, auditoriums, and gymnasiums are the future; they deserve the best because we are the best; we belong to the United States of America. As a student, I excel when I have the necessary materials

to complete the task before me. We must educate our students properly if we hope to compete collectively as a nation on a worldwide basis.

Aside from cheating, not comprehending, or having a lack of motivation, the issue, in my opinion, that brings students' morale down the most is government regulated standardized tests. I always dreaded the week of testing during my time in K-12 school. If taking the MEAP, Stanford/OLSAT, and ACT taught me anything from elementary to high school, it was that I just was not good enough. I never earned favorable results on standardized exams. I recall my parents receiving the outcomes of my testing ability and being completely distraught at the numbers. I have always considered myself a hard working person. I started my first job when I was eleven years old, picking weeds and trimming shrubbery for neighbors. I sought after a position at a local fast food restaurant when I was fifteen and worked my way up into management. I was the captain of the swim team, involved in my student council, and was elected president of a club where I fundraised over \$9,000 to benefit a secondary school in Uganda. How could an involved, 3.5 grade point average student get such disparaging marks on these standardized tests? A twenty-two on the ACT does not merit high valued scholarships and certainly not admission into an Ivy-League school. A single test should not determine a scholar's future because some students are more cut out for exhibiting their knowledge through a pencil, while others have to take a hands-on approach and speak about their thirsts and hobbies. I propose that an interview should be instituted alongside the standardized test. This is something that I have felt passionately about for many years. Having an interview and a standardized test will allow all students to excel whether their strength is through the pencil, or verbally. I think this approach is the most successful device in judging the character of a person, which cannot be done through aimlessly bubbling in hundreds of small A, B, C, and D's on a Scantron bubble sheet. I was taught that making a great first impression is the most important thing in school or in the workplace. Establishing myself as an ethical, responsible, thoughtful, team player has allowed me to make connections and gain the trust of my peers and elders. The way a person communicates to others at an early stage is an important factor of how they will contribute to society when they are grown. No matter what profession a student chooses to pursue in the future, communication skills are essential to the success of businessmen, doctors, lawyers, legislators, innovators, movie stars, television and radio personnel, teachers, farmers, factory workers, and every other member of the working class. Standardized tests hold some students back. The true

potential and passion of an outgoing person is deduced once you sit down with him or her and get to know them on a personal level. Discussing hobbies, interests, future plans and aspirations is just as effective and less intimidating as trying to solve for x in $2x^3-4x^2-4x+3$.

Book Smart (adj): guaranteed scholastic success, but lacking common sense or real world knowledge.

Street Smart (adj): having the instinctiveness to react defensively and survive in an urban setting.

Each individual person goes through life differently. We each take an approach that is either “book smart” or “street smart”. A problem is that many of us face the challenge of being able to manage both. Those with a book-smart approach to life stick to the rulebook. Reserved, quite, and loner are all words that sometimes describe someone who is book smart. While this keeps a person out of trouble, the human body flourishes on exploration, questioning, and learning on the go. A person with a street-smart approach has a lot of “off the cuff” knowledge and is able to react defensively in a moments notice. The issue is that a street-smart person may sometimes struggle to put his or her knowledge into a practice where it is actually useful. While book smarts can be taught, street smarts cannot. Street smarts are acquired with the exchanges between a person and the place where he or she lives. How can we bridge the gap between the educational curriculum and the necessary traits it takes to survive in the real world? The school setting is a wonderful place for learning and developing; the real world is difficult if the student is not prepared.

You are faced with a situation, how do you react? A man approaches you on a dimly lit street and demands that you give him your wallet. You are ringing up a customer after presenting him with the food you just prepared and he starts to raise his voice and threaten you. A fight breaks out at a nightclub and you are caught in the middle of the brawl. These are three situations that I have been placed into before. Slowly talk him down and sprint away as fast as I could, calmly explain why the customer’s meal cost a certain amount and not backing down, and ducking down and crawling away from the fight was my gut instinct that kicked in during those situations. Developing a sense of street smarts came easily to me, but takes time for others. Real world experience combined with some motivation by ones peers will teach you a great deal about yourself – in particular, how to become a trained member of society.

The idea of developing street smarts ties back to family time. When I was a child, my father always told me to hold his hand as I crossed the street, to make sure to never talk to strangers, and to have fun. My mother encouraged me to seek the truth, explore, find a passion and pursue it until it is mastered. Their combined teachings allowed me to use my imagination while watching out for myself at the same time. This is the type of real world experience that children need in their daily lives. In today's society, it is so easy for the parent to turn on the television or game console and allow their son or daughter to sit there for hours on end. We need to encourage the youth of the twenty-first century to disconnect from the technology and go outside and explore. Street smarts cannot be taught in the classroom, but it can be found through self-investigation.

Curriculum (n): a set of guidelines which acts as framework to plan the courses and procedures of a K-12 and college education.

Part of seeking a higher education is the idea that once university graduation day arrives, each man or woman will pass his or her tassel from right to left, signifying the once candidate is now an informed, educated graduate ready to approach any task that life throws at him or her. But how do we get to this point? Our success in real life is engrained in the structure of the courses we enroll in from kindergarten to senior year of college. Quality from day one is vital to the success of a student. While discussing how incoming college students can be made better college prepared, a reoccurring theme that multiple teachers, parents, and I discussed was that class size is key for early development. When I attended elementary school, two teachers commanded a group of fifty kindergarten, first, and second graders. This was not a favorable set up because although there was more one adult in the room, nearly five-dozen six and seven year-olds in a large classroom are hard to control. If courses were capped at twenty pupils, the teacher would be able to have more voice in the classroom setting. Fast forward to high school, when the material gets more challenging in difficult classes, low volume groups would allow for teachers to direct their knowledge to the students in a more straightforward way. Smaller class sizes will allow educators to connect with their students on a personal level more often. Teaching a student the correct way to approach any situation through a structured curriculum ties back to the idea of both accountability and book smart versus street smart.

When I was admitted into my university, I received a pamphlet in my welcome folder that questioned my preparedness when it came to math and writing. Two classes offered included “Math 97” and “Writing 98”. These courses do not fulfill a university requirement any level writing and math class; they also do not count toward your 120 credit count necessary to graduate. Although it may be very convenient for a student to take a class to prepare himself or herself for the 100 level requirement, the skills taught in these classes should have been solidified before the student left high school. These entry-level courses take the student’s money and should not have to be offered. It is necessary for high school teachers to make sure their lesson plans educate students to a college-approved level before they graduate.

While talking to my peers about the idea of reforming education in Michigan, a general consensus was made that the curriculum is taught to the state exams and standards rather than the importance of the lesson. As students, we should not be taught to approach the subject material so we can reiterate the material on a test. Educators should be teaching the material to their students so they can learn how to approach any type of situation in the real world. If we hope to compete on a global scale after college, we need to focus on teaching the fundamentals of education – reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, and social studies. Although Home Economics, Woodshop, and Weight Lifting are “life skill” classes, many students rely on taking those electives with the hope that they will receive an “easy A” to carry their grade point average. This is the wrong mentality to have and is contributing to the United States falling behind the world average. Harvard University recently published an article that discussed how the United States is still lagging behind its international peers. The United States has unacceptably low educational outcomes in math and science. Business are moving their development facilities overseas where students study for twelve hours a day, and return home to study for the majority of the night. Michigan is grouped together as one of the bottom thirty-one states when it comes to educational outcomes (Hanushek). The confidence and comprehension level of students is depressing. Which skills must the United States focus on? How will we once again be competitive in the world marketplace if we are unable to connect with other human beings?

The two most important topics that students must master at a young age include reading and writing. Both of these subjects will be a factor in their educational journey for the rest of their lives. Part of the curriculum must include ample time for teaching the proper pronunciations, spelling, and grammatical rules of the English language. The rules of using *your* and *you’re*,

spelling *definitely* “*definatly*”, the rules of proper grammar, capitalization, and punctuation, and minimizing the use of dead words (including good, bad, like, nice, stuff, things, and a lot), need to be taught early on so that students take a more intelligent approach to sentence structure and writing. Once graduated, reading and writing will be reoccurring topics that will return in the work place and throughout life. Writing is essential to success in everyday life. A well constructed letter, email, public service announcement, or memo will show your seriousness about the matter at hand. A high level of reading comprehension is necessary to get along as well. Without a college-level reading ability, a person will certainly struggle in the workplace. Good habits formed, as an adolescent, will guarantee understanding for the future.

Subsequent to reading and writing, math and science are very crucial to the success of students. Unfortunately, these very important core classes that have been watered down. As time progresses, the degree of difficulty in both math and science progressed from “2+2” to “12x9” to an equation that looks like more of a sentence than a math problem. Many intermediate courses are being developed in high school to compensate for the students who do not want to take the “harder” math or science class. This should not be acceptable. Not only do these courses hold students back, but when they should be enrolled in a college-prep class, they are learning how to balance a check book, or fill out a W2 form. Taking an American Literature class may be suitable for covering a reading pre-requisite, however enrolling in an “Algebra Explorations” class should not count for meeting the mathematics requirement when people are taking Calculus to satisfy the same benchmark. Every student should be required to take the same math and science courses across the board.

A forgotten subject in all curriculums includes the social sciences, history, and the humanities. It is said that history has a way of repeating itself, so why are history and the social studies being forced out of the classroom? There is much to be learned from our past. An accomplished student is one who is knowledgeable across the entire prospectus, rather than in one specific branch be it math and science, or reading and writing, or art and music. While math and science are “problem solving” classes, the humanities, social studies, and the arts are “problem-posing” classes which must be analyzed meticulously and thoroughly in order to be understood. A solution is not as simple as balancing a chemical formula or factoring an algebraic expression. The way humans interact through communication and body language allow for a better understanding of how to be a productive part of society. Recalling the history of our nation

allows for innovation and progress – taking one step forward as opposed to two back. Experiencing what different media has to offer teaches students in a way that a textbook cannot. Watching a movie, traveling to a museum, observing a reenactment, studying a piece of physical art, and observing photographs and paintings give a whole new dimension to learning about the world around us. Allowing growing children to explore their surroundings and think on their own will help to build a foundation of intelligent learning through their high school and college careers, and for the rest of their lives.

Once students are taught to be able to think for themselves, part of the curriculum of elementary, middle, and high school needs to be a focus on building student confidence. Encouraging after school programs on top of taking challenging classes throughout the four years of high school helps to develop a well-rounded student before coming to college. Entering college as a team player gives students an upper hand and extreme advantage to conquering the tasks of group presentations and assignments. Their peers who were not taught these essential skills in high school will sometimes struggle to coalesce with others in the university environment. Character and confidence is built in the team setting. Taking that confidence, students need to learn how to publically speak in front of a large crowd. This is probably the most important “real world” lesson that I took away from my high school experience. I am able to calmly approach a podium with a key word outline and talk to an audience without worrying about being embarrassed or nervous. Getting personal with the crowd, telling jokes, and being able to talk confidently about a topic has led me to earning many A’s in the last three years.

How can a person be taught confidence and have personal achievement? I owe the majority of my success to two high school programs in which I was enrolled. At Livonia Stevenson High School, I was a part of a program that changed my life. The Stevenson School of Global Education taught that as a student, we must think globally about contemporary issues that are of importance, while acting locally to change our community, our school, and ourselves for the better. The Global Education program was a four-year plan that incorporated the importance of English and History. For example, if we were learning about the Australian Aborigines in history, we would be reading Aborigine poetry and reflecting on the native peoples’ writing in English class. Through this program, we researched and participated in a Model United Nations Simulation for a month each year. I was taught how to properly research any topic ranging from the geographic features of Botswana, to what constitutes genocide from war. Wikipedia and the

first three results posted on Google are wonderful tools to use to find “surface” information, but the best knowledge resides in the depths of search engines and Think Tanks. Students will find success in their studies, especially in college, if teachers were to dedicate a week of class time per semester, showing their students how to properly find and cite information online. I imagine that in the next five years, the textbook will be a thing of the past. Online and e-readers will be the learning devices my children will use. We are engulfed in our tablets, cell phones, and the Internet, so students need to be instructed how to use them to their full potential.

The second program that changed my life was the Career Internship Program. The curriculum of the program allowed high school seniors to go out and work at a job for twelve hours per week at any business or organization that would host their internship. Opportunities included clerical work at a law firm, audio specialist at a mega-church, physical therapy assistant, and hospital aid worker. I interned as an advertiser/graphic designer for a company that sold camera parts and accessories. I learned the importance of creating clean artwork, and some of my advertisements were featured in both a print and online mail out. The internship program taught personal responsibility and contributed to a better understanding of the real world. I did not realize the impact of the program initially, but after completing it, I do appreciate the twelve hours I spent per week working outside of the classroom in the “grown up classroom.” The Career Internship Program emphasized the importance of having a positive reputation in the work place. Aside from building work experience, a resume was created and perfected. At the end of the semester long program, a portfolio of everything I accomplished was constructed highlighting the triumphs and lessons-learned. A personal recommendation that I tell all of my friends is to try to get an internship with a business that you think you may want to be a part of some day. I found out when I was eighteen years old that I wanted to run a small business some day. A volunteer or internship opportunity avoids the headache of taking many “feeler” classes once at the university level. With a clear mind and a finish line in sight, an incoming college student can become better prepared for the university coursework. I came to my university knowing that I was going to declare a Business Major. I know that in the future, I will own my own business. I will build it from the ground up. I will take the experiences from the two different jobs I have held at small businesses, combined with the lessons learned at college to become successful.

In conclusion, it is so vital now more than ever that we reinvent our schools. With dismal rankings and a lack of motivation from the student body, something must be done. We must follow the ABC plan to make sure that the next generation and generations to come are able to live the American Dream as their forefathers did. When we hold students, parents, teachers, and the government accountable for their individual tasks of learning, the system works. We must make sure that students are given the opportunity to ask questions and explore their interests. Parents must take a proactive role in their child's life to stay involved and make sure that they are staying on top of their studies. Teachers need to evaluate their presentation strategies and make sure that a topic is thoroughly discussed before moving to new material. Encouraging one on one meetings is also beneficial to the student if he is she is more comfortable meeting in this personable setting. Finally, the government must allocate more money to our struggling school systems, especially early elementary programs where nurturing and structure are the two most important building blocks of an education. We must bridge the gap between book smarts and street smarts. Book smarts can be taught, however street smarts cannot. The only way to make sure our children are ready for the outside world is to let them explore on their own. In the full throttle forward society we live in today, we must disconnect to connect; disconnect ourselves from all of the distractions around us. We must remember the timeless values of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. Those values make this country great and teaching them to our youth will allow our dreams to live on once we are gone. Finally, curriculum must be restructured to once again mandate the ever so important core building blocks of education; that is reading, writing, mathematics, social and behavioral sciences, and the arts. In *Dead Poets Society*, Professor John Keating (Robin Williams) is quoted saying:

We don't read and write poetry because it's cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. And the human race is filled with passion. And medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. ... To quote from Whitman, "O me! O life! ... of the questions of these recurring; of the endless trains of the faithless... of cities filled with the foolish; what good amid these, O me, O life?" Answer. That you are here - that life exists, and identity; that the powerful play goes on and you may contribute a verse. ... What will your verse be? (Williams)

We must teach the students of today that their ideas will be the basis of tomorrow. It is as simple and direct as that. What will your verse be?

Works Cited:

Alvarez, Brenda. "Flipping the Classroom: Homework in Class, Lessons at Home." *Successful Students*. National Educational Association, 30 Sept. 2011. Web. 5 Dec. 2012.

Hanushek, Eric A., Paul E. Peterson, and Ludger Woessmann. "Achievement Growth: International and U.S. State Trends in Student Performance." Harvard University, July 2012. Web. 1 Jan. 2013.

Whipps, Judy, Diane Maodush-Pitzer, Susan Mendoza, and Maureen Wolverton. "The Banking Concept of Education." *Paulo Friere*. Acton: Copley Custom Textbooks, 2011. 1-2. Print.

Williams, Robin, perf. *Dead Poets Society*. 1989. Videocassette.