

# TRAINED TEACHERS AND HIGH EXPECTATIONS HELP CHILDREN THINK

**PART I**

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Across the country, the inner city and rural education story for poor students is a grim read. Public school systems leave students from the poorest families to learn in schools in the worst physical condition, where they are taught by the systems' least experienced teachers.

Youngsters in these school sit in classrooms under leaky roofs, paint flaking ceilings, unusable light fixtures, broken windows, scarred blackboards taught by new, often unprepared and overwhelmed teachers. The result is too often students who produce the lowest results on math and reading tests and have the lowest daily attendance rates.

**Successful Learning**

One school in New York stands out in this scenario. Even though it is in a community beset by drugs, crime, unemployment, poverty, and single parenthood, rigorous teaching and high expectation learning do take place daily. New York's East Harlem Public School (P.S.) 171 at 103rd and Madison Avenue is a living study of an educational learning environment which students and parents utilize aggressively.

**Getting Results**

In the 93-year-old school building with corridor walls of peeling paint, there are 536 African-American and Hispanic students. Some 67 percent receive free breakfast and lunch.

Despite the odds against these students, they rank first in their District 4 in standardized reading scores, with 53.9 percent reading at or above grade level. Almost 77 percent per-

form above grade level in math and also rank first in the district. These statistics place them in the top 30 percent of elementary schools in the city.

The 21 classroom teachers at the school engage their students by imparting information through the modern classic method. Teachers first prepare detailed lesson plans for introduction of new subjects. When they teach, they stand at the front of the classroom facing students seated at desks. In daily and weekly reviews with rapid fire questions, students give answers on what they have learned.

**Making It Happen**

According to Lorraine Mann Skeen, P.S. 171's principal for the past 16 years, she and her teachers have identified 10 areas that help maintain the chemistry of it's excellent teaching environment. Those areas include:

- \* Top notch school management by principal.
- \* Excellent classroom management by teachers.
- \* School wide discipline.
- \* High expectations of teachers for students.
- \* Willingness to try new ideas.
- Reading enrichment-non-fiction books
- Sustained silent reading
- Taking reading books home
- Ample problem solving in math
- \* Teachers devoted to teaching and children.
- \* Well prepared and detailed lessons.
- \* Good student-teacher relationships.
- \* Support from supervisors.
- \* Communication with parents through monthly report cards and orientation meetings.

"There was a period in time (a very long time in fact) in which the United States was preeminent in education; technologically advanced, capable of educating a corps of business leaders and engineers who were innovative in the laboratory and skilled in the manufacture of high quality products," says Ms. Skeen.

Skeen.

**Rigorous Teaching**

"If we look at the corollary form of education that paralleled this golden period of leadership in the U.S. and produced such a competent managerial and intelligent workforce, we see schools that were organized in a 'traditional' manner which, in

simplest terms, meant that children learned from skilled teachers who imparted to them a rigorous developmental curriculum.

At P.S. 171, that rigorous education means a structured day, five days a week.

Teachers come with a lesson plan prepared to teach phonics, vocabulary, concept

development, semantic mapping, textural analysis in which students learn the importance of plot, setting, character, theme, and language. Teachers and students engage in pre-reading activities and post-reading activities and answer student generated questions.

To Be Continued

## HARRY REID INTERVIEW

(Continued from Page 5)

be extremely helpful to small business. I think that anything that we can do, for example, to improve the Small Business Administration. That's one of the things we can spend money very wisely on. In having more money available, because in Nevada, as an example, we have a great record for small business grants. We have no money. We stopped doing grants. We just have a little bill that we just passed that's called the Supplemental Appropriation Bill and we'll put some money in there so that the fund will be not completely out of wack. I just want to lay the groundwork to say that I don't think the poor Americans are doing pretty well under this program. There are two countries that do very well under our foreign aid program, Egypt and Israel. They get about half the money we put out in foreign assistance. It's hard to believe, but Egypt and Israel get half of our foreign aid dollars. Why? Because of the Camp David Accord. Because of the Camp David Accord, we have certain

commitments that we made because Egypt and Israel were willing to make peace with each other. I think that's fine. I think that Sadat will go down in history as one of the great leaders of all time for his courage knowing that he was probably signing his own death warrant when he signed the peace document. That could be true. He was a man who was devoutly religious, a man that believed in peace, not war, and as result of that, his leadership brought about peace between Israel and Egypt and set an example for the rest of the country, for the rest of the world. Why does Egypt and Israel get that money separate and apart

from the Camp David Accord. Well, a couple of reasons. One is that if you look around that part of the world where nothing but a bunch of death spots and tyrants are, there is no democracy at all in that part of the world except in Israel and, to a lesser degree, in Egypt. They have been friends of ours, Egypt and Israel, or Israel longer than Egypt, they've stood by us, through good times and bad; they've tested our weapons, they have important things, and the other reason of course we have to acknowledge is there is a tremendous and very important Jewish community in America. That's foreign aid in general.

Foreign aid is not like we used to think of foreign aid where we would just give somebody something. We've had nobody that's paid off their debt better than Israel, they always pay on time. But our foreign aid programs no longer are out like grants. What we do now is we have programs that they have to buy our products with grants or loans that we give them, which in effect helps our business community. Take Poland as an example, Poland, while I was there in 1987, were plowing fields with domestic animals. They're not going to do that forever. They are going to, someday buy farm implements (See Interview, Page 11)

## PROJECT YOUTH PROUDLY PRESENTS BACK-TO-SCHOOL SAFETY WORKSHOP

Featuring Freddie the Fire Truck; Franky and the safety puppets; Metro Police Department and McGruff; Mercy Ambulance and First Aid; Sponsorship by Nevada Power and Electric Safety; The Discovery Museum and the Bubble; and much, much more.

MAYOR JONES IS PROCLAIMING THIS DAY "YOUTH DAY":

Call now and register your child at 647-5800 SO THAT WE CAN MAKE SURE WE HAVE ENOUGH SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR ALL OUR CHILDREN. This event will be held at 1201 West Miller street. Councilman Frank Hawkins will deliver the message for this day. LOOKING FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU SOON!!!  
DATE: 8/20/93 TIME: 12 - 5 P.M.

### WLV LIBRARY AUGUST GALLERY OFFERING

Artist Harold Bradford's watercolors, oils and pencil works, "The Black West - The Unrecorded Truth," opens in the Beni Casselle Gallery of the West Las Vegas Library, 951 W. Lake Mead Blvd., Thursday, August 19. A reception is scheduled from 5-7 pm. The exhibit continues through September 19.

Also, "Different Worlds," black and white photographs by artists Barbara and Rudy Gonzales continues.



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