

DENNIS VAN ROEKEL: Welcome to NEA's Town Hall discussion with Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan. This is a real opportunity for Secretary Duncan to talk to you about his vision for public education and what he wants to accomplish in his position but more importantly to me, it is an opportunity for you to have him respond to your questions and listen to your comments. It is a wonderful opportunity. I was thinking this morning what a difference a year makes. A year ago we were gathered in Washington DC and you endorsed the candidacy of Barack Obama for President of the United States. And when you did that, you created a political partnership. You said that you believed in him and you wanted him to be elected because of the kind of administration that he would have. In November that was solidified with his election and in January we began in earnest to build that partnership. Along with President Obama and Secretary Duncan. I believe that we elected a president whose values for unions, public education, and you are just where we want them to be. I so believe that we have a Secretary of Education who clearly demonstrates his passion and his commitment to the education of all children in America. I feel good about who they are and what they care about and where they want to take this nation.

It is interesting to me the press stories that come out between President Obama and the NEA and Secretary Duncan and the NEA, the press love to talk about differences. I understand that, I mean you got to have a good story. But what I think they miss is the significance of the conversation and the engagement. The idea that the Secretary of Education in the United States is listening and meeting and is accessible to 3.2 million members of educators I think is news. The reason I think it is news is because it is new. We have not done this for eight years. It is a wonderful opportunity. Frankly I enjoy the conversations. You know with the challenges we face, there is no one group who gets to define the answer and then everybody else will say "oh go ahead, we'll all follow that one." It is a challenge to find solutions to real problems. To real issues that face our nation and especially the youth of this nation. I find it invigorating to have conversation and to find a way to talk about that and to find solutions that can make a difference.

Now today's program, Secretary Duncan will come out and address you then I am going to introduce a panel of our members from around the country and I will give them about ninety seconds to respond to his remarks, and if he wants to respond I will allow that. Or if he triggers something in my head I may just pipe off myself a little bit. Then we are going to open it up to you in this audience. We have several microphones that will be open and you will have an opportunity to go to the microphone and give your comments, ask questions, and I will hold you to being brief. We have a lot of people and there are lots of you who would love to speak. I will really say, make your point, state your question, make your comment, but let's give as many people the opportunity to speak as we can.

Now let me introduce to you our speaker. There are many people who understand the importance of education. I believe that is fairly universal in our country. But Arne Duncan grew up understanding the importance of a passionate and dedicated educator. You see, his mother started a community school in Chicago. He saw first hand that it's hard work. But he also saw that it can make a profound difference in the lives of children.

As Superintendent of the Chicago school system, one of the first things he did was to restore collective bargaining rights for the local union. He is someone who understands what it means to be an educator and he knows that a union of educators is a powerful force that can help drive the kind of change that many of our schools need.

Now a few other things about Secretary Duncan, he is a pretty good basketball player. In fact, he played professionally in Australia for several years. By the way while he was there he worked with indigenous and disadvantaged youth so that passion continues. The one thing I have not read about his basketball experience, they often mention he goes one-on-one in basketball with President Obama, but no one ever says who scores the most. So maybe today he will divulge that little bitty secret that nobody seems to know.

Without any further ado I would like to present to you I believe a real collaborator with the National Education Association, someone who wants to partner with us to find solutions to very difficult challenges to America, introduce to you the Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan.

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: Good morning. Wow. You guys know how to throw a party. This is pretty cool. It is great to be here. Dennis thank you for that kind kind introduction. I actually have never met Dennis before coming to Washington. It has been just a remarkable chance in a short amount of time to build a real collaborative partnership. To build a level of trust and mutual respect is so important. John Wilson, I want to thank you for your tremendous leadership. I have to tell you that as I have traveled the country and meet with local union leaders at the district level, at the state level, I couldn't be more impressed with passion and for the commitment. Please give yourselves a big round of applause for all the hard work.

Thank you for having me this morning and thank you for hosting one of our Listening and Learning events. We embarked on this tour to hear from people in classrooms, in schools, people who are facing educational challenges and people who are finding solutions every single day. I have now been to twenty-two states and dozens and dozens of communities. I have met with hundreds of teachers and principals, education support staff, students, parents, superintendents, college professors, higher education administrations, and community leaders. Everyone I spoke with understands that the status quo is not good enough. They want to get better, they need to get better, and they are willing to work even harder. They just want to be part of the process and they

absolutely want their voices to be heard. So I look forward today to hearing your voices, hearing what you have to say, and hearing your ideas for improving American education. I encourage you to think boldly and courageously, to challenge me, to challenge yourselves, and to challenge each other. But we must be willing to do more than talk. We must be willing to change.

As I said recently, education reform is not a table around which we sit and talk. It is a moving train and we all need to get on board. I have had some compelling conversations with NEA leadership and many of your members and I am convinced that if everyone, if everyone is on board this train it will gain enough speed, momentum, and direction to take public education to a new and a better place. In recent weeks I have given a series of speeches about the four core reforms embodied in the Recovery Act leading up to the release of five billion dollars in competitive grants.

The first speech was about creating data systems that follow the progress of students through pre K through college so teachers can better meet the needs of students and we can help identify teachers who are doing well or who are struggling. The second speech was about adopting higher standards and creating higher quality assessments. I want to thank all of you and Dennis particularly for your tremendous leadership and support on the issue of higher standards. That's the kind of leadership we need on a whole range of issues. We must raise the bar and we must stop lying to children as we do in far too many states, including the one I am from in Illinois where standards have been dummed down. The third speech was about turning around our most troubled schools. We propose several models and invited everyone to be part of the solution, unions, nonprofits, charters, for profits, universities, states, and districts. To this tough critically important work for this to go well, we have to increase capacity around the country. I also challenged the audience of charter school operators and authorizers to get much more serious about their own accountability. They must not protect third rate charters. Third rate charters that are not performing well need to close. Charter schools are public schools and they should be held to the same standards as everybody else.

Today is the last of my four speeches. The focus today is on the quality of the education work force, teachers, principals, and education support personal. I want to acknowledge some of the great things that we have done and talk about some of the things that we have not done yet. I came here today to challenge you to think differently about the role of unions and public education because when thousands of schools are chronically failing and millions of children are dropping out each year, we collectively have to do something different. It is not enough to focus on issues like job security, tenure, compensation, and evaluation. We must become full partners and leaders in education reform. You and I must be willing to change and as a country we must do this together. I know we won't all agree on everything but I am absolutely confident there will be a lot more that we'll agree on than not. It starts with our shared values. We

believe it is our moral obligation to give children the very best education possible. We believe every child can learn and every school can absolutely succeed. We believe teaching is a profession and good teachers and principals are essential to its success.

Unlike many of you, my values and views in education were not shaped in the front of a classroom. In 1961, three years before I was born, my mother began an after school intercity tutoring program in the heart of the south side of Chicago and literally raised myself, my brother and sister as a part of her program. She believed everyone should both teach and be taught so the ten year olds worked with the five year olds, the fifteen year olds tutored those who were ten. That daily experience was absolutely formative for all three of us. We have all, my brother, sister and I we've all tried to follow in her footsteps in various ways. It was work filled with both great heartbreak and also amazing triumph. We experienced more than our share of early violent deaths because of the community's chaos. Those tough experiences shape you and honestly scar you in ways that to this day are difficult for me to talk about.

From that group of friends I grew up studying with, and playing ball with, from one street corner at 46th and Greenwood emerged literally a brain surgeon, a Hollywood movie star, one of my top administrators in the Chicago Public Schools, and one of IBM's international corporate leaders. How did this happen? Because these children, despite tremendous poverty, despite staggering neighborhood violence, despite challenges at home had my mother and others in their lives who gave them real opportunities, real hope and guidance over the years and had the highest of expectations for them. Because of that opportunity, their gifts, their talents, their fierce desire to succeed all blossomed. What I learned as a little boy and what continues to motivate my mother today, forty-eight years after she began her work are the same two values that I am sure motivate each and every one of you. It is a fundamental unalterable belief that every child can learn and a fundamental understanding of the tremendous urgency of our collective work. Simply put, we can not wait because our children can not wait.

As I've traveled the country I've met a thousand educators like my mother in schools all across America. I've seen them on an Indian Reservation in Montana, in a West Virginia middle school, at an intercity high school in Detroit, and at a charter school in Newark. All of us remember that teacher, that education support person, or that coach who changed our life. That person who saw something in us that we didn't even see in ourselves. For me, it was my English teacher, Miss McCamble. It stays with us forever. It sustains us, guides us, inspires us. They are the ones who commit those everyday acts of kindness and love and never ask for anything in return other than your commitment and your hard work as a student. They counsel trouble teens, take phone calls at night, and reach into their own pockets for lunch money for children too ashamed or too embarrassed to ask for help. I see how much these teachers want to be

valued for their work and honored for what they are, dedicated, professional, compassionate, serious, and responsible. These are the qualities of a great educator and we have millions of them all across America.

In 1992 after returning from Australia I went back to the community where my mother had worked and started an "I Have a Dream" program with my sister. We adopted a class of students and agreed to send them to college if they stayed in school. Our job for six years to work with those children and their families every single day and give them a chance to succeed. The previous class one year ahead of us from their local elementary school had a 67% dropout rate while at the end of our program in 1998 we had an 87% graduation rate. The same children, same socioeconomic challenges, same community, from the same school. 67% dropout rate, 87% graduation rate, what was different? Opportunity was different, support was different, high expectations were different.

During that time we also helped start a small new neighborhood public school. The Ariel Community Academy. It was not a charter. It has always had union teachers and today it is one of the highest performing public schools in Chicago even though the vast majority of children who attend it live below the poverty line.

Finally I spent seven years running the Chicago public schools where I learned many other critically important lessons. We set up 150 community schools open 12 hours a day offering classes both to our students and to their parents. Our schools have to become the true centers of the community. We pay teachers to work extra hours and many of them took on that responsibility because they were absolutely committed to their schools success. Schools must support the social and emotional needs of our students and engage the whole family. This is the only way we are going to succeed.

We also increased the number of nationally board certified teachers in Chicago to about 1200 from about a dozen when we started. We partnered with the union and with the Chicago Public Education Fund which is led by a group of business leaders. Together we grew NBC faster than anywhere else in the country. I am a big believer in this program but also we must be honest school systems today pay teachers billions of dollars each year for earning PD credentials that have very little to do with improving the quality of teaching and at the same time many schools give nothing at all to teachers who go that extra mile and make all the difference in the lives of our students.

Excellence matters, excellence matters. We must honor it, fairly, transparently, and on terms that teachers can embrace. The President and I have both said repeatedly that we are not going to impose reform but rather work with teachers, with education support personnel, with principals, and with unions to find what works. That's exactly what we tried to do in Chicago.

In Chicago we enlisted the help of 24 of our best teachers in the system; 24 out of 24,000 nominated by their peers, their colleagues to pilot a performance compensation system. We also sat down with the union and bargained it out. It was based on classroom observation, whole school performance, and individual classroom performance, measured in part by growth in student learning. (Heckler in background) – You can boo just don't throw any shoes please, (laughing) You are welcome to boo. (Pause for clapping) – The rewards and incentive for increased student achievement went to every adult in the school including custodians, security guards, and cafeterias, not just individual teachers. That sense of teamwork is extraordinarily important to me. You cannot pit teachers against each other. Such programs will always fail.

We have to encourage collaboration, get teachers to open up their classrooms and de-privatize education. When you see high performing schools it is the culture, every adult taking responsibility, and collectively creating that culture of high expectations. We only went into schools where 75% or more of the faculty wanted to participate. We picked 20 schools but 120 showed interest. That gave me some sense for the demand of such programs.

We are asking congress for more money to develop compensation programs with you and for you not to you. Programs that will put money in the pockets of your teachers and support personnel by recognizing and rewarding excellence.

So I begin our conversation today around some important areas of agreement. Excellence in teaching, meaningful professional development, schools open longer hours, and a shared responsibility for student success among every single adult in that school building.

But I want to go further. I want to describe some of the tough challenges and ask you how we can work together to meet them. Let's start by talking about underperforming schools. We don't need another study to tell us that chronically underperforming schools don't have the best teachers and principals. Experience tells us that failing schools usually have poor leadership and poor leadership usually drives away good teachers.

In tough communities in tough schools where you need the best talent and the most ability all too often you have the least. Now often we try replacing the leadership and sometimes that works. We need to invest much more in principle leadership. We need to recruit and train the very best people possible because the job is hard and cost of failure is far too high. Principals run multimillion dollar budgets. They hire, train, and manage scores of people and the best of them are always first and foremost instructional leaders, trained in classroom observation. It's a lot to ask of anyone and we need 95,000 of these individuals around the country. Great principals lead talented instructional teams and drive student

performance and close achievement gaps. They deserve to be recognized and rewarded but if they are not up to the job they need to find something else to do.

Similarly in struggling schools we have tried boosting support for teaching staff and making other changes around curriculum, school day, and sometimes it has worked. I always favor more support, collaboration, mentoring, and time on task. But sometimes despite our best efforts these methods don't work. Today our country has about 5000 schools that continue to underperform year after year despite our best efforts. 2,000 of these schools produce half of our nation's dropouts. Their kids are years behind grade and despite the best of intentions we collectively, we're perpetuating poverty and we're perpetuating social failure. When it comes to these schools, we have to think differently. We need the courage to change.

We need to go into a room, states, districts, unions, administrators, foundations, think tanks, charters, non-profits, parents, and elected officials, lock the door, throw away the key, throw away the rule books and start with a clean slate. We need to be open and honest with each other about the barriers and the challenges. If we agree that children need more time then we must give it to them. If we agree that teachers need more support, then we must give it to them.

But if we agree that the adults in these schools are failing these children then we have to find the right people and we can't let rules and regulations get in the way. Children have only one chance, one chance to get an education.

This is not about charters or unions. Chicago had turnaround schools led by a businessman who used only union teachers and they did a phenomenal job. Green Dot in Los Angeles is doing the same thing. But Mastery Charters in Philadelphia is a different turnaround model and we need that as well. There is so much urgency and so much need in under-performing schools that we can't impede successful models.

The NEA has a phenomenally honest, committed, and passionate leader in Dennis Van Roekel and I have tremendous respect for him. He absolutely shares our sense of urgency. He has told me personally that he'll walk into any room with anyone to talk about how to help struggling schools. And that gives me great, great, hope. We're losing far too many children today and incremental change won't save them. We can't lose another generation. We need dramatic change. And we can't continue to blame each other or blame the system. We, we in this room, we are the system and it's up to us, you and me to change that. So let's talk about it.

We created seniority rules that protect teachers from arbitrary and capricious management and that's a good thing. But sometimes those rules place teachers in schools and communities where they can't succeed and that doesn't work.

We created tenure rules to make sure that a struggling teacher gets a fair opportunity to improve and that's a good, good, goal. But when an ineffective teacher gets chance after chance to improve and doesn't and when the tenure system keeps that teacher in the classroom anyway then the system is protecting jobs rather than children. That's not a good thing. Nothing angers committed teachers more than inheriting children year after year from a teacher who has failed to help them make progress. We need to work together to change that. We all have to change to look in the mirror and be self critical and that starts with us in the Department of Education where frankly I think we have been part of the problem. When I was in Chicago I did not always welcome a call from the Department of Education, it was usually about some audit or compliance report. It was rarely about teaching a child to read, so everyday I am pushing my staff to say can we go from being a compliance driven bureaucracy, will we go from being part of the problem to the engine of innovation, to scale up what works, to invest in best practices. So we have to change. We have to look in the mirror.

Before I came to Washington I did not think all the good ideas came from Washington, now that I am in Washington I know all the good ideas don't come from Washington. The best ideas are always going to come at the local level from great educators who are making the difference everyday and our job is to listen and to learn and to replicate them. So as we challenge ourselves and look in the mirror I am challenging everybody else.

I told the charter schools they need to police themselves or their progress will be stalled. I told school boards that if they can't improve student achievement they have a moral obligation to consider mayoral control. And so I'm telling you as well that when inflexible seniority and rigid tenure rules that we designed put adults ahead of children then we're not only putting children at risk we're putting the entire education system at risk. We're inviting the attack of parents and the public and that's not good for any of us. I believe that teacher unions are at a crossroads. These policies that were created over the past century to protect the rights of teachers but they have produced an industrial factory model of education that treats all teachers as interchangeable widgets. A recent report from the "New Teacher Project" found that almost all teachers are rated the same. Who in their right mind really believes that? We need to work together to improve this.

Now let's talk about data. I understand that word can make people nervous but I see data first and foremost as a barometer. It tells us what is happening. Used properly, it helps teachers better understand the needs of their students. But too often, teachers don't have access to good data to inform instruction and help raise student achievement. We have to fix that. Data can also help identify and support teachers who are struggling. And it can help evaluate them. The problem is that some states prohibit linking student achievement and teacher effectiveness. I understand that tests are far from perfect and that it is absolutely unfair to reduce the complex, nuanced work of

teaching to a simple multiple choice exam. Test scores alone should never drive evaluation, compensation or tenure decisions. That would never make sense. But to remove student achievement entirely from evaluation I think is illogical and indefensible.

It's time we all admit that just as our testing system is deeply flawed so too is our teacher evaluation system and the losers are not just our children. When great teachers are unrecognized and unrewarded, when struggling teachers are unsupported and when failing teachers are unaddressed the entire teaching profession is damaged. We need to work together to fix this. I promise you, I will meet you more than half way. I will demand the same with every principal, administrator, school board member, elected official and parent and I ask the same with you. I know how committed so many of you are to change and improvement and not just in education but around issues like healthcare, civil rights, child advocacy, and disability rights. In education, for example in Illinois, the IEA has done a remarkable job, a twenty year effort to build labor and management partnerships around school improvement. One of the leaders in that effort, Jo Anderson, has joined our team and we are very very lucky to have him. I know he is here today.

I also want to acknowledge my general council, Charlie Rose who is our labor lawyer in Illinois. Charlie told me years ago, I've never forgot it, that the key to making progress in education reform begins with respect for the labor and management relationship. I believe that. I believe that. I salute union management partnerships all across America that are working together to develop better hiring, compensation, evaluation, and turn around strategies. We also need to move faster and we need to go further. America's teachers are yearning to be partners in reform and change. They want teaching to be a respected profession that has high standards for performance, rewards excellence, provides opportunities for advancement, and promotes real and lasting collaboration. They are tired of being demonized, blamed, and disrespected. They don't just want to get on the train, they want to help drive it.

Let me share with you a powerful quote from your former president, Mary Hatwood Futrell. She said "The education reform movement demands not only that we seize the opportunity, but that we embrace the responsibility that is ours. You and I must provide the leadership ... and share this responsibility with every parent and citizen who is concerned about safeguarding the sanctity and purpose of public education for all. "Taking her words to heart, our challenge is to make sure every child in America is learning from an effective teacher—no matter what it takes. So today, I ask you to join President Obama and me in a new commitment to results that recognizes and rewards success in our schools and in our classrooms and is rooted in our common, sacred, obligation to our children.

You've heard my voice—and I deeply appreciate the opportunity you have given me and now I want to hear your voices. I began my remarks with a personal story. I just want to close with one more:

Dr. Martin Luther King came to the West Side of Chicago in 1966 to protest housing discrimination. His powerful and inspiring message brought billions of dollars—billions of dollars into the community for housing, job-training, and community development. But when I took over the public schools in 2001-35 years later—the children of North Lawndale were still desperately poor. You have to ask yourself why—after so much money—billions of dollars and 35 years—why had nothing changed for North Lawndale's children. The answer, I am convinced is because they forgot to invest in the one thing that has the power to transform lives. They forgot education. They put all of that money into bricks and mortar and social programs but they forgot to give the people the skills they need to help themselves.

President Obama learned that lesson and that's why the Recovery Act invests more than \$100 billion in education. I want to thank all of you, the NEA for making that happen. That money is going into our classrooms to keep teachers teaching and students learning—so we can educate our way to a better economy. The President understands that the nation that out-teaches us today is going to out-compete us tomorrow. He understands that education is the foundation of our economic strategy and the only sure path to long-term economic growth. That's why he wants America to produce the highest percentage of college graduates by the end of the next decade. This is our moon-shot. This is our collective call to action.

It is absolutely an economic imperative and a moral imperative. This is the civil rights issue of our generation. The fight for a quality education is about so much more than education. It's a fight for social justice. And he's counting on you—and he is counting on all of you to help lead that fight. This is our time. A time of historic opportunity. Please take a moment and think about the magnitude of the opportunity ahead of us. When have you ever seen the stars so aligned. A president who is absolutely passionate about public education, a bipartisan congress that wants us to get better, great ideas, great schools, communities around the country. Never had stronger or more courageous enlightened union leadership who have never had a \$100 billion in new money for education. Together, let's seize this moment, let's seize this opportunity and let's change education forever in our country.

Thank you so much.

DENNIS VAN ROEKEL: All right, let me start with Kim. Kim you have ninety seconds or less to either make a comment or ask a question and I know how to count so I will cut you off.

KIM URSETTA: You're no fun.

DENNIS VAN ROEKEL: I know.

KIM URSETTA: Thank you for the opportunity to listen to you today. I'm very excited about some of the things that you talked about especially around teacher leadership. As a National Board Certified Teacher we have been working in the Denver Public Schools with our association and with our state association and support from the national to start our own teacher-lead school where we will have twelve staff members, four of which are National Board Certified. Because I think the most important thing is whenever we look at how we are affecting teaching and learning, teachers are never asked what their students need in order to make sure that we are providing quality public education. And so the opportunity for us to work with the Denver Classroom Teachers Association and the Denver Public Schools to create our own school which will focus on math, science, technology, and service learning is very exciting. I hope that you will consider the importance of teacher voices and working with our education support professionals in order to make sure that we have a voice at the table because we know what works for kids.

GREG GREEN: I'm glad that you have taken the time out to go ahead and listen to us as educators. I have some concerns around the issue of merit pay. I applaud the recognition that a teacher's responsibility extends beyond the classroom dismissal—sorry. I applaud the recognition that a teacher's responsibility extends beyond the classroom dismissal but I'm hesitant how merit pay could be implemented. We all know the quality of a child can not be determined by a test score and neither can the quality of a teacher. We're all willing to do whatever it takes to get our children to reach their potential. I hope that—I'm not saying that teachers should not be held to standards. It takes—I agree—you said that every child can learn and I think it takes a great teacher to get that child to learn and to get to—to reach that potential. Thank you.

DENNIS VAN ROEKEL: Secretary Duncan if you want to respond to these, you are absolutely welcome.

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: I am going---

JOHN WRIGHT: Thank you Mister Secretary for joining us and for the listening. Its so much of what you said today points to the heightened importance of teacher evaluation and assessment whether it is compensation or practice and student achievement. And we know that those evaluation instruments really are not up to standards of excellence in many schools and in many districts around the country. So given the need for real authentic systems of teacher assessment and evaluation with informative component to improve practice, the summative component necessary for employment purposes, the fact that they're locally developed, we need them to be standards based. We need to have the right sort

of partnership and relationship in the schools and districts. Is there a federal role in creating and maintaining and nurturing this system given this local nexus of the policy? What would a federal role be towards improving teaching quality, teaching practice as you mentioned repeatedly in the context of teacher evaluation and assessments at the school level?

MICHELE JOHNSON: Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity and I commend you for having the listening tours and actually listening to the voice of teachers. I think it is important that you continue to listen to the voice of teachers but also to have the collaboration that you spoke about in your speech. But my key point that I heard today was about professional learning and that it is important to build the capacity of teachers and administrators. So it is important that as you build a teacher evaluation system and the data systems that you keep that as a key focus. Without that you will not be able to get the effective teaching that is needed. So continue to build in that capacity building and the time for teacher learning and continue to have the voice at the table, not just these few months of listening but to actually have a partnership with teachers.

DR. THERESA MONTANO: I think where we agree is that education is a civil right and it is about social justice. On the other hand there are a couple of things that you said that maybe you can elaborate a little bit on. One of them is evidence based and the discussion on evidence. Where we know there is no measurable tool right now that measures students overcoming adversity. Students do overcome language proficiency. Students who overcome poverty, there is no test that can measure that as it relates to student success. Moreover there is no research at the present time, in fact the latest Stanford Research talked about how charter school do not do better than public schools. So, if you could talk a little bit about—and my last question would be on the role of evidence base and research as it relates to performance base since we know there is no research that talks about that improving the quality of teaching either.

W. MICHAEL HOFFMANN: I would really like to thank you for coming. I'm a paraeducator in the classroom. I spend six and a half hours a day giving instruction to students. I heard a lot in your speech about the importance for us to be part of the process and I do believe in professional development for all ESP. You talk about the train, we make that train roll. I would really like to hear how you see our role in that. Thank you.

FRANK CARDELLA: Secretary Duncan, colleagues. When they ask you to speak near the end of a list of speakers they ask you not to be married to your comments, at this point I hope you'll recognize this is a civil union. As a National Board Certified Teacher I believe in continual growth. As a science teacher I love data and process and as a union member I believe in work place ethics and social justice. But, reflection is required to have improvement. To have data be meaningful you need to have context and to have any kind of equity in the workplace there needs to be a larger discussion of the social framework. Thank

you for listening but when ESEA gets reauthorized, how much of our input will we see in that document?

CHRISTY LEVINGS: Good morning Secretary Duncan. As you can see, I chair the NEA's advisory committee on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and you can see we have jut a few thoughts that we would be happy to share with you about what we need to see in the reauthorization. Getting to be the last person on the piece, I want to put a couple of issues that I hope you will respond to as well. I really liked what you said about lenses. We all bring the lenses of where we come from and what we've seen work. For thirty-five years I worked in a large district in Kansas and we have been successful in using a couple of things that we would like to share. One of it is use of collective bargaining. Through collective bargaining we've developed a strong professional development component. We have a very strong teacher evaluation system that we bargain using the components of National Board Certification. I also want to talk about the piece about what we know through the collective process of developing school leadership and calm and collaborative teams and the role of the administrator. I thought that was very important what you talked about today. The National Board is preparing certification for administrators. I think that will be a very important part to have a good strong standard of national standards for administrators. That collaboration, the use of the bargaining process, the recognition that those are our day to day working conditions tools, working conditions that talk about prep time, talk about professional development, that talk about the pieces that make our working conditions intertwine with our students learning conditions. Those two things are totally intertwined. So, I think we have a lot to offer in the discussion of it but there are components we really need to step up on. I think professional development, the role of administrators and how we use our collective processes is a huge one. Thank you.

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: Do you want me to try to summarize.

DENNIS VAN ROEKEL: Oh yeah, go for it.

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: Okay, I don't need a mike.

DENNIS VAN ROELKEL: You don't need that, you are fine.

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: So it is a lot to try and respond to at once. Just to walk through—walk through my notes. For me, just to be really clear, the teacher voice is huge and important. So this Listening and Learning Tour is a start. I will tell you that every year in Chicago I had a teacher advisory council, it was picked by the teachers picking the best teachers in the system, who pushed my thinking in many many ways. I have yet to develop a national teacher advisory council, need to start to figure out how to do that. As you go into

the school that is something I would like to talk to Dennis and others about and that voice is hugely important, not just over the next couple of months but the next eight years. So that is something I am absolutely committed to doing.

The question about the federal role in improving teacher quality is really sort of an intriguing one. This is an interesting one, let me sort of back up a minute. On this higher standards that we are all talking about, to me, honestly if it is federal standards it dies, it does not work. This is being led by school board chiefs, by the NEA, by the AFT, by governors, by nonprofits, Achieve, college board and others. You have a lot of folks working together. A couple of years ago you could not have this conversation, it was like a third rail. What you've had is again is real courage, and Dennis I appreciate your leadership so much on this, of folks saying fifty states setting their own goal post does not make sense. All over the map. Many have been dummed down, and many states were lying to children. We have to raise the bar. We have to have a common high bar. If we have a common high bar, we need to think about common assessments behind that and then how do you align professional development. So this is something where I think we can cheerlead, we can provide some resources. We put 350 million dollars on the table to help create assessments behind the common standards. I think so much of this honestly doesn't work if we lead. It really has to come from great teachers, it has to come from states, it has to come from the local level. So we want to support that effort but I think our job is support and let the states, and the governors, and the school chiefs come together behind it. So it is an interesting sort of balancing act or dance. So far it is going beautifully. We have forty-six states sign on the dotted line to talk about committing to common standards. That is a huge step in the right direction. It is a first step, it is a long way to go but it is really really an important step and again you guy's collective leadership there is hugely important.

The issue around how do we measure or evaluate how children overcome poverty. There will never be a test for that. We know that. There is no test for that. I will tell you having spent a lifetime working in very poor communities, not just in Chicago but in Australia, a couple of things matter tremendously. More time for children. They desperately need more time. Six hours a day, five days a week, nine months of the year does not cut it. I worry desperately about summer reading loss. We all know children when we get to a certain point in June, they come back to us in September they are further behind than when they left. That is a heart breaking thing. We have to think very differently. I am talking about schools being open twelve, thirteen, fourteen hours a day, six, seven days out of the week, eleven to twelve months out of the year. The schools have to become the centers of the community. We have to have a wide variety of after school programming for children and for parents. Academic enrichment, but drama, and arts, and sports, and yearbook, and chess, and debate. We need GED, you need ESL, you need family literacy nights, family counseling. I want to attach health care clinics to schools so it is really one stop shopping for families. When schools truly become community anchors, children learn. But I will tell you—again—this

isn't one where we need another study. We have examples. Inner cities all over the country, rural communities, you know 98, 99% poverty, 95, 96% minority students who routinely, 95% of them are graduating. And 95% of those who are graduating are going to college.

My job is not to come up with a new study, not to come up with some good idea myself, my job is to go out, scale up those best practices, invest in those, find out what is working and do more of those. We have great great examples. I have never been more hopeful. We have huge challenges. We know we have a 30% drop out rate in this country. That is unacceptable. Those children are basically condemned to poverty and social failure. There are no good jobs out there. But we have schools that are routinely beating the odds. Not one miraculous child making it but class after class, year after year. So we collectively have to scale up those best practices and a big piece of it is thinking very very differently about the day.

In terms of continued development of educational support personal. To me that is all of us. As ESPs, its principals, so you got a couple of National Board Certified Teachers and I commend you so much. Children listen to what we say, they watch what we do. We have to walk the walk. What I love about NBC is our best teachers going back to get better. This is challenging. It is tough. You guys have lived it. It is rigorous. It is scary. You have to open up your classroom. You have video tape and that takes a lot of work. But the impact that makes on our students is huge. For us being willing every single day to get better, all of us. The custodians, the security guards, the lunchroom attendants, the bus workers, the aids, the teachers, principals, all of us every day have to be getting better. Because what we are doing now isn't enough. We have to continue to improve. We have be collectively committed to doing that.

NCLB reauthorization, seems to be a little bit of interest in that topic, that is probably another hour and I won't take an hour. But that is something that is obviously is just hugely important. NCLB got a couple of things right. They got a lot wrong. We are not going to reauthorize NCLB every single year. We are going to do it once and that is going to be the law for five, six, seven, eight years. We have to be absolutely thoughtful, absolutely strategic and comprehensive and do something that builds upon what did work and what is broken, let's fix it. I want to really want to take a blue skies approach to it. Again, if it made sense, some piece of it, let's keep it. If it didn't make sense, let's start fresh. This is a huge opportunity for us again, not to come back every single year but to be thoughtful over the course of the next X number of months and create something that is dramatically better for children, for teachers and for our country. So we have a huge opportunity to do that together.

I think that the final point, I am bouncing around a little bit, is on the collective bargaining process and using that to really drive instruction. Again, that to me, is the only way we are going to get where we need to go. None of us can

do it alone. Unions can't do it by themselves. We can't do it alone. We have to listen, we have to learn, we have to challenge each other. The thing that pushes, we all have to move outside our comfort zones. I am pushing very very hard in the department education to fundamentally change the business that we are in. That is hard to do. Just as we are doing it, we are going to challenge everyone to think a little bit different. We all have to stretch. We all have to move a little bit outside our comfort zone. We have to do it together and we have to do it collaboratively. That is the only way we are going to educate our way to where we need to go.

DENNIS VAN ROEKEL: I want to move to the audience because I know you want to ask questions. But one thing you mentioned, the importance of the collaboration and the unions. What is it that you believe you can do at the federal level to encourage that collaboration to states that don't have a collective bargaining law, to get administrators and management to collaborate with teachers, because they know, they should know if they don't it won't work anyway.

SECRETARY ARNE DUNCAN: Let me very very clear. There have been a couple of challenges in education. One is absolute lack of resources. Education has been desperately under resourced and there is never enough money. But \$100 billion in new money for education is an unprecedented, historic. You guys who've been educating thirty, forty years, you have never seen that before and you will never see it again. So again, I want us all to think about the magnitude of the opportunity. Unprecedented resource on the table. I think—I am convinced we have more great schools, more great classrooms, more great teachers than ever before in our country. We have seen this flourish of innovation and great work, data driving instruction over the past ten, fifteen years. We have more great ideas out there than ever before. So again, I don't know if we need to mark the next great idea. We need to listen and learn a skill if it works.

What I think far too often around the country, whether it is union management, whether if it is teacher principal, whether if it is teacher parent, whether it is high school elementary, or high school college, or elementary preschool, what has hurt so much of us in education is frankly adult dysfunction. We have not talked to each other. We have not listened to each other. We haven't bridged the divide. We're all in this together for children. So, behaving differently together and collaborating doesn't cost a dollar, does not cost a dollar. In far too many places adult dysfunction has stood in the way of children learning. We can't afford to do that any longer.

DENNIS VAN ROEKEL: So let me say this. First of all thank you to the people, the representatives from our fifty states who are behind you. Thank you to our panelist. Thank you to all of you for attending. Thank you Secretary Duncan for having a Town Hall right here with the National Education Association.