

**Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation – Speaker Series –  
K-12 Education Reform and Race to the Top**

Dena Blank:

Welcome to the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation Speaker Series. It is a pleasure to have you all in the house tonight. My name is Dena Blank and I'm the Vice President of Alumni Affairs at Teach for America and also a Trustee of the Blank Family Foundation. Our program this evening is Winning the Race to the Top – The Very Best Ideas and Strategies in K-12 Education Reform. On behalf of the foundation's trustees I want to welcome you and I also want to just take a few moments to thank a few folks and groups who really helped to pull this night together. First the Georgia Public Broadcasting and the Atlanta Forum Network, which has definitely helped us extend our reach throughout the state. Second, Multi-Cast Media which is helping to create a live webcast of the event this evening. Third, the Atlanta Regional Council of Higher Education, a group many of you know as ARCHE and it's great to see so many ARCHE members here in the room this morning. ARCHE does so much to organize university presidents around the cause of education, so we're thrilled that you all are here this evening. Finally, last but certainly not least I want to thank Rebecca Stewart and the entire team from the Philanthropy Roundtable who really helped do a tremendous job in pulling this evening together and are also sponsoring really a couple of days of activities here in Atlanta, today and also tomorrow. And we're just thrilled that you all chose to focus on Atlanta and on Georgia for this year. So thank you.

I am pleased to introduce the moderator of tonight's panel, Ted Mitchell. Ted is the CEO of New Schools Venture Fund, an innovative national organization that is helping education entrepreneurs take some of the best ideas in education and use their ideas to transform K-12 education. Ted previously served as the President of Occidental College in Los Angeles and currently chairs a committee that Governor Schwarzenegger created to overhaul California's K-12 education system. We really appreciate your work on the program tonight.

Before I turn it over to Ted and I will do that very shortly. I just wanted to also issue a personal challenge to those in the room, particularly those of us who grew up in Atlanta, grew up in Georgia and are still Georgia residents. As with all of our foundation speaker

series events, we really want to leave you wanting more. But in particular tonight, I really would love for everyone to leave this room wanting to actually do more. In particular, I would love for people to leave this room with a deeper conviction that the challenge of educational inequity is not actually an intractable problem or challenge, in fact, it is a challenge that is being met and overcome in thousands of classrooms and hundreds of schools across the country today and every day. My personal hope is that this conviction will grow within each of us and will outrage us and will aggravate us and will inspire us, but will cause us to change our way of thinking so that to the point where which we really feel like we must act and must bring the best of our ideas and the ideas of this community to bear on this problem.

The only certainty we have is that we definitely cannot continue to do things in Atlanta and Georgia or across the country the way that we always have. Not if we're serious about public education's responsibility which is really our responsibility to educate every single child. The folks that we will have truly the pleasure of hearing from tonight, and these are folks that I really deeply respect and admire, are really inspiring exemplars of what it means to think and act differently for and on behalf of our nation's kids. I really look forward to seeing what this group does with tonight and the events beyond tonight. And I hope you have a wonderful evening. Thank you.

Applause.

Ted Mitchell:

Thanks, Dena. Great introduction. We could probably wrap it up now, don't you think? We'll just move to the Q&A. I want to join all of you I know in thanking Dena and thanking the Blank Family Foundation for organizing this event, bringing us all together. And to echo Dena's thanks to Rebecca Stewart and the Philanthropy Roundtable for gathering people, not only from Atlanta and Georgia, but as I look out across the room, national philanthropists from around the country. And indeed, while we'll spend a good deal of our time focusing on Georgia tonight, what brings us together is a national issue. And it's not only the national crisis in education that Dena alluded to and I'll talk a little bit more about it in just a second. But it is this national inflection point that's been created by a new administration in Washington that has put a serious challenge to all of

us interested in solving the equity problem and the quality problem in America's schools. And that's the Race to the Top Fund.

What I'd like to do is I'd like to talk very briefly just as a context setter a little bit about the challenge we face, a little bit about Race to the Top and then I want to turn it over to three invited panelists who do as Dena suggested, represent some of the very best ideas and not just ideas, some of the very best execution around those ideas in American Education today. And I'll introduce them in just a shake. And following their comments, and I'll ask them a couple of questions in and out through their presentations. Afterwards we have a panel of equally eminent responders who are no strangers to those of you from Atlanta, who will provide a uniquely Atlanta and Georgian perspective on these issues. And at that point we will do what we most want to do, which is to open this conversation up to all of you. We'll have questions and comments from this microphone over here, so you can rush now or wait at your pleasure. But there will be no commandeering the mike and taking it back to your seat, that's unfair.

So with that, let me just briefly set the table for all of us. What's the problem we're trying to solve here, what's the problem that's put \$4.35 billion on the table? Well it can be expressed in everything from the disappointment of an individual student who finds at the end of a high school career and diploma and a pretty good transcript that he can't succeed in college. It's expressed in the disappointment of someone who doesn't graduate from high school and finds herself or himself consigned to low wage jobs throughout a lifetime. It can be expressed in those very personal terms that those of us who have the privilege of working in schools see. Each of those disappointments though is an opportunity lost because the education system is about dreams and making them real.

In the aggregate though, what does this look like? Pretty terrifying. Seventy percent of eighth graders are not proficient in reading across the country. And if you're not proficient in reading in eighth grade you're not going to catch up. What does that mean for the character of civil discourse and dialog in a democracy? Every year more than 1.2 million students drop out of high school and those are the students we know drop out of high school. Only about half of the nation's African American and Latino students graduate on time from high school.

By age seventeen, the average African American student, fifty percentile is performing at the twentieth percentile of White students, independent of socioeconomic status. Across the country, nearly forty percent of high school graduates who go into the nation's public colleges and universities need some kind of remediation in their freshman and sophomore year. Here in Georgia as this excellent Op Ed in the *Atlanta Business Chronicle* by Penny McPhee points out, 'Personal income in Georgia is number twenty in the U.S., largely because of a depressed education system.' And even more telling of every dollar spent in public relief in the State of Georgia, sixty-four cents of that dollar goes to support individuals with a high school diploma or less.

This is as a recent study by McKenzie and Company has pointed out, 'the equivalent of imposing a permanent recession on the United States. It's inequitable, it's unfair, and it is dragging us down.'

So what's the federal government doing? The federal government has said no more and it has an array of a variety of programs in the Stimulus Package to aim at restoring or creating excellence in America's schools to the tune of about \$100 billion. A lot of that money goes to support the students that I've just been talking about. It goes to support Title I students, it goes to support struggling schools in the school improvement funds. But it's not enough in the Duncan/Obama Administration simply to provide supports under those lowest performing students and schools. We need, they argue, to Race to the Top, not simply lift up the bottom. And so they've created the largest competitive grant program in the history of American Education - \$4.35 billion that has been set aside for states and states will compete in one of two rounds. First round will have an application deadline in December. The second in the spring and the money will be given only to states that compete successfully in four critical areas of reform. The first is standards and assessment. If we want to compete internationally where our students today rank in the middle of the developed world in terms of math skills for example, we have to benchmark our standards not just against the very best in our state, or the very best in our nation, but against the very best in the world. And so the Obama Administration is at work now, benchmarking international standards and working to develop a common core of standards that states will subscribe to who win in Race to the Top. And assessments that will help us understand student progress to those goals. And unlike most of the state

level assessments we use now, these assessments will be next generation assessments, open ended questions, essays, problem solving. Not fill in the bubble exclusively, and that's an important consideration. So signing up for the internationally benchmark standards and new assessments is first.

Second, the creation and maintenance of data systems that allow us to measure student progress against the goals and allow us to measure the progress that individual students make year on year. And to associate those scores with the other factors going on in a student's life, what's happening in the health system, what's happening importantly in their attendance patterns. And critically, what value can we then say teachers are helping to provide to that student over time. So data system that helps us understand student progress.

Third, great teachers and leaders; we'll talk a lot about that today. That education is a human capital intensive industry and without the very best people in teaching and leadership positions we're not going to get very far. So race to the successful, race to the top applications will challenge states and districts to differentiate compensation on areas of critical need, on working and challenging environments, and yes, on developing students at a higher rate.

And then finally, states that re successful in race to the top will have strong programs for turning around struggling schools. For too long the Department of Education in Washington notes, 'the same schools deliver the same lousy results year after year after year and it's only the rare superintendent who is able to come in and turn those around.' The phrase 'drop out factory' has become the term of art for many of these inner city schools that face chronically high sixty, seventy, eighty percent dropout rates.

So meeting those four assurances will be critical for Georgia and for any state seeking to make it in the Race to the Top competition.

So this panel here tonight is going to take a slightly different approach than we might otherwise take to this because I think our collective view is that attaining the assurances in Race to the Top and more importantly, achieving the kinds of student outcomes that we want and our students deserve is not a matter of just working harder along the old pathways. It's a matter of doing things differently and taking some risks and making some changes to some deeply held practices. It's about innovating in the Race to the Top. And

in the kind of innovation that I think we need there must be a really close exchange between education entrepreneurs, folks who are working independent of school systems, developing new models, new ideas, new practices. So pushing the boundaries of what we think is possible. There needs to be an exchange between those entrepreneurs and the folks who are running the districts in which most of the kids are and will be educated. And it's that exchange between the entrepreneurial energy and focus of outsiders and the deep knowledge of how to get things done of insiders that is going to be the secret sauce that will propel Georgia's application and the successful applications for Race to the Top. So that's where I want to stop and turn the program now over to people who are far more eloquent and knowledgeable than I. And I want to start with the gang to my right, to your left. First I'll introduce all of them and then let them go. First is Tim Daly, who is President of the New Teacher Project. Tim manages TNTP's efforts to engage the wider education community and their organizations work to close the achievement gap by ensuring that poor and minority students get outstanding teachers. Prior to his appointment as President in 2007, Tim was Vice President for Policy and Research. And he launched a series of partnerships with large urban districts to align district policies and practices to support better teacher recruitment and retention in student achievement. Notably, under Tim's leadership, the New Teacher Project has created a number of very influential analyses that have focused on districts and then mostly recently on Race to the Top in the national teacher problem. If you haven't taken a look at the Widget Effect, you ought to because it's an outstanding analysis of how treating all teachers as dispensable widgets that can be moved from place to place devalues teaching and under serves students.

Next to Tim is Howard Fuller, who's career includes many years in both public service positions and specifically in the field of education. Dr. Fuller is a Distinguished Professor of Education and the Founder and Director of the Institute for the Transformation of Learning at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Dr. Fuller served as the Superintendent of the Milwaukee Public Schools between 1991 and 1995. Dr. Fuller has been one of the strongest most consistent national voices for fundamental education reform and for school choice for all, not simply the affluent who can choose to move. Dr. Fuller has received numerous awards and recognitions over the

years including four Honorary Doctoral degrees. Can we get a fifth going? Four Honorary Doctoral degrees and he serves on the boards of numerous foundations and non profits including being the Chair of the Board of the very influential Black Alliance for Educational Options.

And holding down the far right, which is only believable if you're sitting where I am is Michael Horn who is the Executive Director and Co-Founder of the Innosight Institute which is a nonprofit think tank devoted to applying the theories of disruptive innovation, particularly through technology to problems in the social sector. He is the co-author of the phenomenally influential and successful *Disrupting Class*, another book for your reading list, please. How disruptive innovation will change the way the world learns. He co-authored that book with Harvard Business School Professor, Clyde Christiansen and Curtis Johnson who's the President of the City States Group. *Business Week* named *Disrupting Class* as one of the ten best innovation and design books of 2008.

So this is a group of substantial intellectual weight and I will now turn this over to Tim.

Tim Daly:

Good Evening to everybody. My job tonight is to make the pitch for teacher effectiveness as something to throw your energy behind in Race to the Top. So let me start by defining what I mean by teacher effectiveness because many of you are probably thinking about a teacher that delivers nice lessons or decorates the room really well. And I want to be very explicit that when I say effective what I mean is somebody who generates a response from kids that leads to learning. So not somebody that delivers what appears to be good instruction, but somebody who delivers an instruction that kids react to that makes them produce work that is good work and that helps them learn. You all know this already I think because everybody in the audience had teachers to whom you responded and teachers that you probably did not respond to. And if you think back there were probably years in your own learning that seemed like dead years. Maybe there are years where you can't remember who your teacher was, but I bet many of you have teachers that you remember to this day, not only their name, but you remember specific things they said, specific lessons they taught. That's teacher effectiveness, the people that made you do things as a student that not everybody could make you do. And what we're talking about focusing on here is, what is the importance of teacher effectiveness?

So I want you to imagine that you could give parents one of three choices. You could allow a parent to choose the district that their child went to school in, the school that their child went to school in or the classroom that their child was in. But if they chose one of those they could not choose the other two. So a lot of people say I would choose the district because I would like to move to an affluent district that has a great reputation. And in fact, we know from real estate patterns that that's a huge thing that parents do. The problem is that in all of those districts that are really effective and there are ineffective schools and there are effective and there are ineffective teachers.

The second thing you do is say all right the district is going to be randomly assigned to me but I get to choose the school in that district that my kid goes to. Which is a huge thing for parents, many of them want to do that, but within every school there is much more variation from classroom to classroom than there is from one school to the next. The truth is that the high value choice would be to choose the teacher. Even in schools that you all look at from the outside and think are not good or that are great, within that school is far more variety than you could possibly imagine. And if you could only do one thing for your kid, and that was choose which of the third grade teachers he or she gets, which of the high school algebra teachers he or she gets it would be a far more impactful choice than either of the other two. And the reason is because teachers vary that much.

How much do they vary? If you took a group of kids that are in second grade, performing at about the fiftieth percentile right in the middle and you gave one group of those kids three amazing teachers in a row. And the other group of kids, three not good teachers in a row, they would look nothing like one another at the end of three years. One group would be in the mid seventies in terms of percentile, being considered for gifted and talented. As Ted said, they're above grade level so they're unlikely to ever go below grade level again. So it cuts both ways if you're behind you're not likely to catch up but if you're ahead you're unlikely to fall behind. The kids that had three ineffective teachers in a row are going to be in the mid twenties. Three years ago they were at average, they didn't change their parents, their parent income level didn't change, their race didn't change, nothing change, except for what we did. Also notice I didn't say we changed schools, same schools. So teacher effectiveness is the impact of the people that spend time with children and the response that they get which differs a lot.

So let's talk a little bit about what we do today. What's the problem? Part of the problem is that we start by telling the big lie. And the big lie is that all of the adults are doing not just well, but amazingly well, incredibly well. And the kids that these adults are supposedly doing their work with are doing awful. So in districts, Ted mentioned the Widget Effect which is a report that we did recently, we found that in districts, we couldn't find anywhere where less than 99% of the teachers were being graded satisfactory. We found some places where 99% of the teachers were being rated outstanding, not even satisfactory. They didn't even have any satisfactory teachers in these districts, they only had superlative. And nobody is ever rated unsatisfactory and yet less than half of the kids were graduating high school. So the big lie is that the adults can be great but the kids can be doing awful when we say that the work of the adults is to help the kids learn.

The second thing we do, is that we then put it on the kids. So the kids don't learn because they haven't had very effective teachers, and then we put them out into the world and we stigmatize them as though they were the reason that they didn't learn. So we say that they must not have worked hard enough, they don't have the skills to compete in this economy. It must have something to do with the kids. It has maybe, we might not want to absolve the kids completely, but it has a lot more to do with what we do, but then we blame the kids when they're dumb.

And the third thing that we do a lot around this issue is we fiddle while Rome burns. So we have a crisis that Ted was just describing. We've been doing things to kids that limit their life chances for decades. We've been talking about equity and doing almost nothing to provide it while we've known these facts are true. We know that when we give a kid an ineffective teacher, we are damaging that child. Not only that, but we're disrespecting them by saying you don't have enough potential for it to make that much difference for us to give you an ineffective teacher, so it's probably okay.

And when we talk about reform we talk about tiny, meaningless stuff. Like maybe if we raise salaries a thousand dollars a teacher or provide fifteen minutes a week of professional development, or maybe if we allow teachers to collaboratively plan a little bit more all of this will go away. It's not going to go away, it's not a small issue of trying to motivate people a little bit more, or trying to make sure that they have a better

curriculum. All of those things are tweaking around the edges and it's basically what this policy federally is trying to get at.

When the federal government knocks on your door and says we're going to lead the way because you all have fallen so far behind, you should take that as a wake-up call because the federal government is generally not in the habit of being the one that gets out in front and is innovative on policies. So there are a couple of things that we can do.

One is I recommend that you read the regulations for Race to the Top, read what it says in there, because there are radical ideas in there that hardly any state is even approaching right now. And what they're saying is we want it all, we want it now, and we're willing to pay a lot of money for it. Which is a pretty exciting notion but I think that some of the things that you'll find in there are that: One, they want teacher evaluation systems that are linked to student achievement. Linked to student achievement. In most districts right now, I'm not making this up, there's a checklist on it which teachers are evaluated. And I can almost guarantee you that student learning carries equal weight with other illustrious criteria such as room cleanliness, I'm not making that up. Classroom management, which is important, it's nice to have good classroom management. Routines and procedures and then carrying the same weight down there at the bottom is going to be student achievement, which is the thing that we thought that we were getting out of that from the beginning. That's what we thought people's jobs were.

The second thing is focus in on four things. And if you want to improve teacher effectiveness the first thing to do is to be honest about the fact that we could have been doing this all along. We didn't need new permission to focus on this, but we have this culture of pretending that teachers were all the same even though they were very different. We spend 80% of our dollars in education in most districts, going straight into teacher's salaries. That's where the money is, that's where the leverage is.

So if you were going to stop doing the bad stuff and do the right stuff there are four things you should think about. One is you have to differentiate levels of performance. If you can't the difference between great teaching and okay teaching, or okay teaching and bad teaching, you're done. Because you're going to conflate great outcomes and bad outcomes and you're never going to be able to deliver great teaching to the kids that most need it.

Second, we have to hold administrators accountable. Teachers don't evaluate themselves, they didn't make this up and say we like to get off scot free even though our kids aren't learning well. Administrators have never been held accountable for not only developing teachers but being honest about their performance.

Third, we've got to use information about effectiveness for more than just deciding whether teachers get fired. That's all we use it for. If you're better than incompetent, we're done, that's all we look for. But we need to use this information to figure out how kids that have not gotten their fair share of good teachers can get them. And we need to use it for things like salaries and things like assigning teachers to schools and things like if we have to do layoffs, which I hope we don't, we cannot be laying off teacher of the year candidates and keeping people that are barely conscious on the job. We did that this year. We worked with a district this year that laid off nine teachers of the year nominees in a single year.

And fourth, when somebody is not doing a good job you have to do something about it. We have to intervene. That means developing teachers that are good to be great, but it also means intervening when somebody is horrible. There was an article in the *New Yorker* published two weeks ago that said, the trial that happens in New York City when a teacher is incompetent, the average length of that trial is longer than a capital murder trial, longer than the OJ Trial, for one teacher. That is crazy. Think about how many kids are being hurt while we do that for one single person.

So the message I have is we already have teachers in all these classrooms, we already supposedly have systems to manage teacher quality. We need to focus on executing on those things and getting out of the big lie, being honest about what teacher effectiveness is. And then making it more equitable so the kids that previously have been getting far less than their fair share get at least their fair share, and if it were up to me more than their fair share of really effective teachers.

Ted Mitchell:

Tim, before Howard starts, what's the single biggest impediment in the districts you've worked?

Tim Daly:

The single biggest impediment is the culture of adults all pretending that they communally are doing okay. You think that it might be one group of adults or the other, but when you dig down beneath the surface you find its most of them.

Ted Mitchell:

Okay, thanks. Howard.

Howard Fuller:

First of all I want to thank the Arthur Blank Family Foundation and Rebecca and the Philanthropy Roundtable for inviting me to be here. My job tonight is to try to get us as we talk about all of this stuff to focus in on the issues of race and class. And every time I've talked about this there are two things that like haunt me. The first one is that on February 1, 1960, four students from A&T sat down at a lunch counter and demanded to be served. And here we are in 2009, the same Black students can sit down at a lunch counter and be welcomed and they can't read the menu. And I want to know how did we allow this to happen?

And the second thing is in 1978, Ron Edmonds said, we can whenever and wherever we choose successfully teach all children who's schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need to know to accomplish that task. Whether or not we do it must finally depend upon how we feel about the fact that we have not done it so far.

And so fundamentally what we're talking about folks, is political will. What we're talking about is how we feel about other people's children. And so, I mean, I'm all for Race to the Top, I applaud the Secretary and the President, both of whom I support and admire for what they're doing, but at the end of the day my question is in whose interest is this race going to be conducted? Because at the end of the day the question is who is really going to benefit from Race to the Top? And I see all of these great ideas and I really support the work that Tim has done, but to me the question is are you going to change the power relationships that exist in these school districts and in these communities. Because if you're going to leave the same people in charge who've been in charge, how is it that we somehow expect that all of a sudden the interest of poor children is going to be of paramount concern to them? I don't think so. And I think we're fooling ourselves, because these people are going to go after the money like they always do, and I can tell you for sure that one thing that school districts are good at is sucking up reform.

And when they get through sucking it up it ain't going to look nothing like what you thought it was because that's what they do. And so, I mean, you know I just, I mean I admire people who, I particularly admire people like Dr. Hall who stay at this for year after year after year, but I just got to say that you know for most situations there has to be a way to fundamentally alter the structures, the processes, and most important the organized interests that protect things that we know do not help kids.

So, when people say well what do you think should be done? Well I just want to propose in addition to working to change the existing structure, I also want to put in a word for creating alternative structures. And so to me charter schools represent the possibility of alternative structures, because what it does is it gives people an opportunity to create new schools. And to create ways to bring new people into the space as people say these days, into the space to do something different. But where race and class comes into all of this is education is about liberation. And I believe that people can't be liberated if they're not in the process. And so one of the things that we've got to insure is that as we create new schools, high performance schools; that we have to also focus in on trying to make sure that Black and Brown people are in charge of some of these schools; and that they get access to some of the social capital that White people get access to as you try to develop these schools. Because if ten, fifteen years from now we look at the charter sector and I want you all to know and Tim and other people know this. And the people like you know Feinberg and David and all the people at KIP and Uncommon Schools, these are all friends of mine, but I want to be real clear. If at the end of the day the only great schools and great school networks are run by White people, this movement will be a failure. And if we don't figure out a way to insure that, that does not happen, trust me, there's going to be a rebellion against these schools by the very communities that these schools are set up to serve.

The second thing I'm going to say and this you cannot change this stuff ultimately without giving low income and working class people the power to choose. The hypocrisy about choice is stunning. You go into all of these rooms where talk, talk, talk, talk, talk, about how important these poor kids are, etc. etc. Many of these people, their kids are taken care of, but when you start talking about well how about giving low income and

working class people some of these choices, everybody got all of these reasons why you can't do that.

I'll never forget I was at an editorial meeting in *The New York Times* and this woman was like on me about vouchers, which I wasn't supposed to talk about tonight. But she was, so excuse me.

Ted Mitchell:

That's my question, what about vouchers, Howard?

Howard Fuller:

I'm only going to mention the V word one time. So she was on me about all this, you know you support vouchers and other. I can't support vouchers because it don't help all the kids, blah, blah, blah. I'm like first of all, lady, and I took this for about an hour. I said, look here, first of all lady, I don't know you, I don't know if you've got any kids, but I believe that if you do have kids ain't none of them in school in the South Bronx. And the second thing I want to say to you is I come from the Harriet Tubman School. And Harriet Tubman got up every day, saying I want to end slavery, but in the meantime I got a moral responsibility to rescue every slave that I can. I get up every day saying I want to change this whole system, but in the meantime I have a moral responsibility to create as many avenues as I can to rescue as many kids as we can while we're developing the next five year plan and the next five year plan. Because in America, if you have money and schools do not work for your kids, you're either going to move to places where they do work or you're going to put your kids in private schools and you don't care what kind of government reports come out.

Next thing is that I just, I just believe that unless we operate in the interest of the children and their families no amount of structural reform is going to get us there. Because one of the things that worries me today about charter schools and I tell charter school people this. I'm going to tell them tomorrow night when I speak in New Orleans. We have these charter school needs, I'm starting to hear a lot of the same stuff that I hear from people who are in the regular schools – oh, you know we've got dysfunctional families, oh, you know it's so hard. My whole thing is hell, we knew it was hard, that's why we created the movement. And so you can't start whining now about it's hard. It's supposed to be hard. What we said though was if we create these schools we can do better. We

now got to prove that we can do better because what we're learning is it's harder than we thought it was to create great schools. But unless we are absolutely and relentlessly and totally committed to creating great schools for these children, unless we refuse to let the fact that they're poor and what their life chances are begin to affect our concept of what they're capable of achieving then we're not going to be successful.

So I mean, I think Race to the Top presents a great opportunity but it only presents a great opportunity if we're going to combine it with some empowerment of families in very different ways. Only if we're also going to make sure that the same people who raced us to the bottom are not going to be in charge of racing us to the top. And then unless we are relentlessly honest about that, what's going to happen is it will be a group of you all who will get together in another room somewhere ten years from now to complain about Race to the Top. This is too great of an opportunity for us to let the same old things that we always do hijack Race to the Top. Thank you.

Ted Mitchell:

Thanks, Howard. (Applause) So I'm going to greet that with a trivial question. One of the ways that and Tim talked about the great lie. One of the more modest lies is the lie that's told by schools to parents – your kid is doing fine, right? Do you think that the kind of new transparency, visibility of teacher performance and actually measuring students against a common core standard can change some of that power dynamic and reduce the ability of that modest lie to keep parents who would otherwise be outraged complacent?

Howard Fuller:

I mean I hope that it will, Ted. The problem is for many of the parents that I interact with on a regular basis they're understanding of some of this stuff that we you know converse about all the time. When what they're trying to do is to like save their children's lives, at like a real level. I'm not saying that people don't understand it, I'm just saying that when we are transparent we're going to have to figure out very creative ways to make sure that parents get it. And then the most important thing is once they get it, if they don't have any power to do anything about it, what difference does it make that we then now explain to them how bad your child is doing but you know what? Send them back here tomorrow.

Ted Mitchell:

So Michael, we forgot to tell you that follow Howard is challenging. You should have gotten on the call earlier when we were deciding the order. Michael Horn.

Michael Lomax:

Well thank you. It's a privilege to be here and I want to thank the Arthur Blank Family Foundation and the Philanthropy Roundtable and all the work that Rebecca and her staff have done to put this event together and inviting me to be on a panel of such esteem people. And Ted, you're right about I should have been on that call earlier but, I'll do my best. I think that there's a lot of agreement among us about what's been said here so far. And what I want to talk about is that so first there's really no magic bullet solution to this. This is hard work as Howard said. This is going to take time, it's going to be hard and we have to commit to it. And I think one of the crucial issues that I want to address today is actually the fundamental structure of our education system itself. We in essence today have a school system that is akin to an eight track player in an iPod world. What I mean by that is basically our school system was set up over a century ago, modeled along the factory system. And the very purpose of it was to deliver monolithic, one size fits all education to batches of students to prepare them for a job in the factory for most of them. And it does this really, really well.

There's a problem however. We are not asking our school system to do that anymore, we're asking them to educate every single child so that they can realize their fullest potential. And that's an incredibly different job and it's one for which the school system we have today was not built. And yet we ask it to do it. Instead, we need a system that can customize for different student's distinct needs, their distinct ways of learning and so forth. And yet the economics of this factory model system compels standardization which flies in the face for this need for customization.

So how do we transform? In the book that Ted referenced earlier *Disrupting Class* and in our ongoing work at the nonprofit Innosight Institute, Clayton, Curtis and I talked about the potential of online learning to create a much more student centric system. Online learning has this potential because you could have one path for Michael Horn learned physics, a completely different path for Clayton Christiansen to learn it. And so forth. Ted and I can go at different paces within an online medium, we could see

different learning objects that would intrinsically motivate us in different ways. And this platform could allow for exciting video games, simulations, lectures for those who wanted that. Offline work, it wouldn't all be online, some really robust customization in affordable fashion. But this raises a bit of a mystery. Computers have been around for a couple of decades in education and we've certainly been putting them into classrooms and they haven't transformed a thing. Schools, classrooms look still fundamentally the same way, so how would we implement this? Here we take a page from our work in disruptive innovation theory, which is to say implement it disruptively.

So what's a disruptive innovation? Just to quickly go over it, it's basically one that starts off as not as good as the existing system by the old metrics of that system. But comes in and offers this new value proposition, it's more affordable, you can customize, it's more convenient, it extends accessibility to far more people, it's much more reliable. And it starts around the niches of an industry, plants itself there, and gradually gets better and better and better until it transforms and flips over the system. We've seen it happen it computers with the personal computer disrupting mainframes. Toyota automobiles have disrupted Ford and General Motors. We see it consistently and consistently. Community colleges are in the process of disrupting state universities and online universities are coming up underneath the community colleges.

Now where would these areas of non consumption, these niche areas where the alternative is nothing at all, so the disruption looks great be in the school system? Well it turns out that there's lots of pockets. The first one I want to talk about is in advance courses. Twenty five percent of our schools do not offer an advance course. Defined as anything above Algebra II, anything above Biology, any Honors English course period and yet there are students within those schools who would clamor for that opportunity to take those courses. Say nothing of the advance placement courses that we need to be offering them.

Now this is a big opportunity and if you look at the State of Georgia and you think about teacher effectiveness, don't even think about effectiveness for a second, just look at highly qualified which is a different meaning. There are eighty-eight highly qualified physics teachers in the State of Georgia and there are four hundred-forty high schools.

How are you going to solve that problem and offer online learning as a solution to present every student with a highly effective teacher?

Secondly, credit recovery. Huge issue for urban school systems. Students fail a course and right now there's really no recourse for them to make it up. You can offer them an online course instead to allow them to make up this course and progress. Georgia Virtual School is set up to do this within this state and there's lots of other players coming online to do this.

And then the third area of non consumption is the one we've been reading quite a bit about lately, which is dropouts; 59,000 dropouts in the Class of 2008 in Georgia alone last year. These are students who are not being served at all, not receiving any education. And yet if we can offer them online learning opportunities so that they can learn anywhere, anytime, anyplace and snap them into alternative school models much as communities and schools has done. I think there's some people here from communities and schools who have been doing this work. And offer them these learning opportunities with all the other supports that they need in their lives. This is a real opportunity to start to transform the system. And we're seeing this happen nationwide and we need to focus a lot of our efforts on pushing it forward, making it far more student centric than it is today, more engaging, more robust. Tie in assessments to inform learning. And in essence this provides the ultimate in choice to students because they're no longer bound by geography, income, race, any of these things. They have access to be able to choose the teacher, the school that they want within their own community and online learning provides that for them.

Now, it knits into Race to the Top in some really exciting ways that can leverage off of common standards being critical to allow for the customization. Teacher effectiveness is a huge part of online learning and you can start to solve a lot of the human capital problems through offering online learning pathways. Data collection is an exciting part of online learning because we can capture far more than a test score now. Every single interaction can be captured. And of course for the school turnarounds, I've just talked a lot about credit recovery and alternative schools, snapping them into hybrid models or what's starting to become known as 'bricks and clicks'. And I think this is a really

exciting possibility to actually transform our school system to allow for that customization and choice for every single child regardless of where they live.

Thank you.

Ted Mitchell:

Michael, quick question. Technology is often a place where we think of the private capital markets, sort of being the major moving forces.

Michael Lomax:

Yeah.

Ted Mitchell:

Do you think that we can rely on private capital markets to do the same kind of investing that they've done to build technological infrastructure and make it easier for these platforms to proliferate?

Michael Lomax:

That's a good question. So I think in certain areas the answer is yes. You've seen some companies like K-12 Inc. come into the market quite sizably. It's interesting that all the online universities do have for profit players now in K-12. So private funding is making an impact there. On the other hand, in terms of pushing for that quality and going much more to the engaging measures, the next generation assessments which are critical and private capital I doubt will do. And video games and so forth within these online platforms. I think foundations have a really important role to play there and you're seeing it. Florida Virtual School just brought forth the first full video game based American History course. Sort of when I conceptualize video games and learning I think of well it will be a little homework assignment there. Fully online, fully video game based. I think you probably, not probably, you definitely need foundations to be pushing this forward and making it truly student centric.

Ted Mitchell:

Thank you. Please join me before we turn to our respondents in thanking the panelists. (Applause) For certainly provocative ideas and I was looking over my shoulder and watched our respondents taking notes and so I think that it's provoked some, at least some note taking or is that a grocery list?

A:

To do.

Ted Mitchell:

To do, to do. And I don't want to give short shrift to our respondents but because they are so well known to many of you in the Atlanta Community I'll do just the briefest.

So Beverly Hall is the outstanding Superintendent of the Atlanta Public Schools and I think stands as testimony to what an engaged superintendent working in a district with a can do attitude, can do over time. Remarkable tenure, and I think the very best big city school superintendent in America. (Applause)

I have my resume here.

Michael Lomax is a well known, not only in this community but across the country as the distinguished President and Chief Executive officer of the United Negro College Fund, which is and has been the nation's largest minority higher education assistance organization. Michael is also ubiquitous for us in school reform in America, serving on countless boards and organizations and providing each one of them with excellent advise, wise service and terrific leadership. (Applause)

And Larry Schall, the President of Oglethorpe University is recovering lawyer.

Larry Schall:

Fully recovered.

Ted Mitchell:

Fully recovered. Excellent. And has since his election to office in 2005 done a remarkable job at Oglethorpe; particularly positioning Oglethorpe as one of the centers in the region for public service and civic engagement. And I think I would mark as one of the single achievements the opening of the Center for Civic Engagement at Oglethorpe, which I think stands as a model for a very different federal program, the Serve America Act, which we can organize a separate panel around. Larry, thank you. Welcome. (Applause)

So Barbara, what do you think?

Beverly Hall:

Barbara?

Ted Mitchell:

Beverly. So you could say I think your resume should stay right in that folder. (laughter)

Thank you, Beverly.

Beverly Hall:

Thank you, Ted for that very generous introduction. And I too want to thank the Arthur Blank Family Foundation for hosting this and bringing together really some of the most innovative thinkers in the country. And for me it's a privilege to have an opportunity to try to respond from where I sit as a practitioner in the group here to what I've heard. I'm going to be brief because I know that my colleagues probably have much to add. But I kept asking myself as I listened here, how does that match up to where we are now in Atlanta Public Schools? And I think it's fair enough to say, Tim that you're a little younger than me. And why I bring that up is not because I want to, but to make this point. You know when I started in this profession in 1970 we didn't know what teacher effectiveness really looked like. And I think as I listen to you I said in my State of the System Address to many of the people in this room a couple of weeks ago that what we are working on now in Atlanta is trying to put an effective teacher in every classroom, in every school. And I said that because we believe that by and large now just about all of our schools would be classified as effective in that we don't have the kind of turmoil and we are seeing in some progress and growth in student outcomes. But to your point, we will never get to where we are, a high performing urban school system, any school system, high performing system if we don't have an effective teacher in every classroom. We couldn't have talked about that a couple of decades ago because we couldn't define effectiveness. So I think the good news here coming out of all of this discussion is that now we absolutely know what an effective teacher looks like, ought to be doing, and that what kinds of outcomes we should be seeing, not just the inputs but the outputs in terms of teacher effectiveness. And so even though it may sound grim when you listen to the statistics, I think and I'll speak for APS, that we are now on a mission to truly come up with a transparent way of defining teacher effectiveness.

And I think the other hopeful piece is that a couple of, about two months ago we surveyed all 3600 teachers in Atlanta Public Schools, 83% of those teachers noted that they would like their incentives linked to student performance outcomes – 83%. Over two-thirds of those teachers do not believe that effective teachers are adequately

rewarded. And when we talked about retention and dismissal, which you talk about in the Widget Effect and I really encourage everyone to read that. And if you had done the study here in Atlanta the results would have been very similar.

Now regarding retention dismissal, 62% of our teachers disagree when they saw the phrase 'that ineffective teachers are consistently removed from the classroom'. And they said they want those ineffective teachers removed.

I don't believe and I think Howard could agree, that a couple of decades ago we would have had these kinds of results on teachers. So I think the teachers are saying they too want effective teachers as their peers, they understand the link between effectiveness and student outcomes and that they want us to go on with making sure that we begin to address it. So as it relates to teacher effectiveness I think we're right where we need to be, the challenge will be what Howard talked about, the political will when we begin to do it. Because even though the teachers have said this, I see one of my elected board members standing in the back and wondering where we're going with this, when we decide that next year we will no longer give everybody a step increase, we have our school board member over here, our state school board member. We can imagine what will happen if we say we want to take that money and really look at linking it really to pay for performance. There's nothing in the state law that prevents us from considering it, but the political will to make that happen is the question mark out there.

And again, I could go on in any of these at length but let me jump over to what Michael was talking about. I think that what Michael is talking about is linked to the whole, what we know about teacher effectiveness. Effective teachers differentiate instructions. Effective teachers use a variety of methods and tools to engage students. What a wonderful time to have to be able to do that now with the technology that's available. The only worry that I have around you know I listened to Clayton the other day on video and of course to you tonight, is that we don't forget that there is a tremendous digital divide that links to again what Howard talked about with race and class.

I meet annually, my senior team and I with our valedictorians and salute-dictorians just before they leave us because they are the ones who have benefitted the most from this system. Therefore they ought to have the most, probably the best to say, but they also should have a lot of, they should have thought a lot about what happened to them along

the journey to this milestone. And this year to our amazement many of those students say they do not have internet access at home. These are the valedictorians and salutatorians. So there is a huge technological divide that as we look to do some of what you're talking about that will have to be factored in, in order for this to really play out.

We also have, initially we have lots of teachers who were not able to implement and use technology in their classrooms. This year we are insisting in social studies, Peter, that in first grade and in kindergarten and in eighth grade that the social studies curriculum be taught really truly integrating technology into the classroom so that we can get a sense of if we put teachers in those classes who really can do it, will they be able to use that to differentiate and make the classroom more engaging and as a result keep the kids more focused on what they're doing.

So initially, at first blush where the speakers meet Atlanta is in those areas that I just mentioned.

Ted Mitchell:

Thank you.

Michael Lomax:

She's handed it off to me.

Ted Mitchell:

You're good to go.

Michael Lomax:

Okay. Well it's good to be here first of all. Let me thank the Blank Foundation and Dena and everyone else for hosting this. Lovely. Pretty nice digs I must say. And I want to thank the Philanthropic Roundtable. I have to say to this panel, you're getting it a whole lot easier than I got on a panel I did for the Philanthropic Roundtable at the Rainbow Room in New York. The format was American Idol and we had to pitch ideas. People had little paddles that they held up. It was demeaning. Now, you know I'm not new to Atlanta, people recognize me as a former, a recovering, recovered elective politician. I thought I had given up you know ignominious and embarrassing situations like that but the Philanthropic Roundtable reminded me of just what I was no longer doing. Thank you.

Fifteen years ago that I got out of politics, but I four years ago, this is my 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. I got you, I'm a little bit ahead of you, since I started teaching in September of 1969, Freshman English at Morehouse College. So I've been at this for a while. And so has UNCF, you know we've been at this for 65 years, founded in 1944 to provide access to college for African American kids. We've done that by supporting 39 privately instructed Black colleges, Morehouse and Spelman, Clark Atlanta here in the city. We've done that through our scholarship programs, awarded 10,000 scholarships to kids, at 1,000 colleges and universities last year. And through our advocacy work we've raised \$3.5 billion over that 65 years, we've graduated 350,000 young men and women. Our focus has been on removing the financial barrier to college. We believe that there is a crisis in this country. If we're going to reach the President's goal of this country once again being the preeminent nation in the world that produces college graduates. We can't do that unless we change what's happening in our K-12 classrooms all around this country. We think the crisis is one of college readiness, our kids are not academically prepared. A hundred kids start elementary school, if they're African American, less than 20% of them will graduate from high school. And less than, I mean the percentage is single digit of those students who will actually graduate from college. It's like a sieve and they're just falling out and then those who persist are not academically prepared, and I'm a living witness. I've tried to teach Freshman English to young men and women who were not academically prepared. I was president of a college in New Orleans before I took the job at UNCF and I remembered valedictorians that we would admit from the New Orleans Public Schools who spent the first year of their college careers at Dillard in remedial courses. So you know what we're doing, what the adults are doing is unacceptable. We have a, let me just say it's unacceptable for all of our children. We have a six year college graduation rate in this country of just over 50% for all Americans, six year. Remember college is supposed to – Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, four years. And for African Americans it's in the 40's. And for African American males it's well below that. So you know the reality is that the status quo is unacceptable and UNCF has decided that it is such a crisis that a big part of the work that we're going to do going forward is going to be to make the case, Howard, to our communities that we have a huge stake in what is not happening right in our classrooms in our elementary, middle and high

schools all across this country. And you know we have outstanding examples of superintendents who are stepping up, but we also have a lot of examples of people who are not. So this is a very important issue and it is one that we as a nation have a big stake in. Because if we don't learn how to educate, how to get to and through college kids of color, who are the pipeline of children in this nation, we will not be preeminent in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we will not be. And the places that are learning to do it are in the Far East, in South Asia and in Western Europe and great for them, but we can do better and we must better. So I believe the solutions are here and I want to as a teacher because that is my profession, I want to say I want to put a stake in the ground that it begins with great teachers. And now what Tim has said is critically important and right now we are putting mediocre teachers, far too many mediocre teachers. And tomorrow we have a wonderful panel that's going to talk about our Schools of Ed Irrelevant. I think that's the title or something along that line. But mediocre graduates of schools of Ed going into classrooms and you know what we put in produces what we get out. And it is people like Tim, it's organizations like Teach for America on who's national board I serve where Dena works as well. I mean if I can say that are showing us that we can get the best and the brightest into our classrooms, set high standards and produce great results. And that's what we've got to do. We have rationed academics for too long. It's been college for some. We have to have a public school system that says high standards for all children. You set a low standard and guess what? That's the standard they'll try to reach. So it's got to be academics for all, we don't ration it and we begin by putting great teachers, effective teachers in our classrooms who will inspire. Because I believe, I can remember Allman Geleson, a graduate of Colby College who made me love literature. And I think everybody in this room can remember a teacher who is just the same. So point one, great teachers, point number two, there's got to be competition.

There's got to be competition and I believe charters may not be the solution for everybody, but they are places where innovation is occurring, extraordinary things are happening. And you know I love Dave Levin and I love Mike Feinberg and I love Kip and I work with them every day and I believe as they believe. That if we teach our kids to work hard and be nice that a whole lot of good stuff will happen in their lives and it will be a lot better classroom. But they're proving that you can take the same kids, poor

kids, kids who don't have access to technology, kids whose parents don't have an education and can't read and you put them in a demanding, structured classroom with an extraordinary teacher and the whole school building is doing the same work and guess what happens? Those kids perform. So I believe we've got to do that and so I think choice, charters, competition it will keep us all honest.

And finally, technology obviously, you know technology will play an incredible role to let us know what these kids are doing, to track them wherever they are, to enable them, to support them. But I just want to say it isn't a replacement for a great teacher. And these schools have got to do more than just academically prepare, they've got to socially prepare these children for life. And that means they've got to teach them to work hard and to be nice, to get along with other people because college readiness isn't just that I can do the 'work', it is also that I'm going to get up in the morning without somebody telling me to get up. I'm going to go to class, I'm going to use my time wisely and that is also part of it. So I believe that you know we've got the answers up here. But I say the challenge is back on you as philanthropists that you've got to look at those things out there which are not just replicating the status quo, not just reinforcing it, but are disruptive, which are challenging the status quo because what we have in this country is not working and that's what we've got to invest in. And that's the role of philanthropy I think is to help us figure out you know where are the new models for the future, how do we make something happen better and how do we produce different results for kids. And if we do, you know we may be a little stronger and we'll be living up to the UNCF motto that "A mind is a terrible thing to waste". Thank you. (Applause)

Ted Mitchell:

Excellent. Larry, over to you.

Larry Schall:

What a spectacular evening. I'm honored to be among you and to be among all of you. To the extent that I would sort of line up you know on the side of a debate and I don't think this is actually a debate but I do fall under the great teacher camp. I think that's true of elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, I know it's true of colleges. We have all 99% excellent teachers at Oglethorpe. (laughter) But I think and I'm sitting on the far left and I'm honored to have that seat. And I think if we were to get up and the

music was to play I'm sure I would end up here. But Howard's comments sort of made me think, really sort of question the issue of will the reforms that I think will be spurred by Race to the Top, I mean I think there's no question that amount of money will, you know does get people's attention. But will those reforms in the end you know change the system? Because there have been efforts to reform before and not to the extent, I mean there's a lot more money, but there's been a lot of money, so. And I think you used the words, 'political will'. And I think it is a question of political will. I was driving home from New York on Sunday afternoon, I think on Monday I guess it was and we were listening to public radio for twelve hours. You know public radio in West Virginia is really interesting but it was all about the healthcare debate, not all twelve hours but a whole bunch of it. And at the end of that we sort of wondered at the end of all this healthcare debate will we have a different healthcare system? And it doesn't feel like we will in any significant degree. And that is a matter of political will I think. And then we began to talk about our eco system is falling apart and where is the will to change that. In Atlanta we've got, you know we have no water and traffic is miserable and where is the will to change that? In the State of Georgia around education, you know Georgia is the only state in the union that has no need based aid for its citizens to go to college, the only state in the union. And meanwhile we have this wonderful thing of the Hope Scholarship that private colleges benefit a little bit from, that public colleges benefit a tremendous amount from that is sending our sons and daughters to Georgia colleges for free when we can afford to pay for our sons and daughters to go to college by and large. Yet for students who have no means to go to college, who are struggling to graduate from the schools that we're talking about, many of them can't go because there's no need based aid in the State Georgia. And that's a matter of political will.

So I sort of leave it there and I don't know, it does seem to me that you know there are wonderful things about democracies, there's probably no better way of governing oneself under a democracy but there are issues in a democracy and I think one of the issues that we're facing now as a country is this question of political will around issues which will affect our children and affect our grandchildren. And we don't tend to do anything about it until you know the stock market collapses. I have a niece who teaches in New Orleans who's a TFA teacher in New Orleans. You know that system had collapsed long before

Katrina came and put it under and it took something like Katrina to actually spur some reform there and whether that will be lasting reform or not, but at least it's better than it was. So I don't know what in this realm, I don't know what a collapsed educational system would look like other than the one we have because it is collapsed and yet there seems to be not much political will to do anything about it.

Ted Mitchell:

And I think the tragic answer, I think to connect a theme that I know from public and private conversations, the tragic answer to that is when kids who look like my kids are obviously failed that's when we'll declare a crisis.

What I'd like to do is open this up to comments and questions and we're kind of at the pointy end of our time so I'd like to get a couple of questions and some responses in. And if you want to just feel free to make your way to the microphone because we're going to try to capture everybody on the webcast as well. So if you could travel to the microphone rather than the other way around that would be great.

Beverly Ferguson:

Good evening. Beverly Ferguson, former classroom, educator, business advocate for education in metro Atlanta. My question is since we all seem to agree that an effective teacher is key in the research and the body of knowledge supports that. What are your thoughts on teacher tenure? In Georgia it was abolished and then it was reinstated, do you think across the country that would make a difference in getting an effective teacher if we were to abolish teacher tenure?

Ted Mitchell:

How about if I ask Tim and Beverly to respond to that one?

Beverly Hall:

Well I absolutely was happy when I arrived in Georgia and tenure had been removed because I knew why we had gone to a tenure system. There was a time when there was a lot of you know angst in terms of how teachers were treated and whether or not they were treated fairly and you know job security, etc. and so I think that's the history that led to tenure. But when you think of tenure for life, I don't know of any other profession that would offer you that and then regardless of how you perform from that point on you have that right. And so I clearly believe that when tenure is granted if it has to be granted

because that's the law of the land, that we ought to again look very closely at the effectiveness of the teacher and that we ought to postpone the granting of tenure if the teacher is not really demonstrating effectiveness but we think there is potential. If we think there's no potential we ought to counsel that person into another career. So it should be something that's really earned and I also think it's something that should be revisited if you earn it over time, it's not yours for life. But in the best of all worlds if I had my druthers, if I was in charge, I think we now know that good teachers will be respected, principals will want them in their schools, they will not have to worry about being treated unfairly. If you're demonstrating that you're a good performer and I think we should have a performance based program annually like we do in every other, just about every other profession.

Tim Daly:

I'll be quick. We learn two things when we were researching this Widget Effect Report. One thing was that tenure came into existence in the 1910's and 20's. And it was controversial almost immediately in the exact same way that it's controversial today. There are articles that were written in the 30's that complained about how it's made it impossible to dismiss teachers. So clearly, this is something that is on people's minds. The second thing that we learn is that there's different standards in every state, in some states it's really easy to get rid of teachers, in some states it's almost legally impossible. What is common is that no matter how easy or hard it is, people hardly ever do it. So even when people are probationary and you just have to sign the form and take it to them, we found principals that didn't have the courage to go and say, 'I'm sorry, it's not working, we're not bringing you back'. That was enough barrier, let alone the legal stuff. So I think what most people define tenure as is due process. I think there should be process in place to make sure that somebody is treated fairly and that it's not easy to discriminate or be arbitrary, but I think that has to be kept reasonable. And all of the process is meaningless if we're not actually assessing the effectiveness of the people as Beverly said and being honest about it. So I think let's fix the process stuff, but let's also remember that it's our job to do the evaluations.

Michael Lomax:

Ted, I just as a point, it seems that you know can make tenure of the boogeyman here and maybe it is. But I go back to that early comment that Tim made at the beginning about how bad the assessment of teachers is.

Ted Mitchell:

Right, right.

Michael Lomax:

I mean, you know if you go in and say 99% of your teachers are doing great work, don't blame tenure as what's at fault. I mean we're not telling the truth about the performance of the adults in the classroom. What amazes me about this conversation is that you know we're prepared to evaluate kids, I mean A, B, C, D, but we will not evaluate adults. And I'm with Howard, let's tell it in ways that people get it.

Ted Mitchell:

Yeah.

Michael Lomax:

You've got a failing teacher in a failing school. And I believe if you say that to a parent regardless of income or socioeconomic or whatever, they're going to understand what that means. And if you tell them you've got a great teacher they're going to go in there with the expectation that what that teacher does, they should be supporting no matter how bad the performance of that teacher really is.

Ted Mitchell:

Yes, that's great. Thanks, Michael. And I apologize this but can we do two quick questions and responses. And I don't know if you guys are willing to stick around, but if you are that would be great. And I apologize but I think if we could work it out that way that would be great.

Pat Willis:

I'm lucky to be one of them. I'm Pat Willis, I'm Executive Director of Voices for Georgia's Children, a public policy and advocacy organization for the full extent of issues related to kids. And I agree with the notions of professional development and excellent teachers and so on, which is going to take a while for us to get there. In the meantime we can absolutely identify kids who are probably not going to graduate. And we know that many of those kids are identified by other systems by the Children of

Family Services, Juvenile Justice, Mental Health, we have Pregnant Teens. We know how poorly those kids are going to do. I guess I would ask one, do the reforms that you propose overcome those problems, and two, how would you like to see these other systems working more with education in making sure that kids early on when they're identified are getting what they need to perform?

Ted Mitchell:

So can I take that one? One of the things that Tim suggested early in his remarks was that we all, in addition to the Widget Effect and Disrupting Class, that we go to school on the 149 pages of the Race to the Top application. I think you'd be encouraged in that application to know that in this category of data systems the more robust a state's data system, robustness is how you can connect those things, the higher the point value will be for a state. So the better a state is able to do exactly what you're talking about, not only is it better for kids which the fundamental purpose, but it is very attractive in this particular competition. And so in that way I think the federal government is really looking at finding all of these indicators and putting them together.

Anne Ostholthoff:

Hi, my name is Anne Ostholthoff, I'm the founder sixteen years ago in '92 in Chicago of a nonprofit, Creating Pride. Started working with children directly; I'm a marketer and painter and it took me four years to figure out that you're going to have to get to the teacher if you want to get to the kid. And today we have teachers coming to our training who stand up and say that their administrator was going to punish them basically and not pay them for that day of work because they were there in that training. We have schools waiting to go to training that their administrations aren't paying for them to go to training. The work we do is based in Parker Palmer and Philip Schlechty, a lot of engaging work in bringing creativity in the classroom.

We see on the other hand teachers performing great and we have talked tonight about what great teaching looks like. We've talked about the need for teachers to work hard and be nice. We have talked about teacher's readiness to have colleagues that are competent and I see that all the time. Sixteen years, hundreds of teachers, every one of them wants to be better, they want to be stronger and they want colleagues that are. Are there any common standards being written anywhere to measure teacher effectiveness in

a way that would help those in professional development to target goals and strategies that are appropriate, tested, relevant?

Ted Mitchell:

Yes. So I think again, so this is going to sound like an ad for Race to the Top, but I think and one of the notions that Tim has taught me is the sort of getting to that kind of core metric of is a teacher providing at least one year's academic gain for one year in the classroom? And if you start there and if you tie that gain to a set of common core internationally benchmarked standards you begin to have a very powerful tool that smart administrators and smart and engaged faculties can use together to improve teacher performance and student performance. And so there is a way that this program challenges states to sign onto exactly that set of at least the basic framing architecture of the set of common metrics for looking at teacher performance and being able to then seek ways to improve it.

John?

John :

I want to thank our panel tonight. And for those of you who want to compel your friends to watch, what you watched tonight, visit [Blank Foundation.org](http://BlankFoundation.org). We're going to get the video up as quickly as we can. Thanks to those of you watching, I hope around the world on the webcast. For those of you in the room, join us for a reception and let's give a thanks to all of our guests.

Ted Mitchell:

And thank you all very much.

Applause.