

Charter Schools, Market Capitalism, and Obama's Neo-liberal Agenda

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Introduction

Presently, there are over 4,700 charter schools in 40 states, in the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, with most in low-income urban communities, serving over 1.2 million students (NCES, 2010; CREDO, 2009), with tens of thousands more students on waiting lists (US Department of Education, 2008). A wide array of institutions, some public and some not, manage charter schools: social service agencies, universities, philanthropic organizations, religious schools (that remove religious symbols), previously tuition-charging privates, for-profit firms, parents, community members, and educators. These diverse stakeholders underscore the structural and economic changes that have resulted from the expansion of charter schools.

In this paper, we analyze Obama's education policies as they relate to charter schools. First, we show how his policies continue previous neoconservative and neoliberal educational initiatives that marketize schooling. We then discuss Arne Duncan's role in charter schools, both in his capacity as former CEO of Chicago Public Schools and in his capacity as Secretary of Education. Using evidence from empirical studies, we argue that the data supporting charter schools are underwhelming. Despite Obama's invested hope, charter schools have not given children greater access to quality education, nor have they closed the "achievement gap." While the durable consequences of Obama's charter policies remain unknown, research foreshadows the fate of American public schooling during and beyond Obama's tenure as president. Market approaches will likely continue to leave special needs students and English language learners with fewer choices than their peers enjoy. We speculate on the future of public education in capitalized school markets and argue that charter schools are an intermediary step in the larger neoliberal and conservative agenda to privatize schools and funnel tax dollars into the market.

Neoliberalism and School Choice

For decades now, neoliberal economics has been reshaping democratic agendas by invoking market discourses (e.g. choice) to describe both the problem and utility of public schools (McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2001). Neoliberal discourses commodify public education by depicting it as an economic drain linked to an unsustainable welfare state (Burchell, 1996). In fact, in neoliberal societies, “there is nothing distinctive or special about education or health; they are services and products like any other, to be traded in the marketplace” (Peters, 1999, p. 2).

Such market-oriented thinking has won charter schools support across the political spectrum. Neoliberals and conservatives alike favor them for operating semi-autonomously from state educational mandates. Like Chubb and Moe (1990), who coauthored *Politics, Markets and America's Schools*, an influential book in the school choice movement, proponents of charter schools, contend that public education is overly bureaucratized and politicized, and, thus, unsalvageable in its traditional form. Neoliberals maintain that curricular independence holds the promise of closing the racialized achievement and graduation gaps. For conservatives, a main selling point of charter schools is that they are not required to employ unionized teachers. The convergence of neoliberal and conservative ideologies on the issue of public education has created a sociopolitical climate in which traditional public schools are assailed as a failing public goods and charter schools are trumpeted as entrepreneurial innovations.

For most of their nearly 20-year history, charter schools have also enjoyed access to federal funds. In 1994, at end of Clinton's first term in office, the Department of Education (DOE) began funding charter school conferences, state programs, and charter school research through the Public Charter Schools Program (PCSP). The PCSP was subsequently amended by the *Charter School Expansion Act* of 1998 and by George W. Bush's *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 in order to provide “support for the planning, program design, and initial implementation of charter schools” (US Department of Education, 2004, p. 2). Also in 2001, the DOE established the Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Program to provide competitive grants for entities seeking funds to enhance their credit to secure loans for the acquisition, construction, renovation, and/or operation of charter school facilities (Temkin, Hong, Davis, & Bavin, 2008, p. xi).

Following his predecessors, Obama allocated \$4.35 billion to the *Race to the Top* grant competition to entice states into adopting, among other policies, the expansion of charter schools.

During both *Race to the Top* competition rounds, state applications “receive[d] points based on the extent to which their laws do not prohibit or effectively inhibit increase of the number of high-performing charter schools” (Department of Education, 2010, p.24). Early on, Obama made it clear that states with restrictions or caps on the total number of charter schools would be at a competitive disadvantage for federal funds, “[R]ight now, there are many caps on how many charter schools are allowed in some states, no matter how well they’re preparing our students. That isn’t good for our children, our economy, or our country” (White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2009, para. 30).

In the end, 41 states and the District of Columbia submitted applications, with only 11 states and D.C. receiving funds. All the states that received federal funds had heeded the administration’s warnings, and eliminating or raising their caps. Given that nearly all of the states that applied relaxed restrictions on charter schools, the *Race to the Top* is the most far-reaching presidential policy enacted on behalf of charter schools.

Arne Duncan and the Market-Based Reform of Chicago Public Schools

Obama’s choice of Arne Duncan as Secretary of Education, over progressive educator Linda Darling-Hammond (2010), made clear that he intended to advance free-market models of school choice. As CEO of Chicago Public Schools, Duncan championed *Renaissance 2010*, a plan to shutdown underperforming city schools and open new, autonomous schools (as possible charters) by 2010. *Renaissance 2010*, which Duncan and Chicago Mayor Richard Daley launched in 2004, was developed in collaboration with the Commercial Club of Chicago (CCC), a group of leaders from corporate, financial, philanthropic, and civic sectors.

During Duncan’s tenure, 44 traditional schools failed to meet the academic standards and were shutdown (Gwynne & de la Torre, 2009). Chicago experienced an increase in both *public* and *private* charter schools and militarized public schools (Au, 2009). The closing or turning around of schools also resulted in experienced teachers losing their jobs and being replaced at the new schools by younger, cheaper, and less-experienced teachers (Brown et al., 2009).

Renaissance 2010 has destabilized working-class and low-income communities (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Children experienced school closings as a crisis of displacement as they transferred to other schools, which led to instability and correlated to an increase in youth violence (Brown et al., 2009). Thousands of residents, including many in public housing, were

displaced as middle class families were lured to the city with offers of privatized choice through a lottery-based charter system (Brown, et al., 2009). Critics of *Renaissance 2010* charge that charter schools in are both the outgrowth of, and stimulus for, urban gentrification (Brown et al., 2009; Lipman, 2009).

During Duncan's tenure, low-income communities also had to contend with an increase of military charter schools, specifically the five military academies that made the JROTC program in Chicago the largest in the country (Brown et al, 2009). The cadet programs are in predominantly Black and Latina/o middle schools, and four of the five military high schools are in Black communities (Brown et al, 2009). These military schools, which Duncan lauded for their discipline and leadership (Tareen, 2007), train and socialize children as young as fifteen years old for possible careers in the military. Such militarization of schools is in line with neoliberal and conservative policies that both impoverish poor African American children and target them for military participation through what Berlowitz (2000) calls 'economic conscription and coercion'.

Under *Renaissance 2010*, participatory democracy was a casualty. Many parents who were not invited to participate in the school closing process found decision-making to be cloistered, secretive, and undemocratic. Bob Peterson, a Milwaukee public school teacher and a founding editor of *Rethinking Schooling*, points out that Duncan alienated many parents by closing schools without following consistent hearing procedures, only to open up "boutique" charter schools (Democracy Now, 2009a). Also ignored in the school closing discussions were the democratically elected representatives of the Local Schools Councils (LSC). The willful disenfranchisement of parents stands in sharp contrast with Duncan's claim that the CPS "...advanced school reform's earliest goals of 'more local control'" (Duncan, 2006, p. 458).

Charter schools in Chicago handed public moneys to more private corporate sponsors than ever before. Of the first 57 charter schools in Chicago, 42 are corporate, 3 are teacher initiated, 9 are community centered, and 3 are university based (Lipman, 2009). Two years after *Renaissance 2010* was initiated, Ayers and Klonsky (2006), two renowned educational scholars and developers of the small schools movement, cautioned that existing research did not justify having Educational Management Organizations (EMOs), or profit-oriented companies, run new Renaissance charter schools: "There is no evidence or educational research whatsoever to show that privately run charters can produce better results, but, never mind, the bandwagon is rolling,

and the district — with its \$4.6-billion budget — is climbing aboard. ... This is fact-free, faith-based reform at its worst.” The funding of EMOs is especially telling given that *Renaissance 2010* provided no funds for traditional CPS schools or support for CPS teachers (Lipman & Hursh, 2007).

While corporate, foundation, and political leaders hailed Duncan as a no-nonsense, free-market reformer, the praise was unwarranted. Overall, students’ achievement at the charter schools was not significantly different from matched comparison students in traditional schools (Booker, Gill, Zimmer, & Sass, 2009; Young et al., 2009). Also, *The Consortium on Chicago School Research*, a nonpartisan group at the University of Chicago, found that closure of low-performing schools reshuffled 8 out of every 10 students into similarly low-performing schools, and that when math scores were compared with other urban school districts, charter students were not amongst the highest performers (Gwynne & de la Torre, 2009).

A RAND study found that Chicago charter schools attracted and served students who performed at higher achievement levels prior to entering charter schools than their counterparts enrolled in traditional schools (Booker, Gill, Zimmer, & Sass, 2009). Also, a 2006-2008 study comparing traditional public schools with *Renaissance 2010* schools found that the latter had a smaller proportion of bilingual students attending (24% versus 36%) (Young et al., 2009). A similar pattern emerged with special needs students—with 11% at *Renaissance 2010* schools compared to the 15% in traditional public schools. Furthermore, when controlled for grade level, the students attending traditional public schools were older—a demographic that is statistically more likely to perform lower and to drop out—than those attending *Renaissance 2010* schools.

It is also worth noting that by its very design, *Renaissance 2010* gave the impression of far greater improvement than was actually the case. As Saltman (2007) explains, “By closing and reopening schools, Renaissance 2010 allows the newly privatized schools to circumvent NCLB AYP progress requirements, thus making the list of Chicago’s ‘need improvement’ schools shorter. This allows the city to claim improvement by simply redefining terms” (p. 135). All this evidence challenges Duncan’s claim that: “For students trapped in chronically struggling schools... cutting-edge new schools under Renaissance 2010 hold out the most promise” (Duncan, 2006, p. 458).

Charter School Myths: Innovation, Achievement, and Equity

In public comments, Duncan has referred to charters schools as “laboratories of innovation” that produce better classroom practices that can benefit traditional schools (Diamond, 2009, para. 5). However, even as he announced the first round of *Race to the Top* winners, there was plenty of mounting evidence—aside from the data on new *Renaissance 2010* schools—that charter schools, as a whole, were neither innovative, nor better schooling options. Research suggests classroom strategies at charter schools are not innovative, but rather much the same as those developed and used at traditional public schools (Lubienski, 2003). The few innovations observed at charter schools had to do with self-marketing. Even more telling, multi-national data indicates that educational innovation results from ‘public-sector policies’ and *not* from the competition amongst schools encouraged by charter school proponents (Lubienski, 2009).

Students attending charter schools are not faring any better than peers at traditional schools. In a 2007 study, the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research (NCCPPR), a nonpartisan, nonprofit group, found that charter schools in the state perform no better than traditional public schools and concluded “choice” was not a good enough reason to authorize expanding public charter schools (Manuel, 2007). Similarly, a RAND study of Philadelphia’s public schools found that between 1997-2007 children in charter schools did not outperform their traditional school counterparts and that competition from charter schools did not improve traditional public schools (Zimmer, Blanc, Gill, & Christman, 2008). Additionally, the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data shows that when compared to charter school students, traditional public school students in fourth grade scored higher in both reading and mathematics, and that eighth grade traditional public school students scored higher in mathematics and the same in reading (Robelen, 2008). More telling yet, a 2009 Stanford University study of 2,403 charter schools in 15 states found that 37% of the charters had learning gains that were significantly below those of traditional public schools, 46 % showed no difference, and only 17% showed significantly better gains (CREDO, 2009).

An extensive analysis by the Civil Rights Project at UCLA found that charter schools isolate students by class and race (Frankenberg, Siegel-Hawley & Wang, 2010). While nearly one in four charter schools do not provide data on low-income students, available data shows that charter schools with high minority student enrollments have high rates of low-income students. Additionally, the study finds that charter schools are more racially segregated than traditional

schools. Black students attending charter schools face far greater segregation than other students. Latino charter students experience less segregation than Black students, but are under-enrolled in some Western states where they account for the majority of public school students.

Additionally, “In some cases, white segregation is higher in charter schools despite the fact that overall charter schools enroll fewer white students. These trends suggest that charter schools are contributing to white flight in the country’s two most racially diverse regions” (Frankenberg et al., 2010, p. 82). Studies suggest that many charter schools under-serve students who are English language learners (ELLs). Studies of charter schools in New York show that they enroll fewer ELLs and fewer special needs students than the traditional schools they replaced (Advocates for Children, 2002; Pallas & Jennings, 2009). Betts, Rice, Zau, Tang, and Koedel (2006) found that ELLs in San Diego had less access to charter schools because of language barriers in the dissemination and translation of registration materials. Furthermore, they found that parents’ education level correlated with choice, in effect advantaging better-educated and wealthier parents. In a study of Washington D.C. charter schools, Buckley and Schneider (2007) document that ELLs were proportionately underrepresented in 28 of the 37 charters (and special education students in 24 of the 37 charters. In Boston, while ELLs comprised one-fifth of the public school enrollment, they comprised only 4 percent of charter enrollment, and over one third of the Boston charters did not have a single ELL (Ravitch, 2010). Consequently, the relative academic success of many Boston public charter schools (Kane, et al. 2009) may be due to their unrepresentative student populations. More recently, a March 2011 study finds that Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP), which operates nearly 100 schools throughout the country and serves over 25,000 students, enrolled lower rates of ELL students (11.5%) than traditional public schools (19.2%) (Marin, Urschel, & Saxton, 2011).

Unfortunately, large-scale examinations of charter schools’ ELL enrollments are difficult because many charter schools do not provide the federal government with data, resulting in “major gaps in federal data sources” (Frankenberg et al., 2010, p. 5). The lack of data is so extensive that the available “Federal data on charter schools in California, arguably the country’s most significant gateway for immigrants, describe just *seven* ELL students attending its state charter programs” (Frankenberg et al., 2010, p. 5). A study suggests that those California charters that serve ELLs do not provide enough qualified and specialized teachers to fulfill ELL needs (Fuller, Gawlik, Gonzales, Park, & Gibbings, 2003). By not providing qualified teachers,

charter schools violate *Lau v. Nichols*, which guarantees equal access to the core curriculum. The fact that charter schools do a poor job of providing data on ELL students and of hiring qualified teachers raises the question: how committed are they to serving ELL students?

School choice is also resulting in the exclusion of students with special needs, undoing decades of progress toward mainstreaming (Howe & Welner, 2002). Some charter schools are ‘counseling out’ children with disabilities (Rhim & McLaughlin, 2007; Estes, 2006; Fierros & Blomberg, 2005; Grant, 2005; Howe & Welner, 2002). In a survey, 3% of charter schools admitted telling parents of children with disabilities they could not admit their children and 44% of the schools admitted informing parents that their children would be better served at another school (Rhim et al., 2007). A recent study on KIPP schools finds that they have lower rates of disabled children (5.9%) than traditional public schools (12.1%) (Miron et al., 2011).

Many charters employ inexperienced and uncredentialed teachers, who are “are less likely to be knowledgeable about the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), and Free and Appropriate Education (FAE) requirements of the law” (Grant, 2005, p. 71). These teachers are more likely to both teach racial minority students and to refer them for special education services (Cartledge, 2005). Also, a study of 502 charter schools in California found that charter schools have fewer students with special needs than traditional public schools, and that Black students were overrepresented in classes for the severely learning disabled and the emotionally disturbed (Fierros & Blomberg, 2005). The study also found that ethnically diverse students receiving special education services were more likely to be segregated. Given such findings, special education scholars argue that charters only be given to applicants who demonstrate how they will provide the necessary accommodations to students with special needs (Davis, 2005; Obiakor, Beachum, & Harris, 2005).

Given such data, leading educators and scholars question the role of charter schools. Bob Peterson, a teacher and founding editor of *Rethinking Schools*, asserts “...we’re setting up a two-tier system...the most difficult-to-educate kids, a higher percentage of special needs, English language learners, kids who are counseled out of charter schools and voucher schools because of discipline problems—they end up in the public schools, while there’s a self-selected group in the charter schools” (Democracy Now, 2009a). Deborah Meier, who began the small schools movement, concludes that though some charter schools are quality schools, nearly all charter schools are “just alternative private systems within the public sector” (Democracy Now, 2009b,

para. 20). Lastly, Ravitch (2010), a prominent educational historian and a one-time influential proponent of school choice, argues that business-driven educational policies, including the expansion of charter schools, are unlikely to result in meaningful reform and efficiency.

Scaling up good charter schools, as neoliberal and conservative proponents recommend, is likely to prove difficult, if not impossible. Many charter schools operate by relying on parents' "help labor" (Christianakis, n.d.) to keep their costs down and are highly dependent on the financial support of philanthropists (Education Sector, 2009). For example, a predominantly middle-class charter school in Atlanta saved money by having parents contribute 15-40 hours of labor per week (Hankins & Martin, 2006). Additionally, a study found that \$500 million in private donations was needed over the course of a decade for networks of non-profit operators to open approximately 350 charter schools (Education Sector, 2009). More recently, research found that KIPP schools, which George W. Bush and Obama have praised for their standardized test outcomes, receive much more funding from the federal government and private donors than other charters or traditional public schools, resulting in thousands of dollars more in per pupil spending (Miron et al., 2011). Such dependence on private donations, as well as federal funds, raises serious questions about the feasibility and sustainability of charter school expansion.

The Future Consequences of Capitalized School Markets

Undaunted by mounting evidence that charter schools are not educational innovators, private foundations with large sums of money at their disposal, including some of the most well known partisan and bipartisan organizations, such as the Annenberg Foundation, the Ely and Edith Broad Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Gates Foundation, the Heritage Foundation, and the John M. Olin Foundation, are providing charter schools with financial support. The central role of these venture philanthropists, or "philanthrocapitalists" (Ravitch 2010 p. 199), is startling. Monies from foundations, some of which call for charters to be managed like financial portfolios, have funded both start-up and operating costs of individual charter schools and non-profit organizations dedicated to the nationwide expansion of charter schools. Though foundations are involved in one of the most sweeping educational reforms, they cannot be held accountable by voters.

Additionally, charter school supporters continue their attempts to sway public opinion in favor of school choice. They contend charter schools offer parents opportunities to exercise

greater control over their children's schooling options (e.g., Murray, 2010). School choice advocates, however, make little mention of the fact that those with greater economic and political power are positioned to exploit or manipulate educational markets (e.g., see: Bartlett, Frederick, Bulbrandsen, & Murillo, 2008; Scoppio, 2002; Ball, 1998; Whitty & Edwards, 1998) for their gain. As Saltman (2007, p. 141), makes clear:

Privatizers aim to treat the use of public resources as “shopping” by “consumers,” thereby naturalizing the public sector as a market...[M]arkets themselves are hardly neutral and natural but are, on the contrary, hierarchical, human-made political configurations unequally distributing power and control over material resources and cultural value.

That markets include participants with unequal power is evident in the dismantling and privatization of public schools in Chicago. As detailed above, civic and political leaders in Chicago paid little mind to both low-income parents affected by the closing of public schools and the parents' duly elected representatives on Local Schools Councils (LSCs).

School choice arguments, like neoliberal practices, encourage individuals to participate in increased global competition, but neglect to disclose the transfer of the risk of failure from the state to the individual (Saul, 2005). When charter schools are closed due to their low-test scores, cheating scandals (see e.g., Blume, 2011), or financial malfeasance (see e.g., Blume, 2010), students and parents must turn to the available school options, which in low-income communities may be limited to other schools in danger of being closed. Consequently, in the not too distant future, it may be that in entire communities children's educational experiences are defined not by an innovative education, but rather by their enrollment in a series of struggling charter or traditional schools. Adding insult to injury, these children and their families would be solely responsible for their poor 'consumer' choices.

Blurring the Line Between Private and Public Interests

The continued expansion of charter schools is leading educational entrepreneurs to explore new ways by which to profit from both the marketization and the privatization of education. In this way, education is reduced to “a subsector of the economy” (McLaren &

Farahmandpur, 2001, p. 136). Writing about a key entrepreneur in the *Renaissance 2010* reform, Ayers and Klonsky (2006) state:

Chris Whittle, former publisher of *Esquire* and founder of the Edison Schools— one of the companies brought in to manage CPS schools— found that it can be just as profitable to manage public space as to own it. The way Whittle sees it, ‘If profits cannot be made in education, then here is a partial list of things that should be removed from schools immediately: textbooks, computers, desks, milk, pencils, paper, and all athletic supplies and uniforms. And let’s not forget to tear all school buildings down.’ (463).

Edison Schools, which became a publicly traded company in 1999, had financial difficulties in 2001 after “its track record emerged--years in the red, unremarkable academics, accounting irregularities that led to a SEC investigation, and trouble retaining teachers” (Goldstein, 2008, para. 3). Two years later, Edison became a private corporation again after former Governor Jeb Bush of Florida, along with two other state Republicans and fellow proponents of school-choice, authorized the use of Florida Retirement System (FRS) funds, which include the savings of retired public school teachers, to purchase the struggling corporation (Bracey, 2004). With the highly criticized deal signed, Whittle’s salary as head of Edison went from \$345,000 to \$600,000 (Bracey, 2004).

Other entrepreneurs have moved beyond the limitations of brick-and-mortar schools to the internet, where for-profit companies operate virtual (or cyber) charter schools. In 1999, William J. Bennett, the US Secretary of Education under Ronald Reagan, established K 12 Inc., the most prominent outfit in the cyber charter school industry. In 2006, a Government Accountability Office investigation found that the Department of Education did not follow its own policies when it awarded millions of dollars in grants to K12 Inc. and to other companies with close ties to the Bush administration. Yet, Bennett only resigned from K12 Inc. after making a controversial comment on his radio show, “it’s true that if you wanted to reduce crime ... you could abort every black baby in this country, and your crime rate would go down.”

While private and public interests will likely always intertwine in a neoliberal democracy, the encroachment on public goods by private and special interests take us further

away from a participatory democracy. The surrendering of public schools to market pressures, and to the privileged within those markets, benefits those who have access to power within both sectors. With the continued privatization of public education, there will likely be additional reported cases of corruption involving educational firms connected to individuals availing themselves of the revolving door between governmental agencies and the private educational sector for personal gain.

Conclusion

Obama has correctly stated on numerous occasions that education is “the civil rights issue of our time.” While education is at the center of struggles for civil rights, there is a befuddling disconnect between Obama’s words and his educational policy. If he truly believes that education is our generation’s civil rights concern, why is he subjecting it to market pressures? When has the corporate world been on the forefront on civil rights issues?

Obama’s educational policy has resulted in the greatest increase of charter schools to date. The increase marks the convergence of politics, money, and neoliberal market rationalism in support of school choice, a fact that Duncan knows all too well. In his address at the 2009 National Alliance for Public Charter School Conference, he stated, “We may never have an opportunity like this again—this president, this Congress, \$100 billion, and a broad and growing consensus around the importance of education. So this is our time and this is our moment. This is our chance to transform the one thing in society with the power to transform lives. The path to success has never been clearer” (Duncan, 2009, p. 6). With all that has been discussed in this article, it bears asking: Whose time? Whose success?

Obama’s educational policy is furthering neoliberal and neoconservative agendas to undermine the welfare state, and hand over the public sector to market capitalism. In a market economy, charter school expansion will likely increase social inequalities by encouraging capitalist Darwinism, which leaves urban minority youth, special needs students, and English language learners at ‘a competitive disadvantage.’ Though Obama places his hope on a market-driven education, research indicates that such hope demands blind faith in the sort of neoliberal audacity that nearly toppled the financial market.

Eduardo Galeano (2000) reminds us that capitalist discourse “wear[s] the stage name ‘market economy’” (p. 40) to disguise offenses carried out in the public arena. In closing, we

borrow Galeano's analogical style, which reveals how euphemisms mask and normalize neoliberal lexicons, to highlight the emerging marketing language in public schooling:

- Shutting down schools without community input bares the name “Renaissance.”
- Displacing students is called “restructuring.”
- Turning away students is the luck of the draw in a “lottery.”
- School choice is dressed up as “civil rights.”
- Requiring parents to donate time and labor in order to stay within lean budgets falls under “parent involvement.”
- Re-titling Superintendents as portfolio-managing CEOs is called “Reform.”
- Funneling public money into “For Profit” schools is called “innovation.”
- Revolving doors and potential conflicts of interest between businesses, philanthropies, schools, non-profits, and government officials is termed “collaboration.”
- Teacher bashing goes under the name “merit pay,” “added value,” and “accountability.”
- Learning a foreign language is a must for “global competition,” yet children who are English Language Learners are “low performers.”
- Rejecting special needs children is called “counseling out.”
- Federal coercion goes under the competitive title “*Race to the Top.*”
- Children are so-called investments—subject to elastic market pressures.
- The rich who are co-opting public services are praised as philanthropists who “give generously.”
- Ill-prepared, inexperienced teachers are heralded as, “altruistic, bright, recent college graduates.”

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