

Pushing the meme traditional public schools are broken and need fixing

Schools don't need fixing: We can't call schools designed to fail "broken"

The idea public urban schools are broken and need fixing was the basis for the 2014 IPS school reform debate. Commentaries and articles such as "IPS, Mind Trust propose fellowships to fix failing schools" (*Star*, April 23), "Blame is not going to rescue failing schools" (*Recorder*, Nov. 13), "Board seeks bigger role to fix schools" (*Star*, Dec. 4), and "Families should be free to move children from failing schools" (*Recorder*, Dec. 11). Of course then IPS Commissioner Kelly Bentley suggested this scenario in March 16, 2012 *Star* commentary titled, "A broken system."

Indeed, there are schools which produce academic failure. Yet, this happens inside a system designed to predetermine winners and losers: some schools have resources for success and others do not (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008).

Thus, the "failure" of urban schools is not actually the result of failing. Urban districts like IPS are not broken. They're working exactly as designed

Here's the question for Stand and its CARE team and advisors

Has public education ever made its mission to educate all children equally and effectively? The obvious answer is no. Reality reveals decades of fiscal, political, and structural policies that deliberately undercut and demean public education. This doesn't excuse poor academic outcomes in many urban schools, but suggests advancing past the politics of "fixing failure."

- Indianapolis *NUVO Magazine*: Perspectives in Education February 7, 2013
"Urban schools are not broken: Moving to a 21st century vision of urban education"
https://nuvo.newsnirvana.com/voices/guestvoices/perspectives-in-education-john-harris-loflin/article_1c9b3eba-0273-59b8-90a9-d4058650305c.html
- *Indianapolis Recorder* May 21, 2015
"We can't call schools designed to fail broken"
<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Urban-schools-dont-need-fixing-We-cant-call-schools-designed-to-fail-broken.pdf>

Duncan-Andrade, J. & Morrell, E. (2008). *The Art of Critical Pedagogy*. NY: Peter Lang.