

# Urban Times

*Relationships, Relevance, Rigor = Results*

September 25, 2011



Good Morning Team Urban,

I'm uncertain how closely many of you follow what is happening in the political world. However, President Obama is reforming the underfunded and poorly planned No Child Left Behind Act (enter applause). While I will avoid specifics, I am encouraging you to visit [Whitehouse.gov](http://Whitehouse.gov) to hear the speech in its entirety. One element that resonated with me most is when he stated that teachers should not be forced to teach to a test. As we know, this is the antithesis of BP learning. We service the whole child, as stated in the quote above, "The sum of my parts is more than a test score." Unfortunately, test-teaching is what we've been reduced to. Now I don't know about you, but imagine if your worth was reduced to a number or your personal data. Imagine if a credit score, or a Praxis/G.R.E. score or weight or height or bank account figures or number of children...blah blah blah. Just think, if those figures determined our "success," I would not be sending this and you definitely would not be receiving it. So let's talk about numbers that really count. How many students have you hugged, listened too, texted in moments of loneliness or despair? How many students when faced with doing the all-too-tempting wrong thing opted out to do what was right in respect for the relationship that you share? How many students wanted drop out but knew that it wasn't an option? How many students come to school because of you or the safe and loving atmosphere that we provide? How many students hated a subject because no one has ever taught it the way that **you** have?

Schools should not be dull and draconian institutes where students sit quietly in rows and learn the same things in the same way. They should bustle with excitement, spark creativity, and make students feel welcome, accepted....included. Remember "Nobody washes a rented car," and very few will unless they intern at Hertz. Schools should challenge students to become independent thinkers who are not taught what to think...but how to think. So my challenge to everyone is that every time we talk test scores, let's make sure that we measure up. Now I am not saying that test scores don't matter. We need to know how our students are fairing so that we can monitor and adjust instruction accordingly. What I will say is that test scores should only occupy a small space in the Big Picture or something is not quite right.

I'll close on this note. If you do not already, I must encourage you to try to remain abreast of the trends in education. Things are changing with the force of Hurricane Irene. On a national, state, and we won't even talk local level. Sometimes the changes are necessary, while other times it is because **I said so** and what makes you worthy of an explanation (Think of your momma in the grocery store) ☺. Change is often uncomfortable and unsettling but it is always necessary for growth. No matter how it presents, *always* use change to your advantage and teach your students to do the same.

*New Math*

*tsomp>ts*

*The sum of my parts >  
than a test score.*

*Angela N. Mincy*

## BPUA Learner's Pledge

*I promise to ...*

**B**e Myself

**I**ntern

**G**et Help as needed

**P**ursue My Passions

**I**nvest in My Learning

**C**ontribute to My School

**T**ry My Best

**U**plift My Community

**R**emain Respectful

**E**mbrace these principles  
daily!



### Reminders:

- Monday Morning check-in (8 am in Ms. Pastor's room)
- Regarding open house...stay tuned. I'll keep you posted. Thanks as usual for your patience.
- Please post the following in your advisories if you haven't done so already – School pledge, school goals & a behavioral checklist
- Please forward some advisor reflections that I can include in future Sunday Specials. It will be nice to know what others are thinking.
- Please remember to have students record daily checklist scores in their Super Calendars.
- PMU schedule (Jeremy-Monday only & Kanu-Wed/Friday since you are leaving us) –I'm in the process of altering our schedule to accommodate staff member's prep times.
- My personal schedule - please pay specific attention to our 1:1 times (same as last week).
- Staff learning plans were due last Friday – 9/23/11. Student learning plans should be completed by 9/28/11 (open house).
- Each day, you will have a duty free and a duty-based prep. Specific duties will be addressed in the days ahead. In the interim, please use your duty to ensure that your classrooms are neat, attractive, and inviting. Word walls, cooperative seating arrangements, areas for objectives, student work samples, and resource areas for the subjects that you teach should be clearly established.
- Lesson Plans - if you have not sent them, I look forward to having them by the end of today. Hard copies should be given to Kesha every Monday Morning.



*“One kid at a time, one day at a time”*