

Save Dr. Martin Luther King's Vision for America in Detroit

Defend Public Education in Detroit - No More Charters - Remove Rob Bobb

Declaration of the Youth Leaders of the New Civil Rights Movement to Defend Public Education and Save Dr. Martin Luther King's Vision for America in Detroit:

We, the students of Detroit, are not for sale. We deserve first-class public education. We will not accept Rob Bobb's plan to destroy and degrade our public schools in order to impose private charters, mayoral school takeovers and other anti-democratic, anti-public, unpopular schemes on Detroit.

Students are the only force that can defeat Rob Bobb and win equal quality integrated public education for Detroit, the suburbs, and other cities facing the same attacks. We have the social power to get the federal government to give DPS the money it has set aside to improve educational opportunity for poor black, Latina/o, other minority and white students. Without our leadership and mass mobilizations, however, both Bobb and Mayor Bing will continue to seize on the economic crisis to starve Detroit into accepting privatization of our public schools, public services and public workers' jobs, relegating our city to permanent second class status.

We can win. We can save our schools, our city and keep the vision for America of Dr. Martin Luther King alive and moving forward in Detroit. We must stand on the truth, ignore the naysayers, and reject the racist lie that black people lack the will, the social power or the capacity to challenge and defeat the new Jim Crow. We must make our schools into centers of mass organizing, new centers

of power for freedom, equality, pride and dignity. We must build a new integrated youth led civil rights movement.

If we dedicate ourselves to building a movement in Detroit strong enough to defeat the efforts to dismantle and degrade public education in our city, our new movement will inevitably draw in white youth from Detroit's poor and middle class suburbs whose public schools are also facing cut backs and closures. Fighting together in an integrated civil rights movement, led in the main by black and brown youth, the youth of this area will have to break down Southeast Michigan's legacy of prejudice expressed in attempts to maintain hundreds of tiny, separate and unequal, segregated public school districts. Only a single, unified, large scale, metrowide, integrated public school district can have the social power and resources needed to provide every poor and middle class youth of every race with the opportunity to receive a first class, free, public education. Realizing the promise of *Brown v. Board Education* of equal, quality, integrated education for every metro-Detroit student is not only desirable but necessary under the current circumstances to prevent the opportunities of poor and middle class white youth from cascading downward and to defeat the new Jim Crow.

America's poor and oppressed need new leaders filled with optimism and the confidence and unflinching belief in the capacity of our communities to unite and win that fueled the civil rights' movement of Dr. King. The students of Detroit are poised to be those leaders and we too will lift up and carry America forward on our sturdy shoulders.

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- ◇ Defend Public Education - No more charter schools
 - ◇ Demand the financial resources needed to restore our public schools and rescind the layoffs and cuts
 - ◇ Stop the policy aimed at preventing DPS students from being able to gain admission to and financial aid for the University of Michigan and other premiere universities – Rescind the layoffs and replacement of our counselors, AP teachers, etc. now
 - ◇ Realize the promise of *Brown v. Board of Education* – No more separate and unequal education
 - ◇ Unions and community unite to stop bus and other service cuts – Stop public worker layoffs! No contract concessions!
 - ◇ No reliance on politicians – Organize to defend ourselves
 - ◇ Bail out Detroit – Demand federal funds now
 - ◇ Build the new civil rights movement and rebuild the labor movement
 - ◇ Stand on the truth, ignore the naysayers, and act on our optimism and the certainty that we can build a new integrated youth led civil rights movement and win
 - ◇ Defeat the new Jim Crow and save Dr. Martin Luther King's vision for America in Detroit
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Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, Integration & Immigrant Rights and Fight for Equality By Any Means Necessary (BAMN)

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