

Dr. Karl Wheatley Forum Summary – January 19, 2017

Coalition Forum “Taking Back Our Public Schools” Offers Vision for Meeting Our Dreams for Children

An enthusiastic audience of more than 60 policy makers, community members, teachers and parents from northeast Ohio attended the January 19 HCPE forum, “Taking Back Our Public Schools.”

Dr. Karl Wheatley delivered a critical review of the difference between market-based education and what he called “big picture” education. The current obsession with testing has narrowed what is valued in school. The emphasis on measurable outcomes rather than development of the whole child is damaging learners and impeding the development of skills essential to democracy. It is failing miserably to help us achieve our dreams for children.

Tinkering around the edges won’t fix it. According to the speaker, it is time to cut out the ideology that drives this 30 year failed experiment, and start with a different paradigm.

The CSU teacher educator and early childhood specialist offered an inclusive and humane alternative based on two essential core values. First, education practices should be driven by caring for people and the planet. Second, teaching and learning must be organized around principles of human development and democracy.

He made a strong case that education belongs in the public sector. This is how to guarantee equal access and where meeting the needs of all children are paramount.

To achieve change, Wheatley advised that advocates stop using the language of measurement and accountability. They are the wrong ideas for a system that delivers thoughtful citizens – not just people who are ready for jobs.

The core of his message: “We have the wrong system for achieving our dreams for children.”

State Board of Education member Meryl Johnson and State Representative Janine Boyd were in the audience.

The evening included a role play on how to advocate for change and audience members then practiced with each other.

Click here to go to the:

Article – Taking Back Our Public Schools ([link](#))

Paradigms Reframing ([link](#))

Wheatley’s Talk ([link](#))

Slides to go with Wheatley’s Talk ([link](#))