

***Distinguished Speaker:
Asa Hilliard***

Teacher's Packet

A KET professional development workshop for educators approved for Professional Development Training by the Kentucky Department of Education.

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Overview of the Program

This 60-minute interview with Dr. Asa Hilliard, a nationally known expert on educational issues, covers topics on multicultural education, valid assessment, teacher training, and teacher expectations and student achievement. Dr. Hilliard provides valuable information specifically for Kentucky teachers and administrators committed to finding ways to close achievement gaps among groups of students. In addition, Dr. Hilliard shares examples of classroom strategies that have been effective in the success of students labeled at-risk.

The author of more than 200 articles, books, and research reports, Dr. Hilliard is well known for his work in assessment, multicultural teaching strategies, child development, and teacher training. He is the Fuller E. Calloway Professor of Urban Education at Georgia State University with joint appointments in the Department of Educational Policy Studies and the Department of Educational Psychology/Special Education.

During the hour-long session, Lynda Thomas, a professional development producer in KET's education division, talks with Dr. Hilliard about a number of topics of special interest to Kentucky educators. Here is a sampling of questions addressed during the interview:

1. An important element of Kentucky's education reform movement are the annual assessment test, called the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System, or CATS. And for the first time, data is available in a disaggregated form. The data show that males score significantly lower than females and African Americans score significantly less than whites. All schools now are required to study their disaggregated scores and find solutions to close the achievement gap. What insights do you have to help schools as they go about this work?
2. Students who have the greatest need for teachers who have met the highest standards of excellence often are the ones in classrooms with teachers who are inexperienced. How should issues of teacher quality and equity be addressed?
3. In what ways have you seen teacher expectations affect student performance?
4. Some students are labeled "at-risk" because of the obstacles they face in life. What models of education have been effective in the success of students at risk of failure?
5. How can classrooms become more multicultural? How can teachers become more sensitive to different cultural styles?

About the Speaker



Dr. Asa G. Hilliard, III , is the Fuller E. Calloway Professor of Urban Education at Georgia State University, with joint appointments in the Department of Educational Policy Studies and the Department of Educational Psychology/Special Education. A teacher, psychologist, and historian, he began his career in the Denver Public Schools, teaching psychology, mathematics, and American history. He earned a B.A. in psychology, an M.A. in counseling, and an Ed.D. in educational psychology from the University of Denver. Dr. Hilliard served on the faculty at San Francisco State University for 18 years. During his tenure there he was department chair for two years and dean of education for eight years. He also has been a consultant to the Peace Corps and superintendent of schools in Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa as well as a school psychologist in Liberia.

Dr. Hilliard served with Dr. Barbara Sizemore as chief consultant on the “Every Child Can Succeed” television series, produced by the Agency for Instructional Technology. He has written more than 200 research reports, articles, and books on testing, ancient African history, teaching strategies, African culture, and child growth and development.

Dr. Hilliard has helped develop several national assessment systems, such as proficiency assessment of professional educators and developmental assessments of young children and infants. In addition to consulting with many school districts, publishers, public advocacy organizations, universities, etc. on valid assessment, African content in curriculum, teacher training, and public policy, he also has served as an expert witness in several landmark federal cases on test validity and bias.

Professional Development Credit

Stage of Participant Development: Practice/Application

The Kentucky Department of Education has approved all KET Star Channels Seminars for professional development credit if schools or districts choose to include them in their professional development plans. Districts or schools may choose to include preparation and/or follow-up time as part of professional development. For example, if a teacher participates in one 90-minute program and spends an additional 30 minutes in related activities, he or she could be awarded a total of two hours professional development credit.

Individual teachers who wish to use these videotapes for professional development credit should check with their school professional development chair or with their district professional development coordinator.

Professional development can also be used to satisfy requirements for the fifth year program. Contact your local university or the Division of Teacher Education and Certification at 502-564-4606 for more information.

Summary of Dr. Hilliard's Position on Closing Achievement Gaps

Good teachers are “gap-closers”—they don't accept any excuses for low student achievement. The critical lesson to learn is that the power is in the teacher to make a difference in students' lives. No special equipment, reform, or technology is needed. The good news is that the solutions to the problem have been found. The only questions left are how will this information be disseminated and do we have the will to implement the solutions?

There are four things teachers can do to be successful with all students:

- set high goals
- be problem-solvers and collaborate to figure out strategies
- use feedback daily to plan instruction
- acquire deep content knowledge

The reason teachers don't believe they can be “gap-closers” is that they lack the broad awareness of places where the gap has been closed. Nationally, there are schools—and even entire districts—where progress is being made. If teachers really believe they can make a difference, they will make the effort. Good teaching must take place in an atmosphere conducive to learning. There must be discipline and routine and an environment that raises achievement.

Teacher preparation does not include curriculum on gap-closing nor does professional development include presentations by gap-closers. Instead, schools and the public in general are willing to settle for minimum competencies. To succeed, communities must find the will to close the achievement gaps found among different ethnic and socioeconomic groups.

Some of the places where achievement gaps have been closed include the following school and districts:

Frederick County Schools, MD

In 1994, after being in the middle of the pack, the Frederick County Schools went to first or second in Maryland in every academic category. Seventy percent of their Chapter I students performed on grade level, up from 2%.

Dodge Park Elementary School, Prince George County, MD

In 1994, Dodge Park Elementary—a school that is 90% poor and minority—scored in the 44th percentile on the California Achievement Test. Four years later, after focusing on student achievement, Dodge Park scored in the 99th percentile.

Brazosport Schools, TX

In 1996, 90% of every ethnic subgroup in Brazosport Schools achieved at or above grade level in mathematics, writing, and reading on the Texas State Assessment. The school with the poorest population scored as well as the most affluent school in the district.

Resources

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