# Rhona Weinstein

Professor of Psychology
Director, Clinical Science Program and Psychology Clinic
Research Scholar, Institute for Human Development
University of California at Berkeley

## Nominated by
# Genaro Padilla

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Rhona Weinstein, Professor of Psychology at the University of California at Berkeley, is one of the nation's leading scholars on the negative self-fulfilling prophecies that mute childhood development within the complex of low social expectations in many of our schools. Guided by her extensive field research, she is a major proponent of school restructuring that values the voices of children and their families, as well as teachers and administrators in setting higher expectations for all students.

Professor Weinstein has her Ph.D. from Yale and has taught at Berkeley since 1973. She has published extensively on children's perceptions of differential teacher treatment, classroom expectancy, differential home and school aspirations, and through all of this research, she has been thinking about the structures that must be in place for schools to value children's desire to learn. The culmination of her research is an extraordinary book that combines theories of learning, fieldwork, and case studies of powerful interventions that she and her graduate students implemented in low performing schools where students were not expected to do well. *Reaching Higher: The Power of Expectations in Schooling* (Harvard, 2002) won the Stone Prize as Outstanding Book on Education and Society awarded annually by Harvard Press.

But what is most remarkable about Professor Weinstein's research is that it is always guided by her own expectation that it must make a difference in the world. To that end, she has been working for many years with Nystrom Elementary, a school in one of the poorest and most violent communities in Richmond, California. It is an underperforming school with very low test scores, in a community where children and their families do not feel much hope or positive sense of the future.

Professor Weinstein began working with Nystrom specifically because of these characteristics and its desire to develop a culture of high expectations. She began meeting with the principal each and every week for close to two hours to help her capacity to lead this troubled school and to create a positive school climate. At the same time, Professor Weinstein attended teacher and parent meetings to assess needs and understand how she and her graduate students could provide specific support to change the environment of the school. Over the past few years, Professor Weinstein has helped the principal develop specific goals and strategies for working with her staff and the community. She helped create a structure for teacher meetings within and across grade level, with the specific purpose of increasing student achievement. Under Professor Weinstein's supervision, graduate students have researched successful parent involvement models and have begun to dialog with families on those that would be most appropriate for the Nystrom community to implement.

Nystrom remains low achieving, yet it has made significant gains. The suspension rate has gone from 210 suspensions in 2002 to 25 in 2004; the Academic Performance Index has gone from

415 in 2001 to 494 in 2003 and all subgroups (African American, Latino and Socio Economically Disadvantages) have seen their scores rise.

Another initiative in which Professor Weinstein is deeply involved is one in which the University of California, Berkeley is partnering with Aspire Public Schools, the Oakland Unified School District, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to develop one of the first Early College Secondary Schools associated with a selective four year institution of higher education. The purpose of this new small public charter school is to provide a challenging, supportive, and empowering educational experience that prepares a diversity of learners for academic excellence and a successful transition to college by bridging the divide between high school and college. This 6-12 secondary school will serve primarily low-income students who face barriers to college-going and who have not had positive educational experiences, and will serve as a model for strengthening UC Berkeley's leadership in redesigning secondary education. Professor Weinstein, together with another member of the Berkeley faculty, will provide sustained leadership in making this school a national model for what can be achieved when everyone in a community is committed to reaching higher.

Professor Weinstein has an outstanding record of bringing University expertise to schools and communities who are most often forgotten and overlooked. In contrast to many university researchers, she has lived a model of developing and nurturing consistent and long term relationships with parents, students, and school staff, with a proven commitment to "hang-in" for the long-run.

It is, therefore, with great pride and confidence that I nominate Professor Rhona Weinstein for the 2006 Brock International Prize in Education.

Submitted by: Genaro Padilla

Curriculum Vitae

**RHONA S. WEINSTEIN**

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University of California                        E-mail     rhona@socrates.berkeley.edu
Berkeley, California 94720-1650           Fax        (510) 642-5293

## Educational Background

| 1967 | McGill University | Psychology, B.A. (First Class Honors) |
| 1969 | McGill University | Clinical Psychology, M.A. |
| 1973 | Yale University | Clinical and Community Psychology, Ph.D. |

## Professional History

| 2004-present | Director, Clinical Science Program and Psychology Clinic |
| 1988-1991 | University of California, Berkeley |

| 1997-present | Research Scholar, Institute for Human Development |
| | University of California, Berkeley |

1973-present       Professor (1987-present)
Associate Professor (1981-87)
Assistant Professor (1973-81)
Department of Psychology
University of California, Berkeley

1973-present       Staff Psychologist, Psychology Clinic
University of California, Berkeley

## Honors and Awards

Seymour B. Sarason Award for Community Research and Action, from the Society for Community Action and Research (Division 27), American Psychological Association, 2005

Writing Residency, Blue Mountain Center, Blue Mountain Lake, NY, October 2003

The American Educational Research Association Division K Book Award for Exemplary Research on Teaching and Teacher Education, 2003

Virginia and Warren Stone Prize awarded annually by Harvard University Press for an
Outstanding Book on Education and Society, 2002

Distinguished Contributions to Theory and Research in Community Psychology, from the
Society for Community Action and Research (Division 27), American
Psychological Association, 2001

University Distinguished Teaching Award, University of California, Berkeley, 1996

Expectations and High School Change Project:
Research Recognition Award for School Reform, Office of the President,
University of California, 1992
Centers of Excellence for Students at Risk, National Council of Teachers of
English, 1989
Program of Excellence for Students at Risk, Association of California School
Administrators, 1989
Award of Merit for Contributions to Teachers, California Association of Teachers
of English, 1989

American Cultures Fellow, UC Berkeley, 1992

Dennis Cherlin Memorial Lecture, Department of Psychology, Yale University, 1990

Fellow, American Psychological Society, 1989

Fellow, American Psychological Association (Divisions 15 and 27), 1986

Regents Junior Faculty Fellowship, UC Berkeley, 1977

U.S. Public Health Service Predoctoral Fellow, 1969-1972

Province of Quebec Scholar, 1968-1969

Province of Quebec Post-Graduate Fellowship, 1968-1969

Catherine I. MacKenzie Award, McGill University, 1966-1967

## Research Grants

The Spencer Foundation, $120,000, The Power of Expectations in Schooling, 1994-1996.

PHS Biomedical Research Grant, UC Berkeley, $6,000, Prevention of School Failure,
1987-1988.

SUPER Grant, UC Berkeley School of Education, (W. F. Hewlett and San Francisco
Foundations), $80,000, Prevention of School Failure, 1985-1989.

The Spencer Foundation, $79,050, Mediators of Classroom Self-fulfilling Prophecies,
1983-1984.

National Institute of Education (NIE-G-80-0071), $292,760, <u>Ecology of Children's Achievement Expectations</u>, 1980-1983.

National Institute of Mental Health MH 34379-01, $12,809, <u>Ecology of Children's Achievement Expectations</u>, 1980-1981.

National Institute of Education (NIE-G-79-0078), $73,960, <u>Student Perceptions of Differential Treatment</u>, 1979-1980.

PHS Biomedical Research Grant, UC Berkeley, $6,000, <u>Critical Incidents in Achievement History</u>, 1979-1980.

Faculty Development Summer Research Grant, University of California, Berkeley, 1977.

PHS Biomedical Research Grant, UC Berkeley, $6,000, <u>Individual Differences in Classrooms</u>, 1974-1975.

<u>Professional Societies</u>

American Psychological Society
American Psychological Association (Division 15, 27)
Western Psychological Association
Society for Research in Child Development
American Educational Research Association
National Society for the Study of Education
Sigma Xi

<u>Professional Service</u>

<u>Consultation</u>
West Contra Costa County School District, California
Henry M. Gunn High School, Palo Alto, California
Wisconsin Prevention Network, Wisconsin
Illinois Mental Health Association & Chicago Schools
Berkeley School District, Berkeley, California
Richmond School District, Richmond, California
Keys School, Palo Alto, California
Kansas City School District, Missouri
Stiles Hall Youth Alcohol Prevention Project, Berkeley
Far West Laboratory for Educational Research, San Francisco
Oakland School District, Oakland, California
Stiles Hall and Y House Volunteer Programs, U.C. Berkeley
Prospect/Ansonia/Derby School Districts, Connecticut
Dwight Day Care Center, New Haven, Connecticut

<u>Editorial Boards</u>
<u>American Educational Research Journal</u>, 1995-1998
<u>American Journal of Community Psychology</u>, 1987-present
<u>Journal of Educational Psychology</u>, 1986-1990

The Elementary School Journal, 1980-1990

Committee Membership
> National
> APA Public Interest Directorate
> > Committee on Urban Initiatives, Jan. 1999-Dec. 2001
> > > Commentary on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ("Leave No Child Behind")
> > > Contributed to development/passage of Resolution on Poverty and Socioeconomic Status to advocate for prevention of poverty
> > > Worked to increase psychology's role in school reform
> APA Division 27 (Society for Community Research/Action)
> > Student Travel Award Committee, 1993
> > Sarason Award Committee, 1991-1995, 1998
> > Fellows Committee, 1987-1989
> > Dissertation Award Committee, 1984-1987
> > > (Chair, 1986-1987)
> Sarason Tribute Conference Committee, Yale University, 1987-1989
> Panel on Teacher Education, Stanford and the Study of the Schools, Stanford University, 1982-1985
> National Advisory Panel, Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State University, 1982-1986

Research and Applied Interests

> Children and Schooling
> > Social ecology of classrooms, teacher expectations and self-fulfilling prophecies, motivation, social cognition, children's perceptions of schooling, prevention, school reform

> Consultation to Human Service Settings
> > Models, processes, and institutional change

> Alternative Resources and Interventions
> > Development of children's services; alternative settings, paraprofessionals, self-help and natural support systems, family, school and mental health collaboration

Publications

Books and Edited Volumes

Weinstein, R. S. (Ed.) (1982).  Students in classrooms.  Special issue of The Elementary School
Journal, 82, 397-540.

Weinstein, R. S. (2002).  Reaching Higher: The Power of Expectations in Schooling. Cambridge,
MA: Harvard University Press.  Reissued in paperback, 2004.

Papers and Chapters

Bregman, A., & Strasberg, R. (1968).  Memory for the syntactic form of sentences.  Journal of
Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior, 7, 396-403.

Weinstein, R. S., & Rabinovitch, M. S. (1971).  Sentence structure  and retention in good and
poor readers.  Journal of Educational Psychology, 62, 25-30.

Weinstein, R. S. (1976).  Reading group membership in first.grade:  Teacher behaviors and pupil
experience over time.  Journal of Educational Psychology, 68, 103-116.

Weinstein, R. S., Gibbs, J. T., & Middlestadt, S. E. (1979).  College students in human service
agencies:  Perceptions of their impact on the setting.  American Journal of Community
Psychology, 7, 209-221.

Greer, F., & Weinstein, R. S. (1979).  Suicide prevention service outreach:  Callers and non-
callers compared.  Psychological Reports, 44, 387-393.

Weinstein, R. S., & Middlestadt, S. E. (1979).  Student perception of teacher interactions with
male high and low achievers.  Journal of Educational Psychology, 71, 421-431.

Weinstein, R. S. (1981).  Teaching community intervention in a clinical program:  Reflections in
the themes of supervision.  American Journal of Community Psychology, 9, 681-696.

Namir, S., & Weinstein, R. S. (1982).  Children: Facilitating new directions.  In L. Snowden
(Ed.), Reaching the underserved:  Mental health needs of neglected populations (pp. 43-
73).  Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Weinstein, R. S. (1982).  Establishing a mental health team in a middle school.  In J. Alpert and
associates (Eds.), Psychological consultation in educational settings (pp. 85-107).  San
Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Weinstein, R. S., Marshall, H. H., Brattesani, K. A., & Middlestadt, S. E. (1982).  Student
perceptions of differential teacher treatment in open and traditional classrooms.  Journal
of Educational Psychology, 74, 678-692.

Weinstein, R. S. (1983). Student perceptions of schooling. [Special issue on Research in Teaching.] Elementary School Journal, 83, 287-312.

Brattesani, K. A., Weinstein, R. S., & Marshall, H. H. (1984). Student perceptions of differential teacher treatment as moderators of teacher expectation effects. Journal of Educational Psychology, 76, 236-247.

Marshall, H. H., & Weinstein, R. S. (1984). Classroom factors affecting students' self-evaluations: An interactional model. Review of Educational Research, 54, 301-325.

Weinstein, R. S. (1985). Student mediation of classroom expectancy effects. In J. B. Dusek (Ed.), Teacher expectancies (pp. 329-350). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Weinstein, R. S. (1985). Disruptive students in context: Do schools make a difference? Contemporary Psychology, 30, 886-887.

Weinstein, R. S. (1986). The teaching of reading and children's awareness of teacher expectations. In T. E. Raphael (Ed.), Contexts of school-based literacy (pp. 233-252). New York: Random House.

Good, T. L., & Weinstein, R. S. (1986). Teacher expectations: A framework for exploring classrooms. In K. K. Zumwalt (Ed.), Improving teaching (1986 Yearbook), (pp. 63-85). Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, VA.

Weinstein, R. S. (1986). Community psychology and education: New directions. Community Psychologist, 19, 16-17.

Good, T. L., Weinstein, R. S. (1986). Schools make a difference: Evidence, criticism, and new directions. American Psychologist, 41, 1090-1097.

    Reprinted in:
    Soljan, N. N. & Kovacevic, M. (Eds.) (1989) Psihologijska Znanost I Edukacija. Zagreb, Yugoslavia.

    Hamachek, D. (Ed.) (1990) Readings in educational psychology. MacMillan.

    Novoa, A. (Ed.) (1992) Schools as social organizations. Publicoes Dom Quixote, Lda. Lisbon, Portugal.

Marshall, H. H., & Weinstein, R. S. (1986). The classroom context of student-perceived differential teacher treatment. Journal of Educational Psychology, 78, 441-453.

Weinstein, R. S., Marshall, H. H., Sharp, L., & Botkin, M. (1987). Pygmalion and the student: Age and classroom differences in children's awareness of teacher expectations. Child Development, 58, 1079-1093.

Marshall, H. H., & Weinstein, R. S. (1988). Beyond quantitative analysis: Recontextualization of classroom factors contributing to the communication of teacher expectations. In J. Green, J. Harker, & C. Wallet (Eds.), Multiple analysis of classroom discourse processes. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Weinstein, R. S. (1989). Perceptions of classroom processes and student motivation: Children's views of self-fulfilling prophecies. In R. E. Ames & C. Ames (Eds.), Research on motivation in education (Vol. 3). New York: Academic Press.

Weinstein, R. S. (1990). The universe of alternatives in schooling: The contributions of Seymour B. Sarason to education. American Journal of Community Psychology, 18, 359-369.

Levine, M., Reppucci, N. D. & Weinstein, R. S. (1990). Learning from Seymour Sarason. American Journal of Community Psychology, 18, 343-351.

Weinstein, R. S., Soulé, C. R., Collins, F., Cone, J., Mehlhorn, M. & Simontacchi, K. (1991) Expectations and high school change: Teacher-researcher collaboration to prevent school failure. American Journal of Community Psychology, 19, 333-363.

> Reprinted in:
> A Quarter-Century of Community Psychology: Readings from the American Journal of Community Psychology, (2002). Edited by T. A. Revenson et al. Nowell, MA: Kluwer.

Weinstein, R. S. (1991). Caught between paradigms: Obstacle or opportunity. A comment on the commentaries. American Journal of Community Psychology, 19, 395-403.
Weinstein, R. S. (1992). The challenging of stereotypes: Lessons for individual and community action. Community Psychologist, 26, 31-32.

Weinstein, R. S. (1993). Children's knowledge of differential treatment in schooling: Implications for motivation. In T. M. Tomlinson (Ed.), Hard work and high expectations: Motivating students to learn. National Society for the Study of Education Series. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.

> Issued simultaneously in:
> Hard work and high expectations: Motivating students to learn. U.S. Department of Education Report, December 1992.

Alvidrez, J. & Weinstein, R. S. (1993). The nature of "schooling" in school transitions: A critical re-examination. [Special issue]. Prevention in Human Services, 10, 7-26.

> Issued simultaneously in:
> L. A. Jason, K. E. Danner, & K. S. Kurasaki (Eds.) (1993). Prevention and school transitions. New York: The Haworth Press.

Weinstein, R. S. (1994). Pushing the frontiers of multicultural training in community psychology. American Journal of Community Psychology, 22, 811-820.

Weinstein, R. S., Madison, S. B., & Kuklinski, M. R. (1995). Raising expectations in schooling: Obstacles and opportunities. American Educational Research Journal, 32, 121-159.

Butterworth, B. & Weinstein, R. S. (1996). Enhancing motivational opportunity in elementary schooling: A case study of the ecology of principal leadership. Elementary School Journal, 97, 57-80.

Weinstein, R. S. (1996). High standards in a tracked system of schooling: For which students and with what educational supports? Special Issue, Educational Researcher, 8, 16-19.

Ozer, E. J., Weinstein, R. S., Maslach, C., & Siegel, D. (1997). Adolescent AIDS prevention in context: The impact of peer educator qualities and classroom environments on intervention efficacy. American Journal of Community Psychology, 25, 289-323.

Stewart, E. & Weinstein, R. S. (1997). Volunteer participation in context: Motivations and political efficacy in three AIDS organizations. American Journal of Community Psychology, 25, 809-838.

Weinstein, R. S. & Donohue, K. M. (1997). Next steps in school-university partnerships: Changing the institutional culture. In N. H. Gabelko (Ed.) Cornerstones of collaboration, National Writing Project Corporation: Berkeley, CA.

Weinstein, R. S. (1998). Promoting positive expectations in schooling. In N. Lambert & B. L. McCoombs (Eds.). How students learn: Reforming schools through learner-centered education. American Psychological Association.

Weinstein, R. S. & McKown, C. (1998). Expectancy effects in "context": Listening to the voices of students and teachers. In J. Brophy (Ed.) Teachers' and students' expectations. Volume 7 of Advances in Research on Teaching. JAI Press.

Perry, K. E. & Weinstein, R. S. (1998). The classroom context of children's early school adjustment. Educational Psychologist. Special Issue: Schooling and Mental Health, 33, 177-94.

Measelle, J.R., Weinstein, R.S., & Martinez, M. (1998). Parent satisfaction with case managed systems of care for seriously emotionally disturbed children and youth. Journal of Child and Family Studies, 7, 451-467.

Weinstein, R.S. & Mulvey, E.P. (1999). Introductory remarks in honor of N. Dickon Reppucci. American Journal of Community Psychology, 27, 301-305.

Alvidrez, J., & Weinstein, R. S. (1999). Early teacher perceptions and later academic achievement. Journal of Educational Psychology, 91, 731-746.

Singer, A. B. & Weinstein, R. S. (2000). Differential treatment predicts achievement and self-perceptions in two cultural contexts. Journal of Family Psychology, 14, 491-509.

Kuklinski, M. R. & Weinstein, R. S. (2000). Classroom and grade level differences in the stability of teacher expectations and perceived differential teacher treatment. <u>Learning Environments Research, 3</u>, 1-34.

Donohue, K. M., Weinstein, R. S., Cowan, P. A., & Cowan, C. P. (2000). Patterns of teachers' whole-class perceptions and predictive relationships between teachers' and parents' perceptions of individual child competence. <u>Early Childhood Education Quarterly, 15</u>, 279-305.

Kuklinski, M. R. & Weinstein, R. S. (2001). Classroom and developmental differences in a path model of teacher expectancy effects. <u>Child Development, 72</u>, 1554-1578.

Cappella, E. & Weinstein, R. S. (2001). Turning around reading achievement: Predictors of high school students' academic resilience. <u>Journal of Educational Psychology, 93</u>, 758-771.

McKown, C. & Weinstein, R. S. (2002). Modeling the role of child ethnicity and gender in children's differential response to teacher expectations. <u>Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 32</u>, 159-184.

Weinstein, R. S. (2002). Overcoming inequality in schooling: A call to action for community psychology. <u>American Journal of Community Psychology, 30</u>, 21-42.

McKown, C. & Weinstein, R. S. (2003). The development and consequences of stereotype-consciousness in middle childhood. <u>Child Development, 74, 498-515</u>.

Donohue, K. M., Perry, K. E., & Weinstein, R. S. (2003). Classroom instructional practices and children's rejection by their peers. <u>Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 24, 91-118</u>.

Gregory, A. & Weinstein, R. S. (2004). Connection and regulation at home and in school: Predicting growth in achievement for adolescents. <u>Journal of Adolescent Research, 19</u>, 405-427.

Weinstein, R. S. (2004). Reflections on *becoming* a community psychologist.[Special Issue] <u>Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community, 28, 125-147.</u>

<u>Issued simultaneously:</u>
Kelly, J. G. & Song, A. V. (Eds.). Six community psychologists tell their stories: History, contexts, and narrative. Birmington, NY: The Haworth Press.

Weinstein, R. S. (2004). Performance goals guide current educational reform: Are we on the best path? <u>Contemporary Psychology, 49, 32-35.</u>

Weinstein, R.S., Gregory, A., & Strambler, M. (2004) Intractable self-fulfilling prophecies: Fifty years after Brown v. Board of Education. <u>American Psychologist, 59, 511-520.</u>

Ozer, E. J. & Weinstein, R. S. (2004). Urban adolescents' exposure to community violence: The role of support, school safety, and social constraints in a school-based sample of boys and girls. Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 33, 463-476.

Cappella, E., & Weinstein, R. S. (in press). The prevention of social aggression in girls. Social Development.

Perry, K. E., Donohue, K. M., & Weinstein, R. S. (under review). Child-centered teaching and the promotion of achievement and adjustment in first grade.

McKown, C., & Weinstein, R. S. (in preparation). The relationship between classroom context and child ethnicity as a basis for the expectations of teachers.

Madison, S. M. & Weinstein, R. S. (in preparation). And still they rise: Factors related to resilience in African American students affected by the Prince Edward County School closing.

Weinstein, R. S. (in preparation). Reaching higher in community psychology. American Journal of Community Psychology.

Presented Papers

Bregman, S., & Strasberg, R. (1967, April). Memory for the syntactic form of sentences. Paper presented at the meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association, Boston, MA.

Weinstein, R. S., & Rabinovitch, M. S. (1968). Sentence structure and retention in good and poor readers. Paper presented at a Conference on Reading Difficulties in Children, Douglas Hospital, Montreal. Proceedings published in The Canadian Psychologist, 9, 142-153.

Weinstein, R. S. (1977, April). Supervision of community consultation: Issues raised in the context of field training. In R. Nurse (Chair), Approaches and issues surrounding field training in community psychology. Symposium presented at the meeting of the Western Psychological Association, Seattle.

Weinstein, R. S., & Middlestadt, S. E. (1979, April). Learning about the achievement hierarchy of the classroom: Through children's eyes. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Association, San Francisco.

Weinstein, R. S. (1979, September). Group consultation in school settings: Constraints against collaboration. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, New York.

Marshall, H. H., Weinstein, R. S., Middlestadt, S. E., & Brattesani, K. A. (1980, April). "Everyone's smart in our class": Relation-ships between classroom characteristics and perceived differential teacher treatment. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston.

Weinstein, R. S., Middlestadt, S. E., Brattesani, K. A., & Marshall, H. H. (1980, April). Student perceptions of differential teacher treatment. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston.

Brattesani, K. A., & Weinstein, R. S. (1980, May). Children's perceptions of teacher behavior: Their role in a model of teacher expectation effects. Paper presented at the meeting of the Western Psychological Association, Honolulu.

Weinstein, R. S., Marshall, H. H., Brattesani, K. A., & Sharp, L. (1980, September). Achieving in school: Children's views of causes and consequence. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, Montreal.

Weinstein, R. S. (1981, April). Student perspectives on achievement in varied classroom environments. In P. Blumenfeld (Chair), Student perspectives and the study of the classroom. Symposium presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Los Angeles.

Brattesani, K. A., Weinstein, R. S., Middlestadt, S. E., & Marshall, H. H. (1981, April). Using student perceptions of teacher behavior to predict student outcomes. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Los Angeles.

Marshall, H. H., Weinstein, R. S., Sharp, L., & Brattesani, K. A. (1982, March). Students' descriptions of the ecology of the school environment for high and low achievers. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York.

Sharp, L., & Weinstein, R. S. (1983, April). The relationship between parental stress and parental response to child conduct behaviors. Paper presented at the Western Psychological Association meetings, San Francisco.

Weinstein, R. S. (1983, April). Learning from students about the self-fulfilling prophecy in the classroom. In L. Shulman (Chair), Teacher and student cognition: An overview of four lines of research. Symposium presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal.

Marshall, H. H., & Weinstein, R. S. (1984, April). Classrooms where students perceive high and low amounts of differential teacher treatment. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association meetings, New Orleans, LA.

Weinstein, R. S., Marshall, H. H., Sharp, L., & Botkin, M. (1984, August). Pygmalion and the student: Children's awareness of teacher expectations. Paper presented at the American Psychological Association meetings, Toronto.

Weinstein, R. S. (1984, November). Developmental influences on children's awareness of teacher expectations. In H. H. Marshall (Chair), Classroom self-fulfilling prophecies through children's eyes. Symposium presented at the meeting of the California Research Association, Monterey, CA.

Marshall, H. H., & Weinstein, R. S. (1985, April). "It's not how much brains you've got: It's how you use it": A comparison of classrooms expected to enhance or undermine students' self-evaluations. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Weinstein, R. S., Marshall, H. H., Botkin, M., & Sharp, L. (1985, April). The development of student performance expectations. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Namir, S., & Weinstein, R. S. (1985, August). Risk-taking: A developmental approach to decisions in work and relationships. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles, CA.

Weinstein, R. S. (1985, August). Participant in Careers of women in community psychology. Symposium presentation at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles, CA.

Weinstein, R. S. (1987, May). Prevention of school failure: An expectancy framework. In E. Seidman (Chair), Improving the education and well-being of our youth. Symposium presented at Community Research and Action Conference, Columbia, SC.

Weinstein, R. S. (1988, April). An expectancy model for improving the motivational environment of classrooms. In T. L. Good (Chair), Expectations and high school change: Teacher-researcher collaboration in preventing school failure. Symposium presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Weinstein, R. S. (1991, June). Teacher-researcher collaboration to raise expectations: The process. In Weinstein, R. S. (Chair) Expectancy processes in urban schools: From basic research to intervention. Symposium presented at the Biennial Conference on Community Research and Action, Tempe, AZ.

Madison, S., Kuklinski, R. and Weinstein, R. S. (1991, June). Individual and system constraints against changing expectations. In Weinstein, R. S. (Chair) Expectancy processes in urban schools: From basic research to intervention. Symposium presented at the Biennial Conference on Community Research and Action, Tempe, AZ.

Madison, S. & Weinstein, R. S. (1991, August). Pathways to susceptibility to teacher expectancy effects. Paper presented at the American Psychological Association meetings, San Francisco, CA.

Kuklinski, M. R., Madison, S. M., & Weinstein, R. S. (1992, April). Raising expectations in schooling: A model of constraints and opportunities for change. In A. Hargreaves (Chair) Improving the professional culture of teaching. Symposium presented at the American Educational Research Association meetings, San Francisco, CA.

Kuklinski, M. R., Weinstein, R. S. (1992, April). Two years of differential teacher treatment. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.

Alvidrez, J., & Weinstein, R. S. (1993, March). The role of early teacher expectations in later academic achievement. Paper presented at the Society for Research in Child Development meetings, New Orleans, LA.

Weinstein, R. S., & Butterworth, B. (1993, April). Enhancing motivational opportunity in elementary schooling: A case study of the role of principal. In M. L. Maehr (Chair), Enhancing student motivation through theory-based teacher and researcher collaboration. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, GA.

Weinstein, R. S., & Cone, J. K. (1993, December). Teacher-researcher collaboration to raise expectations in schooling. Paper presented at the American Association of Higher Education's Fourth National Conference on School/College Collaboration, Pittsburgh, PA.

Ozer, E. J., Maslach, C., Weinstein, R. S., & Siegel, D. (1994, April). Processes of adolescent behavior change: The role of model-observer attributes in a peer-led AIDS prevention program. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association, Washington, DC.

Kuklinski, M. R., & Weinstein, R. S. (1994, August). Legislative routes to children's services reform: Proposition J and interagency collaboration. In R. C. Talley, (Chair), Integrating services for children: Agency, policy, and evaluation research perspectives. Symposium presented at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles, CA.

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book reviews

# Reaching Higher
## The Power of Expectations in Schooling

### RHONA S. WEINSTEIN

author photo: philip a. cowan

**Rhona S. Weinstein** is
Professor of Psychology at the
University of California,
Berkeley.

Undaunted by the complexities involved, Weinstein offers a systems approach that demands changes at every point of interaction: students, teachers, parents, administrators, teacher training faculty, and researchers. Implemented systematically across our nation's schools, her approach would move the next generation's educational experience into a new level of excellence, lift multiple barriers to learning, and thus change many of our existing, limiting social norms.
   --Jean Caspers, *Library Journal*

Thinking ecologically about this issue is a tall order, but Weinstein addresses in painstaking detail just what it entails. This is an important book for everyone who believes in the historic promise of equal educational opportunity, and in the possibility that all children can reach their full learning potential.
   --*Publishers Weekly*

Weinstein has undertaken another extension of the discussion [of student achievement expectations] with greater success, and that is to ask what adjustments ought to occur to capitalize on the effect that communicating positive expectations can have on student progress. Those issues are addressed thoroughly and convincingly.
   --D. E. Tanner, *Choice*

I recommend the book unreservedly to anyone with an interest in education. Some readers will find their assumptions challenged. Others will find moral and intellectual support for their pursuance of an educational system that is just, humane, and not wasteful of human potential.
   --Joanna Swann, *British Journal of Educational Studies*

This powerful book reaffirms the democratic ideals of public education.
. . highly recommended for teacher preparation programs.
   --Meredith E. Kiger, *Childhood Education*

This book could not be more timely. The inadequacies of our schools have become a source of national concern as never before. At the core are two questions: What should we expect of students? And why do schools so clearly fail to help students meet those expectations? Rhona Weinstein has taken the study of self-fulfilling prophecies far beyond the earlier focus on how individuals think and interact, to show how self-fulfilling prophecies suffuse the culture of all educational institutions -- and how fateful they can be for society as a whole. Reading this book should make us all reexamine how we look at what goes on in schools. If only I had it when I took my first job as a psychologist over half a century ago!
   --Seymour B. Sarason, Professor Emeritus of Psychology, Yale University

Rhona Weinstein's book is the most up-to-date treatment of

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expectancy effects in schooling now available, definitively ending any doubts about whether expectancy effects in school are a genuine psychological phenomenon. The book is interesting, engaging, and powerful.

--Robert J. Sternberg, IBM Professor of Psychology and Education, Yale University

Here's a book to give us hope. Parents, teachers, principals and scholars can all benefit from Weinstein's lucid and passionate demonstration--that our positive expectations for children help them learn and expand their social development. At the same time, Weinstein shows just how much social norms within families and school cultures can limit children's achievements. The power of the small everyday circumstances in which we communicate our expectations to children is so persuasively documented that readers can look at their own children or students with new insight, and return to them with renewed verve.

--James G. Kelly, University of California at Davis

Rhona Weinstein, an award-winning teacher-researcher, has produced a scholarly and heartfelt call for different kinds of educational institutions and approaches. Emphasizing the workings of teachers' expectations, Weinstein shows us life in classrooms, good teaching and bad, and what may, in the future, improve learning --not only for those of whom little is expected, but for all children. Her book is about much more than the educational effects of teacher expectations; it is about excellence in education at every level.

--Robert Rosenthal, Professor of Psychology, University of California, Riverside

*Reaching Higher* breathes life into one of the most important issues in education. Weinstein brings school and teacher expectancy effects alive in stories of children, some of whose opportunities to learn were unnecessarily thwarted, some of whom were encouraged to achieve more than they ever thought they could. This is that rare thing, a theoretically path breaking book that will be invaluable in the real world of the classroom.

--Deborah Stipek, Professor of Education, Stanford University

*Reaching Higher* is a passionate, scrupulously documented book on how schools create educational inequality in America, as teachers convince less socially favored children that they lack the ability to learn and get ahead. Rhona Weinstein closes her searching book with recommendations about how schools might develop a deeper and more agentive self-confidence in today's schoolchildren, tomorrow's citizens. This is a must read for anybody concerned with the future of American education, or more broadly, with the future of democracy in America.
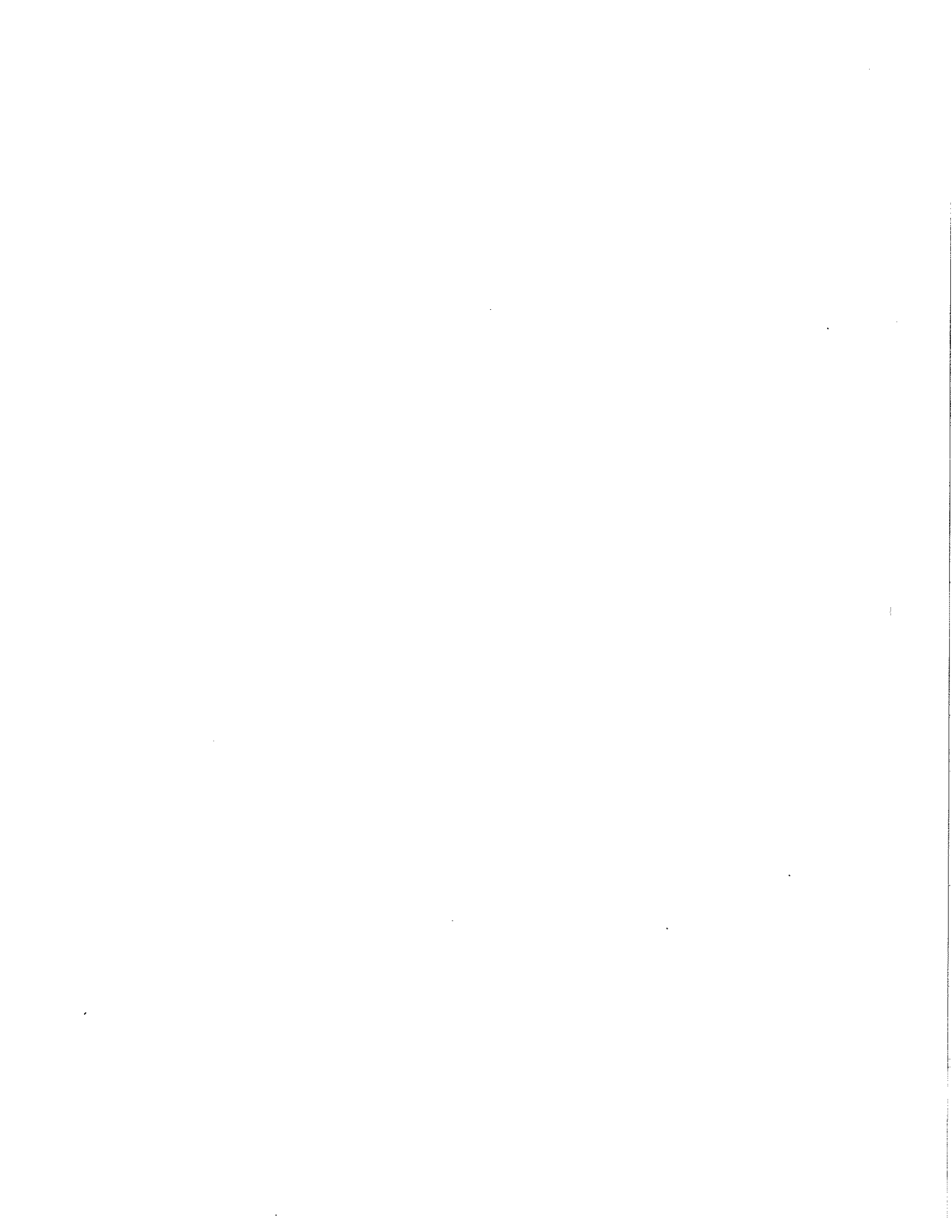
--Jerome Bruner, University Professor, New York University, and author of *The Culture of Education* and *Making Stories: Law, Literature, Life*

*Reaching Higher* provides a crucial reexamination of the corrosive effects of low teacher expectancies--not in artificial experimental contexts, but in the complex ecology of students' and teachers' lives in the American school system. *Reaching Higher* should be required reading for all those who are involved in the art and science of shaping student day-to-day experiences and helping them along their future pathways.

--Carola Suarez-Orozco, Co-Director, The Harvard Immigration Project

Terms like "expectancy" and "self-fulfilling prophecy" have become so familiar in the discussion of academic underachievement that they have lost much of their meaning. Weinstein's book gives them renewed force. *Reaching Higher* is a tour de force exposition of how the expectations we hold for students--often influenced by their background and group identity--form the schooling structures and experiences that can limit human potential. Anybody who cares about equal educational opportunity will never look at the term "expectancy" in the same way again, and will come away with a recharged hope that we can overcome this tenacious problem.
    --Claude Steele, Lucie Stern Professor in the Social Sciences, Stanford University
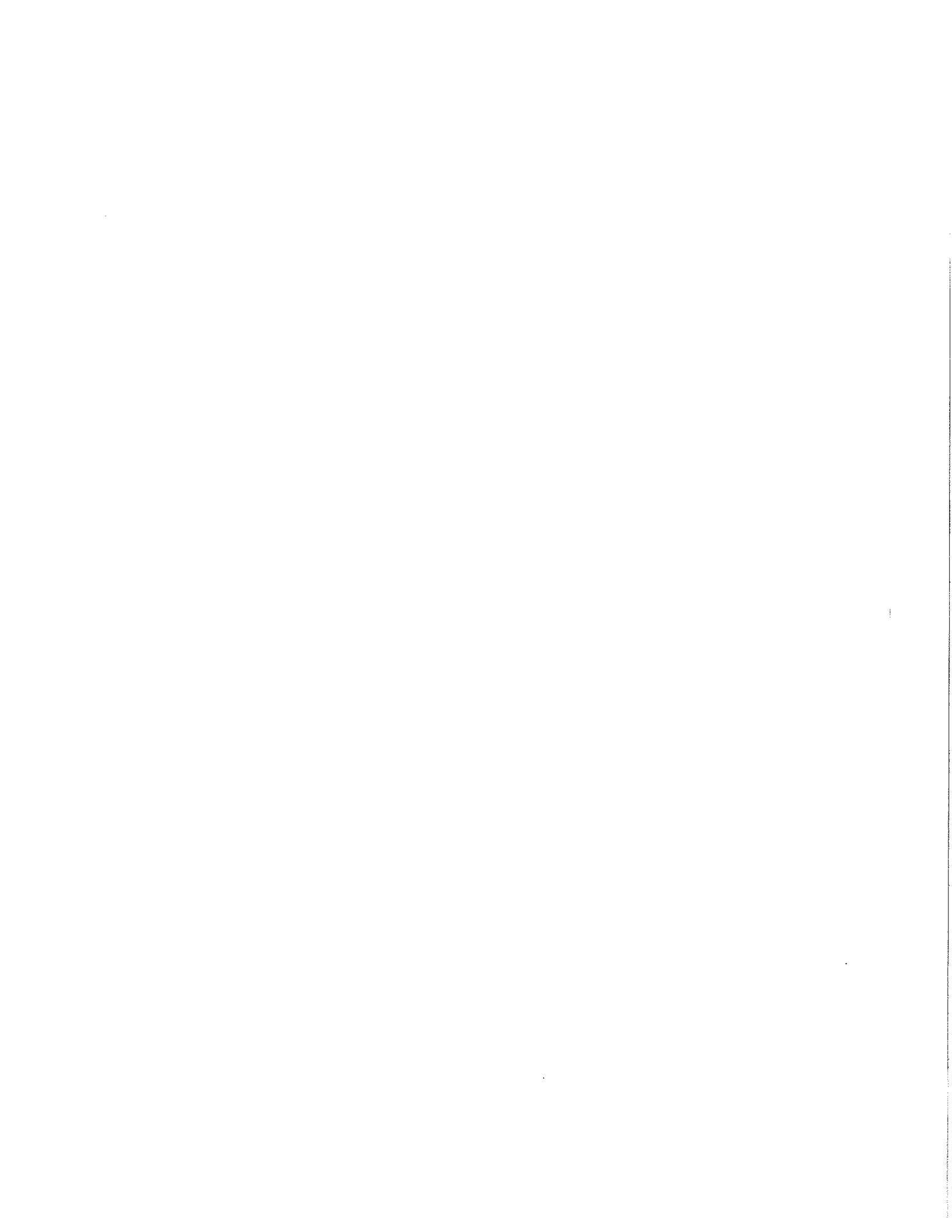
Rhona S. Weinstein

# REACHING HIGHER

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# Reaching Higher
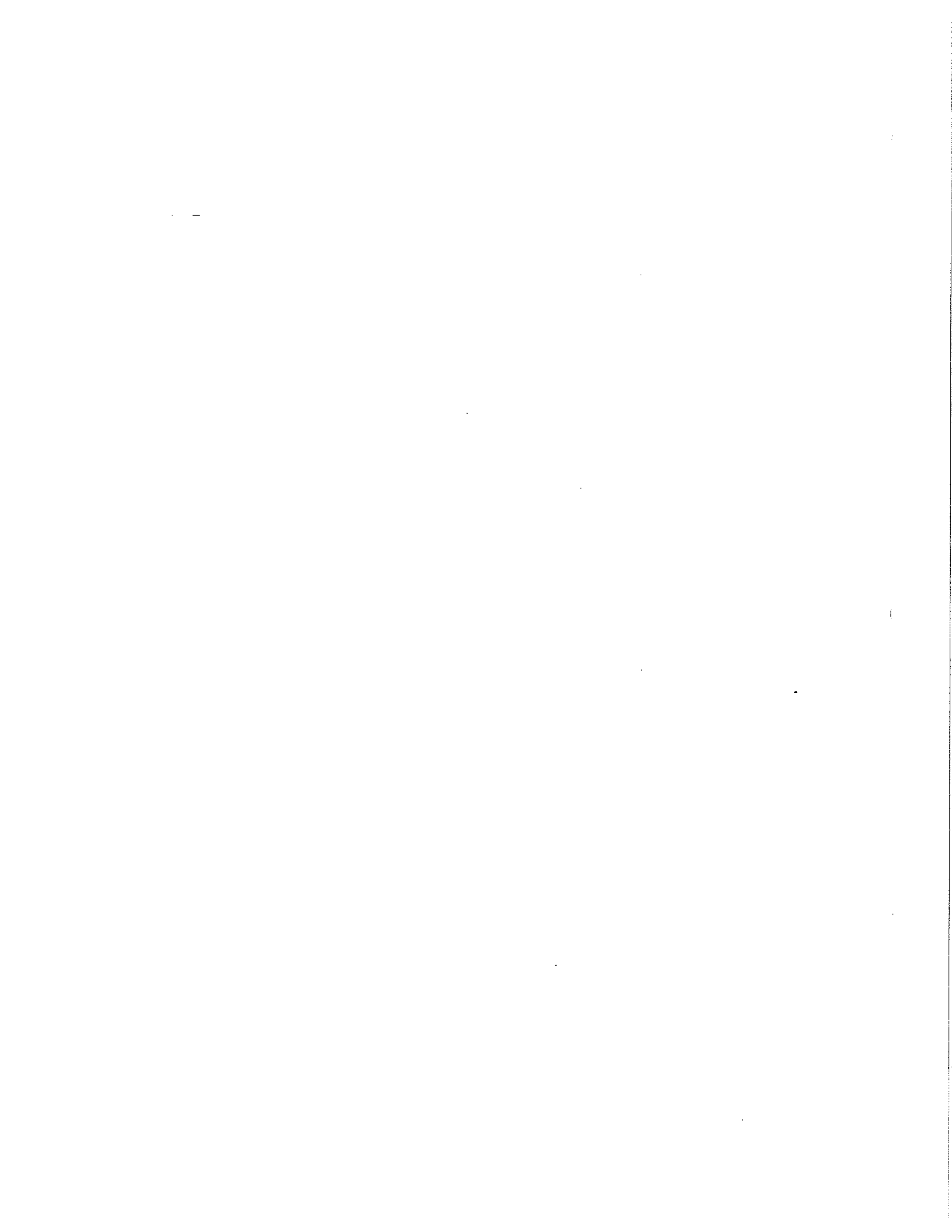
*The Power of Expectations in Schooling*

## Contents

# Introduction

The academic expectations of teachers and parents, educational institutions, and society at large can shape children's lives in school and beyond through self-fulfilling prophecies. Yet the workings of such expectancy effects are far more complex than are commonly understood or than are implemented in current educational reforms that mandate "higher" expectations and high-stakes accountability. To harness its power in positive ways requires a deeper understanding of how such social influence processes unfold and change in real-world settings. This book describes these complex pathways and charts a direction for the promotion of positive educational prophecies, so that all children can develop fully in environments that are both challenging and supportive across their school years.

Our capacity to learn is nourished in the context of human relationships. Most critical here are the beliefs about learning that we bring to our relationships with children. The expectations we hold—about the capability or lack of capability of those we teach—have deep and interwoven roots. These differential expectations guide sharply different educational practices. All too often, under certain conditions, these expectations are confirmed in children's own attitudes and behaviors, thereby creating self-fulfilling prophecies.

Sadly, our system of education is largely built upon beliefs and practices on the negative side—about differences in and limits to ability. Our expectations of ability are too low, too narrowly construed, too bound to time and speed, and too differentiated (high for some, low for others) by social status factors that are irrelevant to the potential to learn. So too are our educational methods narrowly conceived. Guided largely by repetition rather than compensatory and enriched methods, our teaching strategies minimize effort, fail to overcome blocks in learning, and limit what can be learned.

When we respond to the individual differences among students by lowering our expectations and providing inferior educational opportunities, we underestimate the capacity for all children to grow intellectually and we fail to provide adequate tools for learning. In these ways, we confirm our own predictions. To prevent such educational tragedies—a particularly urgent goal given the growing diversity of children attending our schools—we need to both embrace and support pedagogically a vision of *possibility* regarding the educational achievement of *all* our children.

## The Gap between Research and the Real World

As a longtime scholar in this field, I have contributed my share of empirical studies to the journals. Yet as I read the findings, I feel the distance that comes from our scientific study of this phenomenon. So much of *what has been learned* fails to capture the complexity of such effects in the real world. My early professional experiences first fueled my curiosity. In my graduate training at the Yale University Psycho-Educational Clinic, I came upon a vivid example of what I later came to call a self-fulfilling prophecy in my work with a child who had a reading problem. While providing mental health consultation services to a small rural school district near the university, I was referred a ten-year-old boy whom I will call Eric. Eric had never learned to read and he was seriously behind his peers in fourth grade. Years of tutoring had not alleviated the problem and psychological testing failed to reveal a learning disability. Instead, the test results depicted an anxious person who blocked on so many tasks that it was impossible to obtain a valid estimate of his ability. My assessment of the child, his siblings, and his parents provided little explanation for the genesis or persistence of this reading problem.

A visit to his classroom, however, provided more of the story. Eric was a member of the lowest reading group, which was called the "clowns." Among its members were the sole ethnic minority child, a nonreader, an overweight child, and so on. Comparing the climate of the highest and lowest ability reading groups was exceedingly painful. In the highest group, the pace was lively, the material interesting, and the children active. In the lowest group, the work was repetitive, remedial, and dull. Upon following the children out to recess, I found that the friendship patterns matched the reading group assignments, but the members of the lowest reading group stood alone and isolated, even from each other.

So I suggested changing the context for learning instead of trying to

change the child—that is, that Eric be moved up to the middle reading group. I also insisted on a contract specifying that he remain there for a three-month trial and that I would provide extra tutoring and psychological help to support his learning. A lengthy battle ensued. In a classic catch-22, both Eric's teacher and the principal asked for proof that Eric was capable of handling the material in the middle reading group. I argued that we would not have proof until the educational context was changed and Eric's anxiety about learning was relieved. I finally won approval. Eric was promoted to the middle reading group and slowly but surely began to read and participate in classroom life. By the end of the school year, he had reached grade level in his reading skills and he had friends. He proudly showed them off to me, his arms linked with theirs, as I walked the school halls. One of his greatest moments came when he and his new friends were hauled down to the principal's office to be chastised for chattering in class.

This case was a pivotal one for me. A child who could not read at the start of fourth grade had become a grade-level reader by year's end. The intervention was relatively simple given the severity of the reading problem: a belief in the child's capacity to learn, a more challenging and motivating educational climate, and support through tutoring, play therapy, and the friendship of peers.

But I kept thinking about the other Erics left behind in the lowest reading groups, where nothing had changed about their daily lives at school. Individual treatment models took me only so far. This case, then, cemented my shift from clinical to community psychology and to preventive work with populations of children. It alerted me to the larger institutional context in which this problem was embedded—the school's unwavering belief in the accuracy of psychological tests for predicting ability and the sanctity of reading-group assignments. And this case sent me scurrying to the scientific literature. I was curious about the evidence for a causal link between expectations and achievement in schooling, and it was here that I first stumbled upon the research on self-fulfilling prophecies.

Years later, I continue to see too many examples of limiting perceptions of human potential, similar to those I described for Eric. I am certain that somewhere in this book, readers might also catch glimpses of themselves. The following examples highlight our tendency to underestimate the potential to learn:

• In a workshop I conducted on racism in a high school, a number of African American and Latino students recounted the raised eyebrows of

teachers as they entered class the first day of advanced placement courses—signals that they were not expected to achieve and were not welcome. In this same school, a parent told of the difficulties that her attractive blond daughter had in being taken seriously for a career in mathematics.

• At another high school, each year a cohort of low-achieving ninth graders, largely members of ethnic minorities, was routinely assigned to remedial classes that did not qualify them for college admission upon the completion of high school, regardless of how well they performed.

• A parent approached our clinic with the concern that his child's ability was being underestimated. A teacher had accused the child of faking the parent signature on a summer reading list because the list was "too long" to have been accomplished.

• Another parent came for help when told that her child, then only in kindergarten, was recommended to repeat the year because of a suspected learning problem. The child described her teacher as forcing her "to work at her level" and to avoid tasks that "would be too hard for her." This parent had always taught her child to approach any challenging task with persistence and alternative strategies.

• Another parent raged about how her child was handled in an evaluation for a suspected learning disability. After testing, the parents were told that their child was mentally retarded and would be recommended for special education. Shocked, the parents demanded an investigation and sought an independent testing from our clinic. During the investigation, it was discovered that an error had been made in the addition of the scores and that indeed, the child had demonstrated above-average intelligence. Just think how much information had to be dismissed for a teacher, principal, and school psychologist to deliver a verdict of "mental retardation" on the basis of an erroneous test score.

These examples reflect, first, beliefs about what children and youth are and should be capable of and second, actions that follow from such beliefs. Such judgments about capability often apply stereotypes about social groups such as about race and gender, reflect myths about development and behavior, confuse what is with what could be, and put too much weight on test scores rather than daily performance as evidence of ability. The actions taken in response to these judgments often determine very different learning opportunities and convey strong messages about capability. The effect of

these social processes is heightened because they occur in the context of significant relationships between learners and teachers and because the power is unequal. We accord schools the role of defining ability for society at large. As one parent lamented after a long history of educational placements outside the classroom that left her child far behind academically, with poor self-esteem and few peer relationships: "I never questioned their authority. I thought the school would know better than I what my child needed in order to learn."

It is human nature to reduce the complexity of social stimulation by categorizing people, events, and settings (Macrae and Bodenhausen 2000). Such categorization enables us to sift quickly through complex experiences, identify core defining features, predict possible outcomes, and plan courses of action. Without such guiding schemas, appraising each new situation would be an impossibly time-consuming task. Yet while our categories enable us to see more clearly, they can also blind us. Herein lies the opportunity for limiting or even biased perceptions based upon the application of faulty or stereotyped beliefs (Allport 1954; Marx, Brown, and Steele 1999). Gordon Allport (1954) described prejudice as reflective of man's "normal and natural tendency to form generalizations, concepts, categories, whose content represents an oversimplification of his world of experience" (p. 27). Further adding to the complexity, as the studies of Mahzarin Banaji and her colleagues have demonstrated, some of this categorizing goes on automatically without conscious awareness (Banaji and Bhaskar 2000).

What we see is what we *believe to be* the reality. The sociologist Robert Merton recognized the inherent difficulty of disproving these beliefs once they have been formed. In the classic paper that named this phenomenon, Merton (1948) wrote: "The specious validity of the self-fulfilling prophecy perpetuates a reign of error. For the prophet will cite the actual course of events as proof that he was right from the very beginning" (p. 195). Since we spend most of our day-to-day lives with people who share our assumptions, the categorizations that guide our actions are too seldom challenged.

Can the beliefs and actions of powerful others actually cause outcomes that confirm the original prophecy? What are the characteristics of individuals and environments in classrooms, schools, families, and societies that accentuate or mitigate such self-fulfilling prophecies? What are the conditions that harness positive rather than negative prophecies and that render some individuals more resilient and less susceptible in the face of limiting beliefs

and closed educational doors? Can negative self-fulfilling prophecies be prevented? These are the questions that frame this book.

## Revitalizing a Stagnating Field of Study

There has been a long history of both literary and scientific interest in expectancy effects—that is, if and how beliefs about the other (and about the self) can become fulfilled in reality. One can say our interest began with the Greco-Roman myth of the sculptor Pygmalion and his love for the statue Galatea. It was because of the strength of his love that the goddess Venus brought Galatea to life. This legend also appeared in George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion* (1912/1940), which recounted a successful experiment to train a cockney flower girl to pass as a lady. Expectancy effects were formally defined by two sociologists, W. I. Thomas (1931) and Robert Merton (1948) and had their first empirical test in the classic *Pygmalion in the Classroom* study (1968) by psychologist Robert Rosenthal and principal Lenore Jacobson. Today there exists a vast research literature exploring its workings.

It is of interest that our earliest depiction of expectancy effects, in Galatea, focused on positive rather than negative and limiting beliefs—a positive perspective we have yet to fully explore and capitalize upon. There is also a negative side of expectancy effects—where because we expect little or less of others, we provide negative, inferior, or different treatment and ultimately receive little in return. These negative processes have been named "Golem" effects based on the Hebrew slang word for dumbbell (Babad, Inbar, and Rosenthal 1982). Aldous Huxley, in his 1932 novel *Brave New World*, described the workings of negative self-fulfilling prophecies in a society that decides to not only breed but also condition certain individuals for a lower-class future. Huxley described the conditioning rooms where infants of the Delta caste who approached brightly colored books were exposed to loud noises and electric shocks until they "shrank away in horror . . . safe from books all their life" (1932/1946, pp. 28–29).

Research interest in expectancy effects in schooling, once a booming enterprise and long a hotbed of controversy, has greatly lessened in recent years in response to continued skepticism about the power and importance of such effects. Few investigators persist in such research; fewer still implement interventions (Babad 1993; Brophy 1998b). Further, the research that is done has an exceedingly narrow focus that fails to do justice to the complexity and institutional embeddedness of the phenomenon in schooling, to the variation in individual and environmental conditions that may moder-

ate outcomes in children, and to the design and evaluation of preventive action. I will argue here that expectancy effects in schooling have been largely misunderstood and underestimated. And I suggest that this is a critical time to revisit research on self-fulfilling prophecies in schooling—with new perspectives, broader evidence, and a commitment to the design and evaluation of interventions that will harness positive expectancy effects for the benefit of all children.

The power of expectancy effects lies not in momentary beliefs, brief teacher-student interactions, and single outcomes but rather in the cumulative consequences of entrenched beliefs about ability over the course of a school career. Our research methods have too long prioritized the viewpoint of observer over the perspective of participant, largely neglecting insights gleaned from children, the recipients of expectations in schooling. Further, in our concern for experimental rigor, our studies have captured primarily the narrow and the short-term rather than the broad and the entrenched view of the phenomenon. This prevailing paradigm has reinforced our preoccupation with the proof question (do self-fulfilling prophecies exist?) and stifled interest in the conditions question (under what circumstances can expectancy effects be found?).

Thus we have become blind to the fact that, while expectancies are expressed in educational opportunities and interpersonal interactions between teachers and students, they are reinforced by institutional arrangements in the classroom, school, family, and larger society. Further, these layers of institutional arrangements, and their interdependence or lack thereof, enhance or minimize the probability of self-fulfilling prophecies. We have also ignored what can be learned from naturally occurring variations as well as planned interventions. Simple behavioral and linear models are grossly inadequate for the complexity of the task. The need to specify conditions, to link psychological factors with institutional elements, to capture the interactive effects of these processes over longer periods of time, and simply, to humanize the problem requires a shift toward an ecological model of explanation.

Ecological theory, the study of the interrelationships of organisms and their environments, reminds us that individual and collective behavior both reflect as well as influence the context in which they occur (Bronfenbrenner 1979; Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998). An ecological perspective widens the sources of evidence and the time period of consideration, allowing us to bring together somewhat disparate and disaggregated features of the problem into a dynamic and integrated whole (Kelly 1969, 1979; Vincent and

Trickett 1983). An ecological framework of understanding underscores the importance of (1) the perceived and lived experience of students, teachers, principals, and parents, (2) the interaction of person and environment, (3) the interdependent and nested layers of institutional, family, and community beliefs and practices that link classrooms, schools, homes, and universities, and (4) processes over time, such as history, natural transitions, and planned interventions. Integrating this kind of information helps us to learn what over the course of a schooling career magnifies the effects of negative self-fulfilling prophecies and what can save or buffer children from poor consequences. By shifting the prevailing theoretical paradigm toward an ecological perspective, I hope to provide a richer and more contextualized understanding of self-fulfilling prophecies in schooling than we can glean from a single research literature.

I draw upon material culled from multiple vantage points: as a researcher, clinician, and consultant to schools; as a university professor serving both as a teacher and as an eternal student under peer review; and as a parent guiding my own children through schooling. At the core are findings from a long-standing research program on the dynamics of self-fulfilling prophecies in elementary and high school classrooms. My research has examined the perceptions and understandings of children about teacher expectations and explored if and how awareness of differential treatment by teachers results in differential achievement by students—a question that addresses the mediation of expectancy effects. I have also applied what we learned from children about the communication of expectations in the classroom to the design and evaluation of school-based and collaborative preventive intervention programs.

By articulating the voices of children in their role as students, I bring forth an often ignored perspective about schooling and broaden the model of expectancy processes to include the target of academic expectations—his or her understanding of the school experience. I also illustrate the experiences of multiple players—teachers, principals, parents, and university faculty—in myriad contexts and across time, enabling a look at natural variations in the expectancy process, as well as planned interventions to interrupt the cycle of lowered expectancies.

## How the Book Is Organized

Part 1 sets forth the reasons for taking a broader look at self-fulfilling prophecies in schooling. In this Introduction, I have described the gap between the

research and the real world of expectancy effects—a disconnect that leads me to press for a change in explanatory theory. Chapter 1 presents a case study of educational expectancy processes in real-world conditions, a complex scenario that any new theory must explain. It documents a twenty-two-year history of a child with a learning disability as his parents and the schools disagree over what to expect and how best to support his academic achievement. The case depicts the institutional proclivity of schools for limiting and low expectations when faced with learners who are different, as well as the often overlooked role of buffering influences—alternative interventions implemented by family, other schools, and teachers that can break the cycle of negative self-fulfilling prophecies.

Chapter 2 provides a historical overview of research about how expectations can become self-fulfilling prophecies and how prevailing paradigms greatly limit our understanding. I make the case for a shift to an ecological model that examines all players in expectancy processes in varied and interdependent contexts over time. Ecological theory can synthesize our knowledge in ways that better reflect the experience, the institutional embeddedness, and the interactive features of expectancy processes in schooling. In Chapter 3, I highlight the urgency of reexamining what we know about negative expectancy effects during an era of increasing diversity in the student population and of failing schools that are largely ill-prepared to deal effectively with such diversity. Despite the rhetoric of current educational reform, the risk for negative effects may be heightened and differential expectations and self-defeating educational practices persist untouched.

In Part 2, an ecological perspective is applied to illustrate what is learned by taking seriously the perspectives of students. In Chapter 4, the voices of elementary school children are used to capture their sophisticated awareness of the different lives lived within classrooms as a function of how smart students are perceived to be by teachers. Chapter 5 in turn highlights differences among classrooms in the culture of achievement expectations communicated to students. Learning from the reports of children and from interviews and observations of teachers, I highlight the different theories and practices of two fifth-grade teachers. Teachers, and the classroom environments they create, differ in the degree to which they emphasize differentiated treatment (the selection of talented children for different pathways) or equitable treatment (the development of talent in all children).

Chapters 6 and 7 speak to the risks for children of negative expectancy processes, reflected in both immediate and more enduring outcomes. Chapter 6 illustrates what happens to children in the short term in these contrast-

ing classroom environments. Interviews with four fourth-grade students, both top-ranked and bottom-ranked, reveal how in contrasting classrooms children think differently about students' potential to learn. Empirical studies also show that the more differential treatment that children report in their classroom, the greater the gap between children on a range of critical competencies, not only academic but also social and emotional. Yet individual, social, and developmental differences among children also affect how much children are placed at risk and how susceptible they are to the expectations of teachers. Chapter 7 explores retrospective accounts of university students as they reflect upon critical incidents in their own achievement history. Here we see that the differential responses of teachers are long remembered and perceived to have enduring consequences for interest in subject matter, motivation, self-esteem, and achievement, unless self-reflection or positive support from significant others helps to reframe and buffer these negative experiences.

Part 3 moves beyond individual classrooms to educational systems as educators see them. I examine both planned interventions and natural variations in school-wide achievement cultures. I also illustrate parallel features and critical interdependencies between the culture of the school and the culture of the classroom, with implications not only for students but also for teachers. Indeed, all are learners. Such interdependencies can be mutually reinforcing, deepening the institutional embeddedness of expectancy effects or contrarily undermining such effects, be they positive or negative. Targeting and aligning these cultural features at multiple levels prove critical in any effort to promote more equitable learning that will filter down into classrooms.

Chapter 8 examines the transformation of an existing achievement culture in a high school as it shifts from a highly stratified system to a more equitable and development-focused system of high expectations for all students. I use a case study of a collaborative intervention that targeted ninth-grade students in the lowest academic track. This cultural shift (in beliefs, instructional strategies, and institutional policies) was as much about what happened to and for teachers as it was about what happened between teachers and students. While Chapter 8 illustrates possibility in the face of constraint, Chapter 9 speaks to the ideal, in an elementary school where positive expectations are already in place and fully aligned. I identify the qualities of school culture and principal leadership that articulate and maintain this culture—an equitable and development-focused learning commu-

nity for all players, teachers as well as parents. Children are not sifted by ability for scarce opportunities; rather, seemingly limitless and diverse opportunities demand student engagement and thus develop the talents of many.

Chapter 10 turns to the university setting, where the student pipeline is directed, teachers are taught, disciplinary knowledge is discovered, and faculty are developed as scholars and teachers. Akin to the variation seen earlier in K–12 education in both classrooms and schools, universities differ in their achievement cultures, with varying commitments to differentiation (the selection of faculty stars) versus equity and development (the growing of faculty stars). Universities, in the achievement culture they adopt, have a critical leadership role to play both within academia and beyond. They can shape the reform of K–12 education by either exacerbating negative prophecies or by promoting positive expectations that can broaden and diversify the talent pool.

Finally, the Conclusion speaks to the implications for research and intervention. How a problem is defined frames our inquiry and actions taken. Children struggling to overcome the effects of their teachers' and schools' low expectations usually have to contend with multiple, multilayered risk factors, both across levels of the educational system and across domains such as family, school, and community. These risks, and the positive steps that caring adults take to buffer these risks, determine in large part how vulnerable or resilient those children will be. Interventions must be framed around decreasing the risks, increasing the positive influences that protect children, and creating and transforming educational settings that promote positive prophecies.

With this book, I hope to pave the way for a broadened look at for whom, where, when, and how expectancy effects take place and what consequences they have for children. It is my hope that these new perspectives might guide more effective strategies for school reform and preventive intervention. While the methods adopted here are informed by theory and by a critical look at the evidence, they also press beyond the limitations of existing scientific paradigms and raise questions about the philosophical and moral dimensions of this problem in schooling.

Let me also note at the outset that in addressing expectations and their expression in the practices of schooling, I do not place blame. Expectations about ability, and the instructional practices that follow from these expec-

tations, are institutionalized in the very roots of educational theory and societal beliefs. Teachers and administrators put into practice what they themselves have learned as sound pedagogical knowledge, and what they themselves have faced as learners and continue to face in their work lives in schools. And so, too, do parents take action or fail to take action on the basis of what they know and have experienced.

The capacity for change, however, does lie with us: teachers and administrators can take responsibility for children's school failure and turn it around toward success. Doing so requires a radical shift in assumptions about children's ability and the practices that will motivate and support student learning. The capacity for change also lies in the hands of parents, who, if informed and believed, can better advocate for and support their children in ensuring their access to and success with the highest levels of pedagogical challenge. Finally, the capacity for change lies in the hands of faculty (as scholars and educators) and universities (as the last station in the pipeline), because they frame the national debate about what constitutes intellectual achievement and how it is best nurtured.

The breadth of the topics considered and the multiple perspectives drawn upon are intended to humanize a problem whose influence on children has been underestimated in the language of discrete variables and averaged numbers. An important aspect of our children's lives—their schooling—is at stake, and now is the time for stretching the capacities of all children's minds. All children who pass through our schools must be helped to reach higher if we are serious about excellence and equity in education.

# Changing a Stratified School Culture

We have had to learn to guard against lowering our expectations for these students, just because they have been labeled low-ability. . . . We have fallen into the trap of believing that the "noise" which is generated in an honors class is productive, while the "noise" which happens in a low ability class can only be nonproductive and distracting to learning . . . Thanks to our meetings which relentlessly, yet gently, reprimand us whenever we fall into the trap of dealing with our students in this manner, we have found that indeed we can expect our students to do the same tasks which we expect of our higher ability students. Sometimes it takes a few extra steps to achieve the desired product but we often achieve it. In fact, our students become more interested and are more willing to perform when higher demands are placed on them.

—A high school teacher

How can we change limiting and differentiating beliefs and practices so that high expectations for all students are nurtured through the inevitable yet diverse obstacles to learning? How can we transform schools so that principals and teachers are supported in their efforts to engage diverse student populations in a challenging education? Limiting perceptions of students, colleagues, and the system are reinforced by a web of institutional policies that affect teachers and students alike. Once formed, perceptions and practices are rarely reexamined or changed, particularly in the isolated teaching conditions of most schools. These are precisely the conditions that can breed self-fulfilling prophecies about student achievement. The reframing of belief, action, and policy is far less likely when teachers work apart from each other, when administrators remove themselves from the instructional life of schools, when the work of schools is disconnected from research advances in the field, and when school staff members do not know how every one of

their students is progressing. Thus as we seek to raise expectations, we need to consider the interrelationships between the culture of schools and the culture of classrooms.

There are examples of school systems that have equitable or differentiated environments. Such school systems can reinforce or undermine the culture created by individual teachers, whether they are expressed within classrooms or across classrooms and departments, such as in tracks, special education, and gifted classes. While expectations are often manifested in interpersonal interactions between teachers and students, their long-term consequences are ultimately driven and reinforced by an array of institutional arrangements at a school level. These institutional arrangements vary in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels of education and have implications for both those who teach, and those who learn. Such arrangements can turn fleeting judgments into lasting beliefs and can determine what labels, which educational opportunities, and what kind of supports are offered to whom.

This chapter examines the efforts of an urban high school to shift a highly stratified culture of academic expectations toward an enabling culture of high expectations and appropriate instructional supports for all students. What structural arrangements and processes are necessary to enable this return? I draw upon the data and findings from a collaborative intervention study to raise expectations for incoming ninth-grade students at risk for failure through systemic changes in classroom practices and school policies (see Collins 1988; Cone 1988; Mehlhorn 1988; Simontacchi 1988; Weinstein et al. 1991; Weinstein, Madison, and Kuklinski 1995; Weinstein 1998).

An examination of expectancy change is especially critical in light of the feverish national agenda to implement higher educational standards for all children and to improve upon the scaling-up of reform from individual classrooms to whole schools, districts, and states. As currently conceptualized and implemented, these efforts lack a coherent understanding of the deeply institutionalized dynamics of expectancy effects and will likely go the way of previous reforms. As Seymour Sarason (1971, 1996) has long lamented, schooling has been largely impervious to waves of educational reform, whether implemented using bottom-up or top-down strategies. Most educational improvement has been found in isolated settings like single classrooms, almost never in whole systems—a regularity that Richard Elmore (1996) calls the fundamental pathology of the education system. And despite repeated cycles of reform, changes rarely make it past the classroom

door (Cuban 1990). These reforms fail and fail again, as Sarason argues, because they never change the underlying culture of schooling. Although we are knee-deep in raising educational standards and holding schools accountable, remarkably little is known about how to effectively and enduringly implement and support equitable expectations in schools that have for so long differentiated sharply among students in providing educational opportunities.

## Research on Expectancy Change

### In Schools

The experimental studies of expectancy effects are, in fact, expectancy "change" efforts that implant falsely positive expectations on unsuspecting teachers. As discussed previously, such manipulations have improved student achievement or intelligence scores under certain conditions, particularly when they are conducted early in the school year when teachers have little prior knowledge of students (Raudenbush 1984). Relatively few studies have directly manipulated the expectations of students, what Margaret Rappaport and Herbert Rappaport (1975) have called targeting "Pygmalion, the other half of the expectancy equation" (p. 531). Using a sample of five- to six-year-olds in a randomized experiment implemented over twelve weeks, these researchers found that inducing positive expectations in young disadvantaged students (through praise and positive predictions for future performance) was more successful (resulted in greater achievement gains for the students) than doing so with the teacher and was as successful as the condition in which both teachers and students received the feedback. Further, Elizabeth Cohen and her colleagues (see Cohen 1986; Cohen and Lotan 1997) have developed a series of interventions to produce equal-status interactions in the classroom and thereby change children's perceptions of their own and peers' ability. In this instructional strategy for heterogeneous classrooms, teachers are trained to talk about multiple abilities (that none of us has all these abilities; that each one of us has some of these abilities) and to assign competence to low-status children. Cohen and Lotan (1997) have documented that when teachers use the status treatments, low-status or low-achieving students participate more in the classroom.

There are also a small number of intervention studies that seek to increase teacher awareness of their differential expectations for and treatment of stu-

dents as a first step in changing these expectations. The results have not been uniformly strong. Using observational data (Good and Brophy 1974) or feedback concerning the gap between teacher and student perceptions of teacher treatment (Babad 1990), the interventions help teachers become aware of their differential expectations for students and teach them to equalize their patterns of interacting with students so that, for example, praise and criticism are given more evenly. Babad (1990) found that half of his treatment teachers resisted the intervention feedback and further, that student reports did not match teacher reports of change. Good and Brophy (1974) noted changes in teacher participation and interaction with target children, but no change in negative behaviors toward these children.

This empirical work has been scaled up to schoolwide inservice programs, such as in the work of Patrick Proctor (1984) or the widely known TESA (Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement), which has been a regular fixture in staff development nationwide since the mid-seventies (Kerman 1979). In TESA, teachers are taught about fifteen classroom behaviors (concerned with response opportunities, positive feedback, and personal regard) that research has demonstrated are used more often with perceived high achievers than with perceived low achievers. Teachers are trained to increase their use of these behaviors with low achievers. Evaluations of this widely adopted program have been sparse. A recent evaluation by Denise Gottfredson and her colleagues (1995) did not find positive effects. These researchers concluded that "well-implemented TESA training delivered according to the specifications of the developers in the context of a high-level district support for the program model did not produce changes in teacher practices among the teachers participating in the study" (p. 162). Further, the predicted changes in student achievement were not documented.

The passage of legislation has provided another avenue of addressing unequal expectations and learning supports for certain groups of children. By extending the right to education to girls, blacks, and Latinos; desegregating schools; mainstreaming handicapped children into regular classes; and implementing educational standards and high-stakes accountability, these legislative interventions have sought to improve the educational opportunities of those for whom lower expectations were held. Today, too, there is considerable debate about legislatively dismantling tracking systems in high school as a means of equalizing opportunity and raising expectations for students assigned to the lower tracks. While the effects of these legislative mandates are complex to evaluate either in the short-term or long-term (in part

because any conclusion depends on the outcomes considered [Wells and Crain 1994]), evidence suggests insidious processes of resegregation that can take place. For example, although children of different ethnic groups were brought together by law into the same schools, they were then resegregated within schools into separate programs, separate classes, and within-class subgroups, with blacks and Latinos still overrepresented in the less challenging programs (Epstein 1985). Without addressing the underlying processes that give rise to and sustain differential beliefs about the potential to learn and differential allocation of educational programs, such segregation will likely recur in these and other forms.

### In Work Organizations

In a similar vein, there exists an experimental literature on the implanting of falsely positive expectations or the reframing of test results in work organizations. This literature was recently summarized in a meta-analysis by Brian McNatt (2000). Studies targeted managers or their subordinates in a variety of work settings and included actual performance as a dependent variable. For example, Sasson Oz and Dov Eden (1994) documented raised productivity of subordinates when leaders were led to reinterpret low test results not as evidence of inability but rather as the result of test unreliability or a lack of effort and motivation at the time of testing. In targeting subordinates, Dov Eden and Yaakov Zuk (1995) demonstrated that those naval cadets who were trained to believe that given certain test results they would overcome seasickness in rough seas did perform better at their tasks than did a control sample of cadets. In McNatt's (2000) meta-analysis of seventeen such management studies, the results were strongly supportive of expectancy effects overall, with the effects strongest and most consistent in military organizations where authority is more centralized, with men, and with individuals for whom low expectations were initially held.

Of import to expectancy change in schools, only two of these seventeen studies examined leader-subordinate relationships involving previous contact. The existence of preestablished relationships and the use of deception greatly limit the effectiveness of Pygmalion principles (Eden et al. 2000; McNatt 2000). In the words of McNatt, "interpersonal expectancy-raising may be a weak long-term, stand-alone intervention and could benefit from being embedded with a credible program that can serve as a focus for raising expectations" (p. 320).

## In the Research Laboratory

Like the research on expectancies in industry, which has intervened at the point of first contact, much of the empirical evidence on behavioral confirmation and disconfirmation has been conducted in "laboratory analogs of first encounters with strangers" (Snyder and Stukas 1999, p. 293). Researchers have demonstrated behavioral as well as perceptual confirmation in a variety of settings and with different expectancies (Snyder 1992; Claire and Fiske 1998). Despite the limitations of this work, the research on stereotype change points to social contextual features under which negative perceptions are successfully challenged. These include conditions where disconfirming information is systematically made available, analyzed, and generalized (Bar-Tal 1989; Olson and Zanna 1993; Rothbart and John 1985; Rothbart and Park 1986), where motivational goals stress accuracy and accountability (Neuberg 1989), and where interactions are cooperative, co-equal, successful, and lacking in conflict (Desforges et al. 1991). Research has also shown that certain attributes of the person targeted with bias can limit behavioral confirmation, including awareness of the stereotype (Hilton and Darley 1985) and certainty about one's own self-concept (Swann 1987). Self-fulfilling prophecies require *powerful* perceivers and *powerless* targets of others' perceptions and actions (Copeland 1994).

## A More Comprehensive Expectancy-Change Model

Previous reform efforts have made clear that neither deception, nor insight, nor policy mandate are sufficient to alter an established school culture of stratified expectations: the relationships and instructional practices have too many embedded and interdependent components. To address more than the overt symptoms of the problem and to institutionalize the changes made, our intervention model needed to address both the vision (all the parts of a positive expectancy culture) and the change process (the working conditions) for teachers and administrators who have long-term relationships with each other and with students. To promote an enduring psychological as well as systemwide change that will get inside the classroom door, school staff needed regularized and continuing opportunities, tools, and resources to reexamine underlying beliefs, to observe and monitor what is actually in place, and to adapt, design, implement, and evaluate more effective practices and policies derived from the research findings.

## The Vision

We targeted changes in the six features of the instructional environment identified earlier as critical in creating a differentiated and selection-driven achievement culture. With the goal of working more effectively with heterogeneous learners, we focused on changes in (1) ability-based grouping and tracking practices, (2) curricular challenge and differentiation, (3) ability beliefs and evaluation systems based on inborn, global, and normal-curve notions about ability, (4) motivational systems that promoted performance goals, extrinsic reinforcement, and competition, (5) opportunities for student agency in learning, and (6) the climate of relationships in the classroom, in the school, and with parents.

In practice, this meant increasing the use of heterogeneous, flexible, and interest-based grouping practices with more challenging curricula, which would widen exposure and invite more students to meet academic challenges. This included fostering the intrinsic motivation of students by encouraging work that speaks to children's own interests instead of being linked to external rewards, by supporting learning goals that focus on the demands of the task rather than on performance, and by nurturing cooperative rather than competitive ways of working. These motivational strategies deepen student involvement and willingness to expend effort in the face of hard challenges. Further, they increase student choice and responsibility for learning, through the use of self-regulation strategies and leadership opportunities. This increased student agency would also encourage intrinsic motivation, enable new talent to be uncovered and appreciated, and help students to become less dependent on teachers in organizing and evaluating their work.

If teachers are fully persuaded that children have multiple abilities, that ability is malleable, and that all can meet a specified standard, they will feel encouraged to broaden their teaching strategies and offer a wider range of performance opportunities that would measure competencies. Such a change in attitude would also shift the responsibility for failure from students to teachers and underscore absolute rather than relative criteria for judging accomplishment, focusing critical attention toward making sure that all of the students improve to the point of reaching grade-level standards. Finally, classrooms and schools that insist on a challenging curriculum while offering diverse and unlimited opportunities for participation in the classroom and schoolwide, foster warmer, more concerned relationships among teachers, students, and parents—and thus a more inclusive community.

These changes, when coordinated, focus attention on the development rather than the selection of talent in students.

## The Change Process

Informed by laboratory research on stereotype change and expectancy disconfirmation as well as research on school reform, our change process drew heavily upon collaborative rather than prescriptive approaches. Organizational change theory, and in particular, findings from follow-up studies of school reforms that persisted over the long-term, emphasize the importance of involved key players. Given such participation, innovations can be reshaped to fit local conditions, to create coherent changes at multiple levels, and to weather continuing threats to implementation and institutionalization (Maehr and Midgley 1991, 1996; McLaughlin 1990). Research findings on school-university collaborative partnerships and on the norms of workplace settings suggest that collaborative approaches extend resources and provide support to sustain the difficult challenge of systemic change (Gifford 1986; Lieberman 1992; Little 1993; McLaughlin 1990; Rosenholtz 1989). Our change process included these critical components: (1) a school-university collaborative partnership, (2) a membership of key players that included teachers, administrators, and university researchers, (3) a regular two-hour weekly meeting, with additional planning time, (4) a long-term perspective, (5) shared responsibility for students, (6) an opportunity to read research findings and translate them into practice and policy, and (7) the monitoring of conditions and outcomes at multiple levels. The hands-on access to research findings, the built-in monitoring and evaluation of school practices, and the diversity of input to the process both expanded and challenged sources of information and analysis—which was also critical to promoting expectancy disconfirmation. In addition, it is important to highlight that the collaborative ways in which teachers, administrators, and researchers were asked to work together mirrored the features of a classroom culture that they were encouraged to create for their students.

## The Case of Los Robles High School

### The Invitation

Our collaboration began in a graduate seminar on school reform designed to field test this expectancy-enhancement intervention. By design, it included

diverse membership, the reading of original research, classroom and school observations of the instructional features that shaped differentiated or equitable achievement cultures, and a final project culminating in demonstrations and evaluations of innovative lessons and policies. In order to stimulate exchange across research and practice communities, the course was opened to principals and teachers in addition to graduate students from the psychology department and the school of education at the University of California, Berkeley. For the community participants, course or district credit was arranged through university extension. The seminar's activities were crafted to make vivid the communication of expectations and to empower participants to change their own and others' practice to promote more positive educational prophecies for children.

A participating high school teacher wrote this about the seminar experience: "I found myself changing as a result of the research I was reading and applying in my classroom. For a long time, I had seen myself as an effective teacher of 'at risk' students—mostly because I was 'sympathetic' to them—I cringe at that word now ... At the end of this class, I was certain of two things: I knew that my way of teaching 'at risk' students had dramatically changed and I knew that the teachers at my school needed to be exposed to what I had learned." She challenged us to help her apply this expectancy-change model to her high school—a challenge I accepted with some trepidation, given the more complicated departmentalized structure of high schools and the wider and more entrenched achievement gap between students at that level.

### The School

The mid-sized urban high school was described by staff as "aging, graffiti-marred, and badly in need of repair." Its district was suffering greatly from reduced per-pupil funding for education. Los Robles (a pseudonym) was one of six comprehensive high schools in the district with approximately 1,500 students and a certificated staff of approximately eighty, almost equally divided between men and women. Drawing students from both wealthier hill areas and poorer industrial flatlands, the school served an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse student body with an ethnic composition of 47.7 percent black, 5.0 percent Hispanic, 16.3 percent Asian, 30.1 percent Caucasian, and 1.9 percent unknown, and with 13 percent of students on AFDC (Aid for Dependent Children). Ethnic minorities made up 68 percent of the student population and 20 percent of the certificated staff. Al-

most half of the school staff had masters degrees and 88 percent were age thirty-six or older. The teacher-student ratio was 21.2 to 1, the student-counselor ratio was approximately 388 to 1, and teachers were assigned five of seven teaching periods per day. With some classes as large as forty students, teachers worked with 125–200 students each day. Like in most high schools, these were exceptionally challenging working conditions for teachers as well as administrative staff.

Student achievement scores at Los Robles placed the high school just below the state median level, yet the school was known to rank high in the number of graduates it sent to the University of California system. Four levels of instructional tracking were in place: remedial, general, honors, and advanced placement. A look at course enrollment patterns as described in accreditation reports revealed the familiar bimodal distribution found in many high schools: proportionately higher enrollments of whites and Asian Americans than blacks (there were few Hispanics in this school) in certain subjects as well as in higher-challenge classes. For example, while 64.5 percent of white students took chemistry, only 24 percent of black students did. This mix of students and the racially and socioeconomically linked curricular differentiation was reported to create underlying tensions in the school.

First Contacts

The principal and vice-principal as well as the superintendent responded enthusiastically to the project and to its collaborative nature. Tellingly for the future and in line with the curricular differentiation in place, the administrators pledged their own participation but they proposed first, a voluntary model of participation for the teachers and second, a focus on more effective teaching of low-stanine classes, especially for teachers who taught these classes. Thus, we were confronted early on with where the school stood—bound to individual participation rather than a whole-school commitment, and bound, too, to highly differentiated academic expectations. Especially discomforting to us, we later discovered that students assigned to low-stanine classes at ninth grade (on the basis of previous achievement scores and grades) were enrolled in courses that did not meet the requirements for entry into the California State University (which admitted graduates in the upper third of the class) or the University of California (which admitted the top 12 percent of the class) systems. Even if they were eventually moved out of these classes, students could not earn the required four years of college

preparatory English necessary for four-year college or university admittance. This was a reality that many students and parents did not know. Indeed, while the student handbook indicated forty credits of college preparatory English was required, at that time there was no mention that "some English classes do not meet this requirement, so ask your counselor"—a caveat that was added after our project began. The disproportionate membership of certain ethnic minorities in these classes was fueled as well by white flight, as we later observed. In the first weeks of class, numerous Caucasian students transferred out, perhaps at parental urging—leaving these classes with an even higher representation of African American students than planned, and than existed in the school as a whole (68.3 percent compared to 47.7 percent). Thus, we began with what was already in place at the school, just as teaching begins with where the students are.

The Introductory Meetings

The project was introduced at an inservice meeting, which at the school's request was entitled "Working with Low-Stanine Classes" and to which all staff were invited. In three ninety-minute afterschool sessions designed to mirror the expectancy-change process, we asked teachers and administrators to read brief research articles about each of the components of the expectancy communication model (we provided packets of assigned materials), to observe themselves or each other, to write about and share what they learned about these practices (we required written field notes), and finally, to brainstorm about changes in practices and policies that would offer high expectations and instructional support to all students. These inservice workshops were attended by the principal, vice-principal, and twelve teachers from the departments of English, history, science, and math.

Teachers wrote honestly about the complexity of what we were trying to do in such a short span of time, amid hectic working conditions: "I found it impossible to complete the assignments within the time limits. As do most teachers, I was in the middle of a unit and could not devise an ideal lesson in just one day . . . so I tried to use the principles as I understood to revise a lesson already in progress to meet the requirements." Implementing these new ideas successfully was, of course, not easy and required modifications. The opportunity to reflect upon and share what elements worked, what elements did not work, and the small successes helped teachers to move forward with improved efforts. Another teacher wrote that "her organizing of

the [cooperative] groups was poorly done: students resisted, and absences prevented a balance." But she added, "Here, the task was mine—they [the students] didn't do such a bad job. Interest and involvement for the rest of the assignment was substantial. I was free of fighting for their attention and could see how they worked together. Students stopped to share what they were doing in their groups as they left class."

In three weeks, we had engaged administrators and teachers in the shared tasks of reading research findings and applying new thinking to their classes with low-stanine students. And we had evidence that despite the feeling of "too much for too little time," new learning did take place. An administrator wrote, "I discovered and re-discovered several important things for my teachers, that is, the value of using small groups for noisy ninth graders." The workshops "created a marvelous atmosphere for tired teachers at the end of their day . . . and reached a few people who were floundering." A teacher also commented. "The opportunity to discuss with other teachers was most meaningful."

*The Culture of Expectations for Teachers*

Yet the working climate we had created in the inservice sessions stood in stark contrast to the ways in which the teachers routinely worked. When we asked "How much do you exchange ideas?" One teacher's response was particularly revealing: "It is not consistent. On the average, there seems to be an atmosphere of competition—the inference is . . . Well, I've done that. You mean you haven't done it?" Typical of many schools, we saw remarkable similarities between the teachers' work culture and the differentiated achievement culture that children had reported and we had observed.

The teachers described their curricular work as creative and satisfying with the brighter students but tough and often boring with the less bright students. While they often decried the monotony of many of their routine tasks, they reported feeling overwhelmed by the challenging tasks of the inservice—the reading of research, classroom observations, and written assignments. The feelings they expressed were much like those they later reported for their lower-track students, in the face of increasingly difficult curricular assignments. The teachers also described themselves as "tracked" just like their students, a phenomenon Merrilee Finley (1984) has noted. Their interactional groupings largely reflected the ability level of the students they

were teaching as well as their departmental affiliation. There existed remarkably little interaction across disciplinary lines. It was also commonly acknowledged that the newest and perceived weakest teachers were assigned to the lowest-track classrooms, whereas honors and advanced placement assignments were seen as rewards given out by the administration. Many teachers who expressed a special interest in teaching the lower-track students saw costs to their involvement: "They were taking on the most difficult groups in the school, ones that other teachers wouldn't work with." A major risk of this project, voiced by many, was that the involvement of some teachers would signal to others that they did not need to take responsibility for these students. This risk was on our minds as well, because such a result would militate against whole-school reforms.

Not surprisingly, the sharing of classroom observations in front of administrators and other teachers proved scary. A competitive atmosphere prevailed that emphasized performance and comparison, rather than learning and individual improvement. Teachers described an implicit achievement hierarchy that distinguished among the good and the not so good, the fledgling and the more experienced, the more flexible and the more rigid teachers. The opinion that "some dogs can't learn new tricks" was expressed numerous times. Akin to teachers' beliefs about students, teachers' beliefs about colleagues' capacities for change reflected largely fixed rather than malleable notions about ability to learn. Further, agency among all teachers was not actively being developed. In contrast to many staff development activities, the structure of our inservice sessions demanded participation from all, through the sharing of required assignments. Yet some resisted this approach. As one teacher put it: "I understand that you set up a program to help me discover things for myself but I guess I wanted to be fed information." Finally, the climate of relationships with fellow teachers and administrators was described as lacking in trust and as failing to create a larger, inclusive community. Teachers decried that they could not "choose their colleagues" and that relationships with administrators were "filled with misunderstandings and differing perspectives."

In short, the climate in which teachers worked mirrored the differentiated culture described in classrooms like that of Mrs. Iver. These working conditions likely kept differential expectations for students in place, both within and across classrooms. Why did this unhealthy work environment persist? First, this way of interacting was what teachers knew best: indeed, it was re-

inforced on a daily basis and not surprisingly, modeled in classrooms. Second, without the regular opportunity to review research that would improve instruction for students with diverse needs, to examine school data about how different groups of students were actually doing, to challenge each others' perceptions, and to provide support to improve practice and policy, educational prophecies that were positive for some and negative for others remained largely in place, subject to individual differences between teachers. We theorized that if school staff members changed their beliefs about themselves, their colleagues, and the system, as well as refined different kinds of educational interventions with the support of their peers, they would be better able to make such changes for students.

*Adapting the Expectancy-Change Model*

The inservice workshops elicited commitments from twelve staff members, eight teachers from a variety of departments (English, history, science, computer science, and special education), and four administrators (the principal, vice-principal, one counselor, and one dean) who joined the collaborative team for the first year of the project. We negotiated the details of our shared vision in a two-day planning meeting held during the August following the April inservice workshops. Using the principles of the model outlined earlier, we targeted all incoming ninth-graders assigned to the lowest track of English classes. Students were assigned to one or more of the classes of participating teachers, who shared a common group of students as well as a common preparation period each day, scheduled around the lunch hour. This created, in effect, a school within a school to test the expectancy-enhancement intervention.

This model of expectancy change was implemented and evaluated over a two-year period, although the project continued well beyond my involvement. Our evaluation, also collaboratively negotiated, captured the course of the intervention over time as well as evidence of change at the multiple levels of student, teacher, and school policy. Our data were narrative records of meetings, pre- and post-ratings of practices by teachers, and pre- and post-data collected from student records, examining the target students as compared to students from previous years. We followed a sample of 158 students (the first-year cohort) over the two-year project, a group whose progress we contrasted with an archival sample of 154 comparable students from the two previous years' classes.

## Challenging Entrenched Beliefs, Practices, and Policies

This vision reflected the ideal, of course. In reality, even getting around the same table at the same time proved problematic. The teachers and administrators who joined in this effort were passionate and experienced educators already committed to these students, open to trying anything that worked and open to working with each other. Yet at the start of the project, even well-intentioned teachers and administrators reported negative perceptions—of the project, colleagues, administrators, and students. Indeed, the thorny problem in disconfirming negative expectations and developing more positive expectations is that there exists ample evidence for the negative perspective. To the extent that expectations are perceived to have been confirmed, each fresh interaction provides additional support for prevailing beliefs. There exists a rich knowledge base about optimal conditions for fostering motivation and learning as well as substantial and underutilized resources within schools that if harnessed can engage students and support teachers. Yet sadly, teachers are often not working in conditions that expose them to a wealth of alternative strategies—so instead they foreclose too early, before optimal opportunities to learn have been provided to students. And administrators, buffeted by multiple and conflicting demands, fail to engage their teachers in problem definition and resolution—before the opportunity to succeed with diverse learners has been provided teachers.

The cornerstone of our intervention was to promote a change in "working conditions" that could challenge or undermine these negative perceptions and support alternative pedagogical interventions that would ultimately, after considerable trial and error, bring about more positive results. Our work to reframe expectations (cognitive change), refashion instruction (behavioral and programmatic change), and change the school climate and policy (institutional change), was interwoven seamlessly to promote an interdependence of influences, as an ecological theory would suggest.

*Reframing Expectations*

The initial setback in securing a common conference period meant a short lunch hour for shared work, with two subgroup meetings at the beginning and end. This difficult starting point fueled teachers' already low expec-

tations about obtaining administrative support. As one of the teachers explained, "Teachers gave up on joint projects because of the amount of overwork, combined with the lack of administrative support and follow-through." Adding to this understandable frustration was the teachers' desire to be credited for our weekly meetings. One teacher spoke for all when she said, "I feel I should get units for this," but an administrator countered that the district would not award credit for planning, only for teacher development and teacher education.

Teachers also admitted misgivings about the project that they had not shared at the inservice. There were concerns about "a confused start with little prior notification" and about "having expected higher-achieving students." Some teachers felt that "they had been assigned to the project, rather than choosing it" and that "the amount of time asked for was too much, the lunchtime was a crazy, pressured time to meet, the program of readings was burdensome, the readings while wonderful did not apply to their school," and so on. Not surprisingly in the context of tough conditions, teachers felt "overwhelmed—exhausted by teaching, extracurricular, and career-development obligations."

There were also doubts about their colleagues. Teachers, including themselves, were viewed as unlikely "to make the time commitment," unlikely "to use period substitute teachers in order to observe each others' teaching," and unlikely "to profit from the intervention." Indeed, teachers felt unable to meet the demands of a leadership role. As one teacher pointed out, there was "no way teachers could run these meetings, they didn't have [the] authority." Teachers and administrators argued over what could be required of teachers and parents. For example, administrators noted that they "would like to require that teachers attend [school] rallies but can't due to union contracts." Teachers complained that despite their best efforts to arrange parent conferences, "these parents did not show up."

Finally, many reservations were shared about the students' capabilities to benefit from the project. It was felt that this "lower group of students" needed behavioral improvement before we can really make a difference academically." Student disruptiveness, such as taunting, was seen as "a large part of the adverse conditions under which teachers operated." It was agreed that these students "couldn't follow directions, remain on-task for ten minutes, and would rapidly take advantage of lapses in discipline." It was emphasized that "these kids want to be force-fed information and resist tasks that require independent thinking or higher-level operations." It was

also noted that so few of these students "participated in any extracurricular activities . . . they lack particular talents and skills." One teacher explained: "The reading level of our students ranges from third grade to seventh grade. Their writing skills are extremely deficient. They bring with them very little background knowledge from which they can draw to enhance learning. Many of the students hate to read, have trouble listening, do not study, and in fact, know very little about studying."

Thus, we began with our backs up against these multiple perceived constraints. Our task, as researchers from outside this system, was to identify and confront the constraints systematically and to avoid being stopped in our tracks. We were aware that we were seeing student behavior in the context of membership in so-called low-ability classrooms, where all the students had suffered prior failures, the models for school success were limited, and the curriculum provided was remedial rather than challenging. But for the school staff, attention was initially focused on the limitations of these students, not on the limitations of the context of instruction. This is not to deny that the observed deficiencies of the students were indeed enormous. As we were told by participating teachers, "some negative attitudes were justified, both about teachers and students." Another teacher countered that "teachers might need to accept students' limits." But at what point do we accept "limits" in a student's capability to learn?

Our question, increasingly shared, was how to understand these observed "deficiencies" (what they were and under which contexts they were perceived) and how to intervene pedagogically from this point onward. By providing directed assignments, focusing our inquiry through agenda-setting, identifying potential resources, redefining the problem, and affirming positive expectations as well as examples of individuals' strengths, the spirited discussions in our weekly meetings began to shake up perceptions, albeit slowly.

This exchange illustrates the reexamination of underlying assumptions—in this case, the capacity of low-performing students to engage in more challenging material and the kind of teaching support that is required. A teacher reported that one of the writing exercises ("What's It Like to Be a Ninth Grader?") had originally been assigned only to her advanced classes but based on the advice of the last meeting, she had given it to her project class as well. She shared samples of student writing that pointed to an overall sad tone and to the students' feeling as if they were of second-class status in the school. Several teachers commented that the purpose of giving different as-

signments was to better target or address the particular needs of students. But another teacher countered with a description of the positive results of assigning her project class a reading task from a ninth-grade-level text. She said, "They could see that it wasn't babyish, and they liked that ... They really tried to work with it." She did describe the difficulty they had with the text, however, due to their limited vocabulary. Another teacher recalled that when she first taught, she had a reputation for "teaching anybody anything," but over the years, she'd slipped away from being "so democratic." I interjected that the school could maintain the same high expectations for all students using similar tasks but also create resources and strategies to help lesser skilled students move forward to meet the same goals. The "disillu-

sioned" teacher responded that most of the group wanted to do exactly that, but did not know how: "I guess I'm not a very creative person because I find it hard to come up with those." Another teacher quickly replied that "it was hard for everyone; teachers needed to support each other in learning how."

By the next meeting, although concerned about the time it took, our "disillusioned" teacher reported on a lesson that she had tried in advanced, average, and project history classes. Prior to showing the film *A Tale of Two Cities*, she had spent three days preparing the project classes with "silent reading of the story synopsis, class discussion of reading, important points, relation to class content, and vocabulary" in order to avoid failure. In the past, her "low students got nothing from the film and just snickered that it was too funky," but this time, with the preparation, the students themselves told her how "good" they had been in responding to the film. Another teacher summarized our learning by pointing out that while "student behavior continued to be of importance, higher-order changes, as in the curriculum, led to changes in student behavior."

Not only were perceptions of student capability shifting, but as the challenging demands of the project became more familiar, it was perceived by many of the teachers (but not all) as less onerous and more rewarding. As one teacher described it, "Our meetings were planned and focused so that we had a sense of progress and accomplishment; we were committed to attending regularly and preparing by reading research or attempting new practices in our classrooms." She went on: "Occasionally after teaching three classes Thursday morning, I was disheartened or exhausted and longed for an hour of quiet solitude, but my commitment to my colleagues always won out and the support and stimulation of the meeting was always energizing and refreshing." Another teacher described a shift from fear of sharing to a real colleagueship: "From the years of isolation where some

teachers were afraid to ask for help or suggestions for fear of admitting they had a problem, we came to see each other as colleagues and collaborators, people with strengths that could support us and ideas that could help us be better teachers." And indeed, despite their initial disbelief, teachers began to take leadership roles in these meetings: "We continued to read one or two papers a week with each of us volunteering in turn to lead the discussion the following week. Reading the research and discussing its application was one of the most interesting aspects of the project to me."

## Refashioning Instruction

We worked hard to address what "teachers did not know how to do" and what teachers found "scary to implement"—namely, teaching challenging material but with varied supports that helped students from diverse backgrounds to respond successfully to that challenge. Systematically, we experimented with all the features of the instructional climate that students had told us were critical to the development and support of high expectations for diverse learners.

This experimentation was not easy work. Successful implementation of changes in each area required embracing new attitudes, gaining access to resources for problem-solving through research and other faculty, and persisting through multiple trials. For example, in applying cooperative learning techniques, one teacher described the ups and downs of our efforts:

Although cooperative learning activities have a definite structure, students are responsible for much of the instruction and direction of activities. This shift in responsibility from teacher to student is sometimes difficult. It can be uncomfortable for a teacher to allow students to control and direct classroom activities, especially in low stanine classes, where teachers feel a need to establish and maintain control. Our first attempts at cooperative learning were not completely successful. Some students refused to participate in activities and some found it difficult to work in groups that were organized for activities.

Happily, we began to experience some positive results, which proved reinforcing and even changed some beliefs, as this teacher described:

One of our history teachers divided students into groups. Each group was given a part of the industrial revolution to research. Within each group, each student was responsible for researching a particular set of facts con-

cerning her group's topic and then explaining her findings to the group. The group in turn had to teach their area of the revolution to the rest of the class. Student work was compiled into booklets covering the entire revolution. Each student was given a booklet to keep. Although the teacher did encounter some difficulties with the activity, the results were well worth his efforts. Students proudly showed their work to their peers and other teachers.

The multidisciplinary membership of the project also enabled joint efforts across departments. As one teacher illustrated, for example, common expectations became possible: "Just being in an environment that reinforces the same behavioral demands as students move from class to class seems to provide students with a confidence about what is expected of them . . . They aren't confused by trying to meet the varying expectations of different teachers." Entire integrated lessons, developed jointly across departments, also became feasible. One such lesson across English and history focused on fostering students' personal relationship to history, engaging their families in student work, and providing more challenging texts. A teacher described these efforts:

We agreed that we want to give students a strong sense of history and its relevance to their lives. We began by asking them to write about their names: how their parents chose them, what they meant, and how students felt about their names. They wrote first drafts in class, went home, and interviewed their parents, and then revised their papers, adding what they learned about their family history and how that history sometimes determined the name chosen for them. From this point on, it has been easier to draw parallels about how they are influenced by history. We have also selected reading materials that coincide with the ninth grade world history curriculum. For example, we asked our students to read *Animal Farm* to enhance their understanding of the Russian Revolution, while simultaneously providing them with a demanding book that is also read in ninth grade honors classes.

As we moved forward with higher-challenge materials, we experimented with ways to improve the poor reading skills of the students who were sorely tested by the more complex texts. We developed a tutoring program for students, as well as a study-skills curriculum that was utilized in English and world history, integrating skills important to both these subjects. We in-

corporated reading aloud, shared reading, brainstorming before and after reading, techniques to enhance listening skills, lunch-hour tutoring, and so on, but most importantly we worked toward developing or rekindling an interest in reading—in becoming a reader, a writer, a historian. Awakening interest in the students and providing teaching support to help them succeed nourished many students' willingness to work hard on addressing gaps in their basic skills. Many of our innovations were focused on the development of student agency and their capacity for self-reflection. We asked students "to write about the classes they are doing best and worst in." Students "talked about the reasons why they think they are succeeding or failing and how they think they might improve their performance." As one teacher noted, "This type of reflection presents students with an opportunity to evaluate their performance and hopefully, make the necessary changes for improvement."

A large part of our efforts targeted the building of a sense of community—in the classroom by showcasing successes with meaningful products that the students could share, in the school community with participation in schoolwide events, through extracurricular activities, and through outreach efforts to parents. As one example, student writings were published in each classroom; this allowed students to read each others' work as well as take home a record of their accomplishments. A teacher described the project's work in fostering school engagement: "No longer willing to have our students settle into the portrait of the at-risk student who plays on no team, joins no clubs, attends no school events . . . we wanted them to have a taste of the larger life at our school because we believed that this involvement helps students enter into the academic life as well." As she also noted, "Unlike other students who had found a niche easily, our students had neither confidence nor experience with extra-curricular activities . . . they had not had years of music lessons, participation in little league soccer and baseball, and roles in community drama productions . . . ; they merely went to class (if they did) and went home again."

One strategy used was to draw together a group of active seniors who were involved in a variety of extracurricular activities and invite them to talk to each of the project classes early on in the school year. A teacher pointed out, "There were two particularly nice aspects to these presentations: the ninth graders got to meet some 'famous' students—captains of the league-winning volleyball, wrestling, and basketball teams, stars in the school musical and jazz ensemble, student body and class officers—and they

got acquainted with the procedures for joining activities so that taking the first step—signing up—would not seem an impossible barrier. As teachers, we got to see another side of our students: the side that aspires to be an actor, a third baseman, a sprinter." Seeing this "other side" of students was

precisely what we were after—changed instructional conditions that enabled us to see qualities of students that had not been expressed in the classroom before. With a graduate student intern supported by the University of California, Berkeley, the project also developed a community service program for students to volunteer in elementary schools and day care centers, medical and veterinary hospitals, recreation centers, and nursing homes. Of the twenty-five students placed, fifteen (65 percent) participated successfully; further, a number of students were offered part-time jobs at the end of their service and others developed new career interests.

Fostering parental involvement proved to be most difficult, for these were parents who "rarely came to school except to deal with problems of poor grades and misbehavior." Project teachers began regular phone calls home, introducing themselves and acknowledging something positive about each student. Not surprisingly, many parents were hard to find, numerous phones were disconnected, and families had moved. Conferences about individual students, newsletters, and special meetings with dinner provided were some of the activities tried, but the results were disheartening, with parental interest growing slowly, almost family by family. The most successful outreach effort grew out of disappointment and reflected what the teachers considered as their last-ditch attempt:

Instead of writing letters to the whole group, we began to write letters to parents on an individual class basis. My first letter of the new year included a newspaper article I had discussed with my class which dealt with a Northern California family who had just heard that their third home-educated son had been accepted at Harvard. In the letter, I described an independent reading unit I was beginning and asked parents to assist me in getting their children "hooked on books." The response was wonderful. Parents wrote that they would take their children to the library and check out books with them, they would encourage them to read the daily newspaper, they would cut down on their children's TV time. Because they had taken the time to answer so enthusiastically, I wrote back to them immediately, including direct quotations from their letters. Before sending that letter, I read it to the class. Students were delighted to see their parents' names and ideas in

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print—some students even circled their parents' paragraphs . . . Now every time we include quotations or ideas from parents . . . and every time we get more and more response.

This teacher emphasized the underlying principle central to this success: "It has taught us a valuable lesson, a lesson we used constantly in our classrooms and had forgotten in our dealings with parents; that is, personal attention and acknowledgment bring positive results."

We worked hard to put in place more challenging instruction, with more varied supports for the different skill levels and different learning styles of students, and to integrate all the components of a more positive expectancy climate into classroom practices. While we saw some evidence of success, we also saw obvious limits to efforts made solely within classrooms. So began our examination of obstacles at the interface of classrooms, schools, and districts.

### Reconstructing the Institutional Climate and Policy

From the very start of the project, contradictions surfaced between what teachers were attempting to do in the classroom and the prevailing norms of the school. The failure in the first year to obtain a common conference period for all participants and the denial of staff development credit from the district for these planning meetings were just two such examples. When school staff are not given sufficient time or credit to collaborate, they cannot nurture or sustain collaborative work as effectively. Further, interventions had to be individualized for those students whom we failed to reach and there was as yet no institutional mechanism to track student performance across classes. As one teacher put it, "Despite our attempts at instructional and curricular innovation, we have lost some students along the way . . . Some students disappeared for long periods of time, only to pop back in again for short intervals." More targeted interventions required information about how students were doing across classes and over time (including about absences, grades, and detentions), as well as problem-solving with deans, counselors, and parents.

Further, teachers began to see that instructional innovations could only go so far within the bottom rung of tracked classes:

As we read the research . . . and applied it in our classrooms, we came to know that we could no longer tolerate our department's rigid tracking sys-

tem and its damaging consequences on teachers as well as students. What we did not know is how to dismantle that system or how to teach untracked classrooms . . . We had begun with ninth grade "low" students. We struggled to unlearn beliefs years of teaching remedial classes had made gospel, forced ourselves to identify limiting assumptions about students, pushed each other to stay optimistic when students ignored homework assignments, turned group work into chaos, came to class with no materials and little intention of learning. By the end of the first year, we were frustrated: high expectations. . . . shared responsibility, calls to parents were not enough. Classes limited to low achieving students did not work: our students needed student models of scholarship and good behavior.

Ultimately, the project could not rest on some teachers and not others. Responsibility had to be shared with all teachers and across all departments—a common vision of high expectations for all students needed to be forged. . . .

Thus, the project teachers moved forward with systemic goals, by monitoring the performance and behavior of these students so as to better individualize interventions, by detracking the project students out of limited opportunity classes, and by improving the working conditions and the spread of the project. That the counselors, deans, vice-principal, and principal attended meetings only sporadically during the first year, and that there was turnover in the second year (a new dean, counselor, and vice-principal), made working through these contradictions all the more challenging. These intermittent administrative appearances kept alive the feeling that "nobody cares what we do as long as the kids don't jump out of the window." Teachers felt isolated and unsupported by counselors. Deans, too, were seen as undermining teachers' intent when dealing with disciplinary referrals. Most could not believe that everyone would "come around to appreciating or striving for project kids . . . who were not going to Cal anyway." One teacher described his frustration over the lack of administrative support to acquire computers that eventually became available through our school-university partnership: "A project like this should have greater priority and administrative support."

Differences between the culture that was developing within the collaborative team meetings and the culture in the school became more and more evident. One teacher described our early attempts to engage the administration:

We came to the meeting with the administrators looking for an exchange of ideas. They wanted us to have an answer and take responsibility for the so-

lution. When we proposed different possibilities, we were met with "See, you don't really know what you want" . . . We learned that we had to come to a meeting with a strict agenda, express no public reservations among ourselves, leave the meeting with a statement of agreement, and follow up with a written note spelling out exactly what we had understood had been agreed to.

With hard work as well as administrative turnover, this teacher acknowledged that "our task was much easier (and more collaborative) with our next administrators who saw us as visionaries, shared our vision, and did their best to support us in any way possible."

The project pushed on, generating strategies to build more effective communication among the teachers, administrative staff, counselors, and deans. Our weekly meetings provided a regular opportunity to bring school staff together around new and joint missions. In these ways, we inched forward with our agenda.

In order to address concerns about individual students who were not responding to changed instructional conditions, we clearly needed more, and more timely, information. Although early on there was much talk about "the students who skipped late period classes" and "the students with multiple detentions, many of them not served," our question became "how can we systematically follow students' attendance and discipline patterns?" We suggested meetings with project teachers and the two deans. Despite the perceived problems that "arranging a time when both deans are available would be impossible since it is a zoo in there," and despite the tension that "time spent on one problematic student is taken from someone else," we forged ahead with the deans, and then, with the counselors.

Bringing this wing of the high school staff more fully into the collaboration enabled both the classroom teachers and the deans and counselors to learn from each other. One of the counselors argued for "reducing the number of times students were sent out, suggesting that a trip to the dean was not . . . preventive of future problems." Hard work on this collaboration resulted in regular progress reports about students in all of their classes, which enabled the project to monitor student attendance, grades, and detentions. With this information, we were able to access teachers who did well with certain students and learn from them, to meet with parents informed by a student's entire record, and take a close look at how our own work was affecting student engagement and success in school. We regularly held case conferences about particular students in our weekly meetings and held joint

ening its reach throughout the school, the district, and nationally. Teacher workshops were designed and held within and outside the school, and we continually invited others to our weekly meetings. The project struggled to keep all of its participating teachers, to include new teachers, and to influence all departments. Each meeting began with a brief update and introduction of new members so that teachers felt free to visit and try out the collaborative process. The special challenges of the different disciplines were examined. The consensus was that suggestions to math and science teachers must be handled differently given the "perceived" lockstep aspects of the curriculum. Grants were applied for and won, awards were received, and collaborative papers about the project were presented at national meetings and published. In all of this work, the thrust was to monitor, and with feedback, to redesign our efforts; to develop performance incentives that reinforced positive changes; and to shift more of the shared leadership to the school and away from the university.

## Results of the Intervention

We followed the first cohort of project students through two academic years—the first year when they were tracked into the bottom rung, and the second year as they were integrated into average college preparatory classes taught by nonproject teachers. Had expectations changed for these low-performing students, were they being guided by more positive and challenging teaching practices and policies, and had their school performance changed?

The narrative records of meetings documented that, over time, the project teachers shared more complex, differentiated, and positive views of student abilities. Early talk was focused on the deficits that these students brought to the classroom: low motivation, negative self-image, lack of skills, and poor behavior. Later discussion shifted to the capabilities of students and to what teachers could do to enrich the curriculum, enhance their instruction, and solve the problems they experienced with students. Teachers became more active agents for change—in their own school, as mentors to other teachers in the district, and at a national level in writing about their work. Indeed, the school gained state and national recognition for this effort. Teacher ratings showed an increase in the use of positive expectancy practices. Further, project participants gained a common period in which to meet, district credit was granted, and grants brought new resources to the school, such as xerox machines, teaching materials, and computers. New school policies had been

conferences with students and their families, which included several teachers as well as a dean or counselor.

Step by step, we also worked to detrack the instruction of the project students. That these students, because they would lack the needed credits, would never qualify for admittance to a four-year college, even with more demanding instruction, became unacceptable to the project. The first policy change, hard won, was described by one teacher: "It was instigated through collaboration between the teachers and administrators, allowed college-preparatory designation, and facilitated moving capable, motivated students out of non-college-bound classes." This retroactive credit for students who met certain standards proved difficult to implement because district computers printed out designations only for entire classes. Thus, this policy had to be implemented by counselors on student transcripts; importantly, extensive follow-up was needed since a number of the recommended students had "not received intended credit due to resistance from counselors."

Moving beyond individual cases, the next policy change targeted the dead-end, bottom-rung English classes. Despite lingering concerns of some (as one teacher explained: "I have real issues with heterogeneous grouping because we are getting these kids after nine years of tight tracking"), we gained approval at the end of the first year to dismantle non-college-bound English classes and to broaden the inclusion of students in the higher-level ones. This initiative depended on "the help of our administrators who painstakingly programmed our classes to achieve a balance of achieving and non-achieving students." As one teacher emphasized, "We pushed ourselves to use our accelerated (honors) class lesson plans in our college prep classes, to hold college prep students to the same kind of expectations about deadlines and final drafts and homework assignments that we had for accelerated students, to bring into our college prep classes the kind of freedom, opportunities for shared locus of responsibility, and long-term activities generally given only to high achieving students . . . so that in signing up for college-preparatory English, our students were signing up for less quantity, not less quality." Our third policy change opened up Advanced Placement English classes to student choice and contractual agreement to do the work as signed. As this teacher remarked, "For the first time, AP was open to students who had been in ESL [English as a Second Language] and remedial English classes as freshman, students with combined SAT's of less than 800, students with less than a 3.0 grade point average."

Finally, we worked on improving the conditions for the project and wid-

implemented to detrack these low-achieving students more generally and to broaden the curricular challenge offered.

But there were also failures. As we struggled to widen support for the project, the district agenda for magnet schools, which led to financial ruin, worked at cross-purposes with our expectancy-change effort. A changing administrative staff and the absence of consistent administrative leadership militated against the project taking hold in the entire school. There was also some teacher attrition after the first year. One teacher left due to "time demands and press of other responsibilities." Another left in anger over failed "high" expectations for the project; this teacher was disappointed in an administration that dumped low-stanine students on project teachers and failed to give teachers incentives for their hard work: "No one should have such a tough combination." The teachers varied in their comfort with the collaborative rather than the prescriptive approach; one teacher wanted to be given the "nuts and bolts" of what to do. The teachers who signed on for a second year wrote that "we have discovered that teachers who are unwilling to read the research, rethink their perceptions of students, and examine pedagogy do not change their negative attitudes." Instead, despite efforts to work with all departments, the project remained very much a single department effort during this second year.

Some change in students was documented. Beyond prior achievement differences, project students in contrast to comparison students earned higher GPAs and received fewer disciplinary referrals. But we were not able to affect the absence rate after one year in the program. The narrative records underscored the more positive presence of these students in the school: there were reports of students arriving at school early to use the computers for their writing assignments, student applause for each others' work, students' sharing their accomplishments with other project teachers, and students' expressed excitement about the honors-level materials. Also for the first time in the school's history, two of the freshman class officers elected to the student council came from project classes. At a one year follow-up, by the end of tenth grade, only half as many of the project as opposed to the comparison students (19 percent vs. 38 percent) had transferred out of the school. This greater holding or motivational power of the school was a behavioral confirmation that the intervention was positive for students. While it was not accompanied by significantly higher grades, there were changes in the predicted direction. The unevenness of these follow-up findings (greater holding power, but not significantly higher performance),

can be explained by two possible confounding factors. The lower attrition rate of project students might have meant that more low achievers were staying among the continuing project students and pulling grade averages down (at least temporarily), as contrasted with the continuing comparison students. In addition, these continuing project students, but not comparison students, had been placed in college-bound classes for the first time, and were being graded in contrast with higher performing students. Both these factors could potentially mask the higher actual achievement of the project students at the end of tenth grade.

Without a control school, one can only suggest that the changes documented in teacher thinking, classroom practices, and school policies derived from the intervention itself. The evidence for student change is stronger, however, given the availability of a comparison sample of students from previous years. The more positive perceptions of teachers and the greater holding power of the school at a one year follow-up are important confirmations that the intervention had some positive effect. It is possible that given the evolving implementation, the model was evaluated too early and not yet at its fullest strength. It can also be argued that given the high-risk group of students targeted (and a high absence rate that we could not change), one year of a positive expectancy climate, at this late date in these students' school careers, was not a strong enough intervention. Nonetheless, because of the consistency of improvements across the school, improvements that matched those predicted by expectancy theory, the evidence is promising for this approach to expectancy change.

The influence of this project extended well beyond its partnership with the university. For example, one of the teachers became a teacher-researcher who now writes extensively about detracking reforms. And under the leadership of project teachers, more changes were made in the detracking of students for instruction. In subsequent years, heterogeneous classes for English and history were expanded beyond ninth grade to tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades, and honors and advanced placement classes in English were opened to student choice (except in the ninth grade). This exception for ninth graders was an effort to keep parents of high-achieving students from defecting from the district. After a teacher-initiated student survey indicated that students could not make the choice about an honors curriculum without exposure, the English teachers voted unanimously to program all ninth graders into carefully balanced heterogeneously grouped classes of twenty

students. During the fourth year of this program, outside evaluators under-scored the positive atmosphere in mixed ability classes, noting that it was "inspirational to see the mix in classes of African-, Asian- and European-Americans." The students interviewed were "unanimously enthusiastic about their English teachers" at Los Robles High School and described their teachers as individuals who "made sure you do your work." It should be noted, however, that a later evaluation by a university researcher found un-evenness in effectiveness across the heterogeneous classes. And some par-ents of the highest-achieving students mounted heavy protests.

While the detracking effort spread very far in this high school, it con-tinued to face enormous obstacles and lack of administrative support, not unlike what other schools have experienced in the implementation of de-tracking reforms. As Jeannie Oakes and her colleagues (1997) have noted, "Detracking reform confronts fundamental issues of power, control, and le-gitimacy that are played out in ideological struggles over the meaning of knowledge, intelligence, ability, and merit" (p. 482). They go on to argue that "these prevailing conceptions of and responses to intelligence are grounded in ideologies that maintain race and class privilege through the structure as well as the content of schooling" (p. 484).

These are the thorny challenges at the heart of what Robert K. Merton (1948) described as the "specious validity" of self-fulfilling prophecies, where perceptions of limited ability lead to teaching strategies and labels about relative smartness that ultimately confirm the original judgment, ei-ther in fact or in perception. Thus, the prophecy and its confirmation con-tribute to an unending cycle of events that proves difficult to break. Such challenges exist because these processes are embedded in complex social and political settings and untold over long periods of time. When we enter into the self-fulfilling prophecy midstream, we must grapple with a reality that has already been confirmed. The pressure from all sides is to accept that reality as accurate and as unalterable.

While there is compelling evidence that implanting falsely positive expec-tations can under certain conditions produce more positive outcomes, this is very difficult to do in real-world settings such as schools, where there are achievement records on students, tracked educational opportunities, and diverse student populations with varied educational needs, all operating within a larger political context. The induction of positive beliefs is neither long-lasting nor sufficient. On the perceiver side, we need to change how schools and teachers interpret the capabilities of students, provide opportu-

nities to learn, and ultimately reappraise student performance. On the target side, we need to increase the agency of children and families, lessen their vulnerability to limiting judgments and limited learning opportunities, and open their eyes to untapped capacity. Interventions that deceive parents, students, or teachers, that prescribe specific teacher behaviors, or that legis-late school policies in isolation will likely fall short of the mark. Such inter-ventions fail to address the interaction between individuals, systems, and policy.

Changing the culture of academic expectations is not only about the detracking of instructional groups and classes, and not only about higher standards and more challenging curricula. Such a culture change must ad-dress, link, and apply our newest theories of learning to the development of effective pedagogy and a set of policies that support it in every classroom. Only when we change the learning as well as the assessment conditions (see Shepard 2000) will we see this as-yet untapped potential of all students.

There is an emerging knowledge base about such effective pedagogy for a diversity of children (see Bransford, Brown, and Cocking 2000; Cohen and Lotan 1997; Pressley et al 2001; Tharp and Gallimore 1988; Wheelock 1992). There is also growing knowledge about how to create new educa-tional communities based on alternative theories of learning and school organization (see Comer et al. 1996; Chasin and Levin 1995; Mehan et al. 1996; Oakes and Quartz 1995; Peterson, McCarthey, and Elmore 1996; Slavin et al. 1996). Most critically for expectancy change, teachers and ad-ministrators need to work collaboratively as practitioner-researchers, within and beyond the borders of their schools. They need to conduct their own as-sessments of local conditions; adapt and align effective teaching practices and policies; and evaluate their results for each and every student under their care. And they need to link up with other school sites and laboratories in which effective pedagogy is being refined.

Such a context for learning is lacking in most schools. Sarah Warshauer Freedman and her colleagues (1999) point to how such a collaborative net-work of teacher-researchers can enhance teachers' knowledge about effec-tive literacy teaching in multicultural classrooms. And Kenneth Wilson and Bennett Daviss (1994) argue for systems of schools that "can function as a laboratory, uniting skilled and willing teachers, able researchers and design-ers, students of diverse backgrounds and abilities, and classroom innova-tions, all working together to improve each other" (p. 199).

Our intervention goals clashed with changing mandates of the principal

and district. Rapid turnover of administrative leadership made it difficult to forge alliances with administrators who could encourage participation of all the teachers, across all departments. Until such support was secured, not all teachers were held accountable for diverse learners or offered help to teach them more effectively. Finally, equity in expectations for learning carried enormous political consequences, as seen by the increasing dissent of parents of the "high achievers" when the context for enriched classes was broadened to include all students. If a commitment to expectancy change is to endure, all participants, including parents, must learn to see and nurture ability differently.

In the end, a dedication to lifting expectations for "low achievers" is a commitment to continued improvement in teaching. As one of the teachers wrote: "Our classrooms are changed places, we are changed teachers because of the project. It allowed us—invited us—to share our frailties, our loss of faith, our failures with each other and to create a vision of the possibilities for public education when teachers work together . . . it has been about our achievement as much as our students. When we started this project it was about the kids, now we know it is about us."