

FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE

PARTICIPANTS' GUIDE FOR FILM SCREENING



WELCOME AND THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

Welcome and thank you for coming to this special screening of “From Our Perspectives,” an EdChoice film. We hope that you’ll come away from this film and the following discussion with enthusiasm to expand educational opportunities for the children of your school and community.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM THIS FILM?

The Barber Shop: During discussions among Black men in a barber shop, questions about the current state of education for Black students are asked and discussed. Host and moderator Curtis Valentine speaks with Black men about the history of education for Black students, delving into the intended and unintended consequences of *Brown v. The Board of Education*. The men discuss the lack of representation of teachers of color and the uneven discipline within schools, tracing it back to a lack of cultural inclusion in curriculum, leadership, and classroom discussions.

The Beauty Shop: Host and moderator Naomi Shelton speaks with Black women about the gaps in opportunities for Black students at traditional public schools. The women -- ranging from a former state lawmaker to a homeschool advocate -- discuss how tension outside and within the Black community impedes students’ chance to learn at their full potential.

The Restaurant: The men and women from the barber shop and beauty shop gather around a table to partake in soul food and discuss how members of the Black community can better work together for students’ benefit.

WHAT WILL YOU LEARN?

The film’s goal is to bring awareness and ignite critical thinking when it comes to the educational status quo in K-12 schools, particularly how it relates to Black students. These aims are intertwined in the film through:

- **Examining** the current lack of educational opportunities for Black children in traditional public schools
- **Analyzing** “how we got here,” including a discussion of historical perspectives on education for Black children in America
- **Highlighting** the strengths of Black togetherness and community, including the church’s role in supporting Black children and their families
- **Asking** how members of the Black community can do a better job advocating for choice and opportunities for their children

ABOUT CHOICE EDCHOICE.ORG

The EdChoice mission is to advance **educational freedom** and choice for all as a **pathway to successful lives** and a stronger society. EdChoice accomplishes this through **research and thought leadership, training, outreach, and focused state investment initiatives**.

EdChoice is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan organization committed to understanding and pursuing a K–12 education system that empowers every family to choose the schooling environment that fits their children’s needs best.

“From Our Perspectives” brings together Black leaders from different realms, including education policy, church communities, and politics. The film aimed to include varied points of view to foster more profound debate and conversations.

MEET THE HOSTS



Curtis Valentine

Co-Director of Reinventing America's Schools



Naomi Shelton

Chief Executive Officer at National Charter Collaborative

MEET THE PANELISTS

Chris Stewart *Chief Executive Officer, brightbeam*

Michael Phillips *Author/Chief Engagement & Fulfillment Officer, TD Jakes Foundation*

Alisha Thomas Morgan *Former Member, Georgia House of Representatives*

Dr. Kathaleena Edward Monds *Founding Director, Center for Educational Opportunity*

Dr. Charles Cole *Founder, Energy Convertors*

Sekou Biddle *Vice President, Advocacy and Student Professional Development Programs at UNCF*

India Johnson *Founder, Thrival Indy Academy*

Deirdra Reed *Partner, The New Teacher Project*

Walter Blanks, Jr. *Press Secretary, American Federation for Children*

VIEWING TIPS

The film is designed to bring questions and discussion points to the fore. As you watch, feel free to take notes in the designated spaces in this guide. Here are some other viewing tips:

1. There will be a discussion portion at the end - **feel safe to speak freely about your thoughts on the film and ask your questions.**
2. Consider as you watch **which points resonate with you and which seem unfamiliar.**
3. Allow yourself to learn new things and **rethink old ways of viewing education.**

FILM DISCUSSION POINTS

The Barber Shop

1. Black Americans have a long history of educational excellence, built by them and for them. In what ways do current public school systems undermine this?
2. The Brown v. the Board of Education ruling had unintended consequences, including dismantling the Black-created and maintained educational system. Discuss the negative fallout of this ruling and how it has impacted the current state of public schools.
3. Only 7 percent of public school educators are Black; only 2 percent are Black men. Discuss why this is often at odds with Black students excelling.
4. The role of Black fathers and guardians is vital to the home and education experience for Black children. Discuss the ways this can improve in the current systems.
5. The men in the film talk about how the current government-run educational system benefits adults more than students. Discuss this point of view and other similar systems.
6. Discuss how families can advocate for better educational opportunities for their Black children.



FILM DISCUSSION POINTS

The Salon

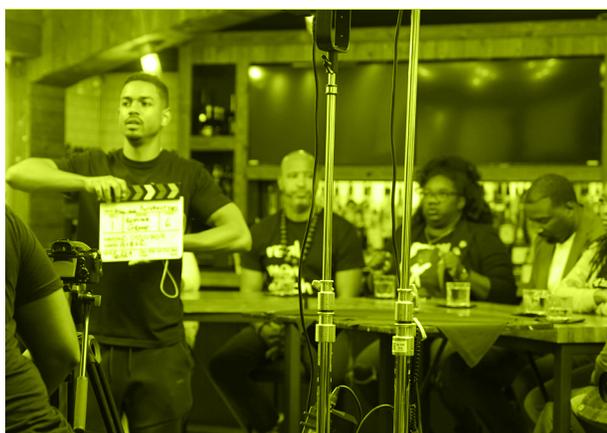
1. Why do you think advocating for educational choice is so unpopular - even among Black families?
2. The former lawmaker on the panel talked about how “liberal white women” were her biggest opponents regarding educational choice. Why do you think this group of Americans, who say they stand for progress, push back against school choice?
3. In what ways have you experienced members of the Black community pushing back against progressive ideas, such as school choice and prison reform?
4. Have you ever experienced a time when you advocated for your child and were dismissed? Explain and delve into “why” you think that happened.
5. What types of resources do you feel are vital for families to feel empowered about educational paths for their children?



FILM DISCUSSION POINTS

The Restaurant

1. Soul food brings Black families together. Discuss the “why” of this -- and its significance in the Black community.
2. Churches have long been a backbone of Black communities, not just for spiritual health. How have you seen churches and church leaders strengthen the lives of Black families?
3. At family or church gatherings, everyone pitches in to serve everyone and every taste. Why do you think this community spirit is lacking when it comes to education?
4. Food is a necessity to live, just as education is a necessity to excel. Discuss ways you have seen education take a backseat to other issues and why you think that happens.
5. What new information did you learn from these educational advocates in the film,, and what old beliefs of yours were questioned?



THANK YOU!

Thank you again for your participation in this screening and discussion of **“From Our Perspectives,”** an EdChoice film.

Visit EdChoice.org to learn more about school choice options and advocacy groups in your area.



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