



## Twelve Recommendations For Dignity in the New Orleans Public Schools

July 2009

*Dear superintendents, principals, teachers and members of our school community: We Rethinkers believe that a climate of dignity and respect makes learning possible. Please respect our dignity and we'll respect yours.*

### Safety with Dignity

- **Recommendation 1: Optional use of metal detectors for all elementary schools.** Allow school communities to use positive safety approaches rather than metal detectors and body searches if they choose to do so. Metal detectors make students feel like criminals entering their own schools.
- **Recommendation 2: Include students in the security solution!** Refer non-violent offenses to student intervention groups that offer peer counseling and conflict resolution under adult advisors.
- **Recommendation 3: Train students so they can keep their schools safe.** Student intervention teams need training to run reconciliation circles and counsel peers. Partner with Rethink to secure grants to make this happen.
- **Recommendation 4: Increase the number of social workers and counselors in our schools.** Even in hard economic times, we need them! Social workers and counselors can solve security problems before they happen.

### School Food with Dignity

- **Recommendation 5. Support the Rethink “Food Provider Report Card” project.**

= Page Two =

- **Recommendation 6: Serve us fresh local food. Choose food that is grown organically – without pesticides, antibiotics and growth hormones.**
- **Recommendation 7: Give us at least 45 minutes for lunch.** We need time to wash our hands, stand in the food line, and eat without stuffing it down.
- **Recommendation 8: No sporks under any circumstances!** There's no appropriate use for this utensil in our cafeterias.

## **Dignity and Teaching**

- **Recommendation 9: Make sure that teachers don't use cell phones in classrooms.**
- **Recommendation 10: Observe teachers regularly in their classrooms and coach them so they can be inspiring and nice to kids.**
- **Recommendation 11: Conduct student evaluations of teachers.** If teachers grade students every quarter, students should grade teachers every quarter, too.