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EDU 5420 – Politics
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Four main themes which appeared in the text Whatever it Takes by Paul Tough are:

Themes:

- 1. Leadership**
- 2. Eliminate barriers to success**
- 3. Focus on results**
- 4. Community Involvement**

The subsets to these categories are:

1. Leadership

- Establish high standards, expectations, and increase rigor
- Increase accountability on all levels: administrators, teachers, students
- Manage the support from various stakeholders
- Seek out advice from experts

15.2.17 “We’re going to show people all over the world that with a good staff, with dedication, with teamwork, that we can turn out first-rate scholars.”

40.2.8 “When I meet these kids at age three or age four I just don’t see any reason they should not be successful.”

92.1.6 “We’re going to do what we can for your child, and you are going to have to do for your child what you have been taught...”

114.3.2 When Canada went to Wyandanch he realized there was a struggle going on in America and he now realized he saw a role for himself.

127.1.12 “Everything we do at Promise Academy is going to be different ..”

127.2.3 “Canada introduced the woman who would have direct responsibility for the success of the sixth grade: ...”

128.4.2 “We want every single one of you to go to college.”

128.6.1 “We can do this. Together we’re going to do this.”

131.3.4 “I’m for vouchers, I’m for charter schools – I’m for anything that blows up the status quo.”

133.2.3 “Geoffrey Canada had guaranteed that every student entering sixth grade would graduate from high school with a successful academic record, meaning that they would be ready for college, and that they would be, at the very least, on a grade level in math and English.”

135.1.4 “. . . that a business model was exactly the right approach for Promise Academy. . . “

135.1.8 "Canada believed the best way to achieve that goal was to act not like a bighearted altruist but like a ruthless capitalist."

135.3.3 "If a kid is missing twenty days of school, this organization should treat that like a crisis"

136.3.6 Druckenmiller asked Doreen Land, the school superintendent, what she was doing to fix things.

145.4.2 "The war is those 1s; those kids we don't think are going to move. We can't surrender that ground. Don't put this off. Go into battle mode now and stay there. Fight the war now."

156.2.7 Beginning of year 2 – Canada – "there were some things I thought we should push on, and in deference to the experts I didn't push. I should have. Now it's full steam ahead, guns blazing. We're going to get this done."

156.3.7 Druckenmiller – "If we don't show serious movement by the end of next year, and success by the ninth grade, then I think things could become very challenging."

157.1.8 Druckenmiller – "We can't fail."

162.2.9 "As Canada often said, he was tired of programs that helped few kids "beat the odds" and make it out of the ghetto; his goal was to change the odds, and to do it for all of Harlem's kids."

165.1.1 Canada – "only thing that needed to be fixed at PA was what he called "blocking and trackling, the basic nuts and bolts of school management that Grey sometimes seemed to him unable to master: solving discipline problems, collecting useful data on students' progress, developing curriculum, managing teachers."

171.1.2 "So you've got to rally the troops. That's why you're a leader. We're in a war. You have to walk in the door with a take-no-prisoners, I'm in charge, move over a new sheriff's in town attitude. I don't care what the evidence is. I believe there's a way of getting this done."

171.4.6 – new leader – Pinder – made demands and set expectations on parents, students.

172.1.8 "Expectations will be set very high for your children. If we try to reach the stars, we will land on the moon."

172.2.6 "By working hard I mean you have to make every effort at all times to succeed. Failure is not an option. We expect your children to be responsible for his or her behavior, and failure to adhere to these commitments will result on the loss of privileges."

172.3.1 "The new sheriff had apparently arrived."

174.1.6 Canada to Pinder "the school needed to make an immediate turnaround, and that meant improved test scores right away."

174.1.11 Pinder concluded same as Terri Grey – the school's biggest problem was discipline.

175.2.2 Pinder – he needed what Grey had only dreamed of: a dean of students.

175.3.15 "...Pinder and Finn conducted an all day discipline for every teacher in the school, sharing the tips and strategies that Finn had gathered."

176.2.1 "There are no deputies, everyone in this room is a sheriff."

178.1.5 "We have to do better. The sole purpose of us being here –teachers, assistants, everybody-is to prepare you to go to college. Every decision that I make, every choice that we make as educators is going to be made so that you can be--"

187.3.11 "Crisis is good. As worried as everybody is about the reputation of the organization and the school, I think it is well worth it to be in the heart of this battle and to struggle with it. It's been a long time that we as an agency have put ourselves n the line."

214.2.1 McKesey seemed unflappable, an oasis of placid confidence.

214.3.9 McKesey referred to his administrative staff as his "leadership team"

229.2.11 "It's my responsibility to explain why it's so important. If they don't understand what it takes for their child to be successful, it's my responsibility to tell them. It's my responsibility to educate them on that."

244.1.4 If I honestly thought that we weren't going to do better, then I would have said something much earlier."

246.1.4 I'm not blaming students for the failures to get good scores," "That's our job and our responsibility. That's what we get paid for."

254.3.6 He was making a tradeoff: he was reducing the students' individual chances of success in order to improve the odds for the school as a whole

2. Eliminate Barriers to Success

- Ensure rules are enforced in order to maintain the safety of all children
- Early intervention program
- Increase time on task through extended school day and year

3.5.1 Canada wanted to help poor children.

4.1.1 He wanted them to grow into fully functioning participants in America

12.2.2 "We are calling our school Promise Academy because we are making a promise to all of our parents."

18.3.5 "There's just no way that in good conscience we can allow poverty to remain the dividing line between success and failure in this country...We have to even that out. "

40.2.12 Canada believed he could find the ideal intervention for each age of a child's life, and then connect those interventions into an unbroken chain of support.

79.2.5 A large part of the mission of Baby College was to figure out what advice and support to give the parents so that children would have a better chance at success.

127.1.5 “Your teachers wanted to make sure everything was ready for you to learn.”

131.3.4 “I’m for vouchers, I’m for charter schools – I’m for anything that blows up the status quo.”

130.2.12 Thernstroms – KIPP schools – extended day, year – 60% more class time than public schools. Clear/strict rules – 2 principles “work hard” “be nice”

162.1.14 “If you are made to feel special and elite, you tend to work harder.”

162.2.1 “And this situation – a blighted neighborhood producing a select group of high-achieving kids who manage to accomplish great things and succeed beyond their peers . . . “

163.1.8 Canada – “the only way to save large numbers of poor children in a neighborhood like Harlem was to give them all a high-quality education, . . . transformation of the entire community.”

167.3.1 “Grey felt that Canada was demanding Kipp like results without giving her the tools.”

170.2.1 “We’re in the kid saving business. That’s not what schools traditionally do, but that’s what we do.”

183.2.5 “Druckenmiller’s largesse, and 40 new part-time reading and math specialists had been hired for the school’ second year.”

219.2.19 These students need to get frustrated and keep going.

222.1.1 “I just think we need to take a greater responsibility, a greater role in making sure that the children who need help get help”

223.1.8 They wanted students to believe they had the necessary tools to read and understand any text, no matter how foreign it might seem at first.

232.2.1. “I am convinced that the longer a child remains with us, the longer they will be able to orbit around the community without the gravity pulling them back in.”

252.1.17 “I’m excited about the opportunity to kind of press reboot,” . . . “I feel good about this next year. I am really optimistic about it.”

3. Focus on Results

- College and career readiness
- Enhancing student achievement
- Implement a coherent, content-rich curriculum with a focus on literacy, math and critical thinking skills
- Increase time on task through extended school day and year

3.2.4 Canada wondered what if he started with the outcomes he wanted to achieve and then worked backward from there.

3.12.14 “If you work with us as parents, we are going to do everything to see that your child gets a good education.”

12.2.3 "If your child is in our school, we will guarantee that child succeeds.

65.3.2 The outreach workers' goal was to ensure that 80 percent of the others and caregivers of young children were graduates of the program

80.2.3 "...he thinks there is a better way to do things, and he believes it is his job...."

128.4.2 "We want every single one of you to go to college."

134.2.1 – Canada to move the students in PA ahead they had to be "exposed them to a whole lot more instruction." "It's going to be a monumental effort to get these kids from where they are right now to grade level."

136.2.1 Canada – Walmart model – "we have to be every bit as focused on results as they are."

141.1.4 "The test is coming on the nineteenth whether we're ready or not.

137.2.4 "How much do we need to do? Start from the result you want to achieve...work backward, figuring out every single thing you have to do in order to get there."

159.3.1 Taking from KIPP – more time on task, extended day, year, professional development for/on teachers/principals, lesson planning, curriculum is a craft, explicit goals set for each year, month, week, class, frequent formative assessments and use that data to change/modify curriculum and instruction.

178.2.10 "We have not lowered our standards this year; we have raised our standards."

184.1.5 "Canada's plan for the year was to gather as much data on each student and to crunch and sort and cross-reference it so carefully and completely that every adult who came into contact with a child would know exactly his or her academic strengths and weaknesses..."

193.1.4 "Dimitry Materov, 2007, "Skill begets skill; learning begets learning. Early disadvantage if left untreated, leads to academic and social difficulties in later years. Advantages accumulate; so do disadvantages."

194.1.7 "His conclusions are in many ways similar to Geoffrey Canada's: the best and simplest way to prepare children for a successful life is for their parents to give them everything they need at home, in their earliest years."

194.2.5 "...he was deeply engrossed in his early childhood initiative, and he was increasingly preoccupied by a concept he was calling the conveyor belt."

195.3.2 "Canada added another section to the conveyor belt: a brand new program to precede Gems called the Three-year-old Journey (graduate school version of Baby College), open to parents whose children who had been selected in the kindergarten lottery.

196.2.8 "In 2008, nearly every incoming kindergarten student would be a graduate of an intensive 11 month pre-kindergarten program, and their parents would have been through two separate parenting programs. They would be prepared for kindergarten in a way that few children in Harlem had ever been before." (Baby College, Three-year –Old Journey, Harlem Gems, Promise Academy)

197.2:3 "...if we start with kids very early, and we provide them with the kind of intense and continuous academic rigor and support that they need, then when they get to the middle school and high school level, were not going to need those super human strategies at all."

198.3.2 "if we continue waiting until middle school and high school to intervene with poor students of color...I just don't think that we're going to change the numbers in America as a whole."

205.1.4 "Harlem Gems did all of the regular pre-kindergarten activities; however the difference was that throughout the day, at every turn, the emphasis was on language."

207.2.2 "Most remarkably, over three years, not a single student was still considered delayed or very delayed after a year at Harlem Gems."

210.3.5 "More than any other kind of intervention in the loves of low-income children, intensive prekindergarten programs have an impressive track record."

217.1.6 He was proud of the school's arts programs but his real targets were reading and math.

262.2.1 What was most important to Canada, though, was not the individual successes of each of these initiatives; what mattered to him was the way they fit together

264.1.7 A few years from now, those young men and women graduated and returned to Harlem, they would become a part of the "contamination" of the neighborhood

265.4.5 "If poverty is a disease that infects an entire community in the form of unemployment and violence, failing schools and broken homes, then we can't just treat those symptoms in isolation. We have to heal the entire community. And we have to focus on what actually works."

274.1.11 " But now that we're finally seeing the beginning of an answer, this country has an obligation to keep trying."

4. Community Involvement

- Mobilize and rally assistance from community to battle against inequalities in education
- Increase accountability on all levels: students, parents, community members
- Manage the support from various stakeholders

6.2.1 One of Klein's early strategies was to recruit private groups.

6.3.9 Canada's fastest and easiest way to get involved was charter schools.

58.3.4 Canada met with T. Berry Brazelton who helped him put together a curriculum for Baby College.

86.4.2 Canada thought that they should be able to get children performing on grade level by ensuring all supports are working in the community.

131.1.9 “There was “no evidence,” Rothstein concluded, that KIPP’s strategy “would be as successful for students whose parents are not motivated to choose such a school.”

129.1.5 Coleman report – how minority students were shortchanged by funding inequities, but concluded students’ home environments and peer groups mattered more than their schools.

129.1.3 “could good schools overcome bad environments, or not?”

129.2.6 Rothstein, author of Class and Schools argued that it was unfair and misguided to put all of the blame for the poor academic performance of poor and minority students on schools and teachers

129.3.2 – 130.1.6 Thernstrom – No Excuses: closing the Racial Gap on Learning – problem with schools is not dysfunctional families or poverty, it was a school system that didn’t educate poor kids

212.3.1 “Fall, 2007, the first Promise Academy kindergarten class, the students chosen at the lottery in April 2004, would be going into third grade, where they would take their first NYS reading and math assessments. If they looked like average American scores, then Canada would have the first concrete evidence that he might be onto something that he might have finally found the right strategy and the right tools not just to close the gap between poor kids and middle class kids, but to keep it closed.”

224.2.6 “join the losing team” – to steer themselves away from comfortable jobs an instead do the hard work with the kids who had fallen behind.

255.3.10 As they watched their sons file across the stage to collect their diplomas, they couldn’t help but feel proud.