

Remarks to the School Reform Commission and Dr. Hite

July 1, 2015



Encounter with Representative John Lewis. Philadelphia PA's Shame*

Good morning. My name is Barbara McDowell Dowdall. For the resume I will submit to my new employer (SOURCE4TEACHERS) who is offering substitute opportunities at less than half the current rate, I am

a graduate of the Philadelphia High School for Girls, a school now “celebrating” two full years of “freedom” from the existence of a professionally-staffed and fully-funded library,

a graduate of Temple University and a contributor to its many libraries,

a three-time Yale University Teachers Initiative and five-time Teachers Institute of Philadelphia (partnership of University of Pennsylvania and the School District of Philadelphia) Fellow whose curriculum units were written with the support of professional librarians and their million volume collections.

For this morning’s remarks, I am a member of the Alliance for Philadelphia Public Schools (APPS). Last week, at a national congregational gathering in Portland, Oregon, I had the honor and privilege of meeting United States Congressman John Lewis, <https://johnlewis.house.gov/john-lewis/biography> , with whom I shared my concern about the lack of school libraries in Philadelphia. Representative Lewis replied with a question:

“Philadelphia, Mississippi?”

*Dowdall, attending the Diamond Jubilee of the UU Service Committee at the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly in Portland OR July 24-28 with fellow congregants from the Unitarian Society of Germantown, presented the Congressman with an Alliance for Philadelphia Public Schools (APPS) button and a report on the state (almost universal closure) of libraries in our public schools. Once actual state of shameful affairs was clarified, he said he would follow up.