

Tiye Jones  
ELA 6<sup>th</sup> Grade  
2012-2013

## “I Am Because We Are”

### Vision

My vision for my 6<sup>th</sup> grade class this year is to provide my students with the necessary tools to be leaders of their future. Our Big Goal will be 85% mastery on the Louisiana iLEAP test in order to open doors to opportunities that will not otherwise be available. We will become advocates for our own education by 1) understand the power within ourselves, 2) taking ownership of our actions, 3) achieve plausible academic outcomes, and 4) are consistent with my student’s desires.

We will work as a team to ensure that all students are supported in their academic achievement. Our voices and concerns will be heard in a safe classroom environment. We will utilize language that is positive and encourages growth. We will get a clearer understanding of ourselves, our ancestors, our history and Black culture. We will be creative with our reflection process and tap into our artistic expression when we are dealing with conflicts with one another, getting frustrated with academics, or just having a challenging day.

With the fall semester approaching, it is imperative that the students that are capable of understanding the gravity of the educational inequalities that linger in this city. Within Jefferson Parish, a mere 67% of students graduating each year it is with great urgency that students are given the education they deserve. Every single child that walks through our door this fall can, and will receive the academic skills to triumph in the classroom. We will remain persistent and determined in the midst of challenges, be awareness of collegiate options, and will incorporate their personal interest within daily assignments and lessons. We will become passionate about our education and understand the importance of Read 180 and ELA to our personal success as a student.

## Goals

### Leaders of Tomorrow's 5 Goals for Success

1. **Leadership** - we will learn to be leaders for positive change in their own lives and in the community
2. **Conflict Management** - we will support one another with a multitude of issues accompanying adolescence including; maintaining a safe space for all students, personal decision making, classroom concerns, academic motivation, peer and friendship concerns.
3. **Understanding of Self** – we will be able to understand that Black people we are not a mono-culture the black experience is different for every single one of us. Through understanding the richness and history of ourselves we can better determine our future as holistic human beings. We will also challenge and change the stereotypes that are placed upon us as individuals and as an entire people.
4. **Creative Expression** - we will be invested in creative ways to engage in academics (reading library, personal journaling and reflection corner to release frustration)
5. **Teamwork** – we will internalize that we are a family, a community and a team; our success as an individual is a success for all (we will get our “shine on,” engage in daily shoutouts, and Friday Umoja circles)

The first goal toward our year-long vision is the ability to develop of leadership skills inside and outside the classroom. We believe that strong students understand how knowledge and information are constructed in our world. As leaders, we use their minds well in order to navigate our complex world of information. We are committed to graduating students who have the tools, knowledge and experiences to be self-sufficient and empowered life-long learners. We know that to be successful in the classroom we must effectively work and lead in groups, families, and communities by actively demonstrating respect and accountability to others and their differences. The sad reality for many students is they are unaware of the gravity of their situation within this educational catastrophe. We must be empowered by our leadership skills and use this ability to articulate our truth, instead of being crippled by our reality.

Our second goal is to be able to deal with our differences in a positive and respectful manner. Within American culture, we have been conditioned to inflict violence on one another and accept this as a tolerable means of confronting our issues. We will understand that words are one of most powerful tools we have as leaders. We have to always be mindful of how we communicate to one another. “You can catch more bee’s with honey than with vinegar,” this is a quote that I will repeat within our classroom to reinforce the notion that words are potent. This will support my students intrinsically internalizing the power of appropriate conflict management. Over the year we understand the power of our words, power of our voice, power of our appearance, power of education, power of the music we listen to, power of the food we eat, the true power of ourselves. We will learn to agree to disagree, and that people do not always have to valid our individual opinions. In middle school is can be very challenging to keep small problems small problems, but we learn the skills to properly deal with minor situations. We will incorporate a no nonsense nurturer position by not allowing bullying, teasing or unruly attitudes control the classroom.

The third goal is understanding people of African decent. We will care deeply for Black people and hope that we find and take hold of the tools that will grant us our freedom. Our ancestors have fought relentlessly on our behalf to ensure that we blessed with a life free of discrimination, prejudice, and biases. We as a community have lost sight of our history causing us to be blinded by our future. We are become immune to settling for MUCH less than we deserve. We will know that with positive reinforcement and unconditional support all students black, brown, white and in between are more than worthy of an exceptional education and can learn. African Americans have forever been given the short end of the stick. We have misplaced our resilience and perseverance, and are now more than ever willing to settle with inadequacies. This has become a habit and mindset that is crucial to the limitation of our education growth and development. We will be passionate about speaking, living and knowing the truth. We will be passionate about the holistic empowerment of ourselves as students. We will passionate about learning to love themselves, where we come from and where we are going. Another challenge we will be charged with is, understanding Blackness and it’s connection to the English language. We will dare to explore the English language, develop our vocabulary and be able to navigate the world and create the possibilities we often dream. Our ideas of blackness are created by the movies, television

shows, and the reality where we live. We will expand our minds to know about Black engineers, poets, nurses, superintendents, stockbrokers, and millionaires.

Forth goal we will work on throughout the year is the influence of creativity within the classroom. Through understanding my students interest and aspirations I will better equip to engage them with Read 180 and ELA concepts and expectations. We must incorporate this within my classroom to support students that are already facing reading, writing, and comprehension difficulties. The ability for us to use art to support our academic achievement is essential. For us to have a clear understanding of self, to be leaders, and problem solve we must find expressive outlets. This will support my students enrolled in System 44, for complete non-readers, because language competency maybe be overwhelming. Artistic expression will support our classroom to make sure that all of my student's actions contribute to the curriculum and student learning.

My last goal is that teamwork is most important skill that we will work on this year. Many are deprived of the truth and stuck in a state of arrested development. Often times society dictates your ability to learn, grow, and rise from struggle based on other people. This method of dictating students capacities is detrimental not only to individual, but to the entire future of our nation. Students have the capacity to do more than they know. As human beings, we often get discouraged by obstacles that may arise in the process. I believe that if students are given the proper tools to reach their full potential magical things can happen. As a team, we will have and maintain high expectations. We will be invested, excited and engaged about our education. We will model teamwork by example. We will be able to work together to ensure that we maintain a healthy learning environment. We are, because I am. We can do very few things alone. I want my student to know they are their classmates keeper, for us to flourish, prosper and be successful we must work together.

*(May or may not add in a few months)*

*I am passionate about the value of education, it is the gatekeeper to a spectacular life. I believe that the world is filled with beautiful, loving and amazing people. I believe that the world has the power to show you the most awe-inspiring places, people, and opportunities if only you have the power to identify them once they are shown. world is filled with teachable moments and crucial lessons. The trick, is that a person has to be taught how to recognize them, and how to react when faced with these situations People must fill some form of support to triumph in indescribable situations. I believe once people are shown the beauty of this world it sometimes becomes overshadowed by the atrocities of this world. When the beauty of this world is contagious and deeply personal, all of our most profound horrors disappear.*

**Class Motto**

**"I Am Because We Are! Everyday I come to school with my learning mind on, prepared to advocate for my teammates and myself!"**

**Measures of Class Vision and Goals**

1. Students will feel internally motivated to take control of their education, lead by positive example looks like: supporting a teammate who is struggling with a word during independent reading; cleaning up after a fellow student who had to leave class early; having a exemplar class line during an unannounced fire drill.
2. Observable usage of conflict management strategies to dissolve problems.  
sounds like: "When you did \_\_\_\_\_ I felt \_\_\_\_\_" "I was upset because \_\_\_\_\_ as your teammate could you please \_\_\_\_\_."
3. Using the stories and books of class to make text to self, text to others, text to world connections to better understand self.
4. Students will utilize their cleverness through art as a way to think about: consequences, conflicts, class work assignments, homework assignments, and exit tickets.
5. As a team, we will be able to articulate their paths towards goals and visions.

**Academic Achievement**

**Measures of Success**

My students will attain tiered reading growth 2 or 2.5 daily years to reflect the growth needed for success.

Reading A-Z fluency tests, growth on SRI, grammar and vocabulary exercises.

My students will meet 85% mastery expectation "Book Logs", on the iLeap.

Vocabulary tests, writing sentence tests, Read 180 graphic organizers and worksheets.

All students will be promoted to their 7<sup>th</sup> grade Read 180 class

The mastery of academic goals has the power to change the life trajectory of my students. The mastery of academic skills will be rooted in real world content that allows for students interest to be incorporated in their educational experience.

Student Traits and Mindsets	Measures of Success
<p>My students will obtain the linguistics skills that will and emotional maturity to handle conflict in learn in purposeful and meaningful ways by identifying describe their goals in confrontation and actively choosing non-physical combatance.</p>	<p>I will observe conflict management skills reflect maturation. These skills we will class. I will hear complex vocabulary to their emotional frustration.</p>
<p>My students will understand that their individual television, and identities are very complex. We will begin to I want understand a holistic representation of black be whatever people. We are not limited to media and societal portrayals of "Blackness."</p>	<p>I will show them books, movies, examples of African American leaders. students to understand that they can they want!</p>
<p>My students will become a team, where we value, hear put respect, care, and work together. We will know disrespectful to one that we are only as strong as our weakest link.</p>	<p>We will not fret or argue. I WILL NOT outs, mean language, and another.</p>

Teacher Continuous Reflection of Vision and Goals
<p><b>Impact of my big goals on my students:</b>  By the teaching the skills of my visions and goals my student will be better equipped to operate in society through the achievement of a of a developed vocabulary memory bank. We will mature in our avenues of expression and be more engaged as reader and consumers of text in different forms. This will allow them to interact with many differing peoples and allow them to seek opportunities within and outside of the classroom, school, community and throughout life. This will also help set them up to acquire the skills and opportunities necessary for success in college.</p> <p><b>Plans to keeps students focused:</b>  The best way to keep students focused is to be there support and be there unconditionally on behalf of my student. The vocabulary test, grammar exercises, growth on SRI scores, writing sentence test, and keeping "Book Logs." These test will provide tangible results that will show progress or not.</p> <p><b>Motivation towards goal throughout the academic year:</b>  There are so many assessments that will check my students progress: fluency test, vocabulary and grammar exercises, "Book Logs," daily Read 180 worksheets and graphic organizers, sentence tests which will all lead to 85% mastery on iLeap. I will support my students in being excited about going to the 7<sup>th</sup>. This curiosity about school will propel them to work towards the tools to prevail against all odds. With constant positive reinforcement, authentic relationships, focused urgency, and ownership of habits within and outside of the classroom, we can advance towards closing the achievement gap.</p>

### **Potential Challenges!**

1. We will need time to understand and internalize the vision and the goals.
2. Students may feel overwhelmed by the variety test, worksheets, and handouts.
3. We will need to work hard to change behavior that has been conditioned for years and may not be reinforced at home.
4. I may get frustrated along the way when my students are not engaging in respectful behavior. It will take a lot of internal reminding to stay focused on the growth.
5. I also believe that the world can be a vicious trap of unfortunate situations. My students may be overwhelmed by the harsh realities of this world and internalize them as their truth. I must encourage my students to stay focused on the end goal.