

Educators in Nation's Largest School Systems Speak Out in New Documentary about Impact of Culture War on America's Children

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Now available for streaming and download, the documentary ***Defining US: Children at the Crossroads of Change*** takes viewers inside the nation's largest school systems to share the untold stories of educators and students at the center of a culture war in America's schools. The battle affects over 3,000,000 educators and over 50,000,000 students, potentially having the most harmful impact on students of color who are now a majority of America's youth.

Produced by CWK Network, Inc. and released worldwide to immediate acclaim by Gravitass Ventures, the documentary is the flagship in a series of films that provides an inside look and deeper perspective on how and why constructive conversations and successful programs that address race and other social issues are critically important to student identity, development, and success. The film gained momentum over the summer through private screenings in Los Angeles, Washington D.C., Atlanta, New York City, and other communities across the nation.

"You are going to be blown away by what you see," said New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) Chancellor David Banks at the [New York screening](#). "Let this film settle in your mind . . . every moment of the film I want you to think about, now what?" said Banks.

The inspiration for the film began as part of a conversation between Paul Forbes, a Black educator from New York and Stacey DeWitt, a White filmmaker from Atlanta, with the goal of producing more than a documentary, but also a platform with credible information and educational resources that give families, schools, and communities the tools they need to create positive, sustainable change.

"This is not a moment, but a movement," said Forbes, CEO of Leading with Hearts and Minds and Former Executive Director of New York City Department of Education, who appears in the film and is an Executive Producer. "We know that the browning of this county has caused anxiety for many people . . . We now have the power and the platform, and we are going to stand up," said Forbes.

"Defining US lifts up teachers and students as a voice of reason in the divisive national dialogue that threatens America's freedoms and future," said Stacey DeWitt, Director, Executive Producer, and CEO of the company that produced the film. "At time when Americans are trying to figure out who we want to become, the documentary reminds us that the heart and health of our nation will be determined by how we take care of our children," said DeWitt.

"This film not only celebrates and uplifts our young people and our educators and our influencers across the country, but it will serve as an inspiration for those who are actually in the work," said Banks. "What do we do with this? Where will this take us? We need to make sure that how we move after being inspired by this film, is critically important."

Defining | US

Media Alert

Click [here](#) to preview of the documentary.

For more information about *Defining US: Children at the Crossroads of Change*, please visit definingus.org. See [Electronic Press Kit including testimonials and remarks from NYCDOE Chancellor David Banks](#).

Connect socially on social media [@definingusofficial](#) on Instagram, [@definingus](#) on Twitter, [Defining US](#) on LinkedIn, and [Defining US](#) on Facebook.

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About *Defining US*:

[Defining US](#) is a non-partisan documentary that tells the unheard stories of teachers and students inside the nation's largest school systems who are most impacted by the culture war in our nation's schools. The nation's two largest school systems, New York City Department of Education and Los Angeles Unified School District, provided key access to producers along with Atlanta Public Schools, Guilford County Public Schools, and others. Leading voices in education from Yale University, Columbia University, University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), and New York University (NYU) also participated.

About CWK Network:

[Defining US](#) is produced by Connect with Kids Network, Inc. (CWK), a company that combines the power of media and the promise of education to tell the compelling stories of people and organizations that are improving important social and emotional issues that define our times. The company began by producing and syndicating documentaries and corresponding educational resources on social issues distributed through a network of local school districts and local ABC, CBS, NBC, and Fox television station affiliates reaching over 55 million households. CWK now produces national feature documentaries and corresponding evidence-based educational resources, teacher training, and parent programs delivered through digital platforms. The company is an Effective Producer of Programs on the U.S. Department of Education's What Work Clearinghouse List. CWK's documentaries have won over 27 Emmy nominations and awards.

About Gravitass Ventures:

Gravitass Ventures is a leading, all-rights distributor of independent feature films and documentaries. Founded in 2006, Gravitass connects independent feature films and producers with distribution opportunities across the globe. Working with talented directors and producers, Gravitass Ventures has distributed thousands of films into over a hundred million homes in North America – over a billion homes worldwide. Recent releases included *Queen Bees* directed by Michael Lembeck; *Our Friend* directed by Gabriela Cowperthwaite, starring Casey Affleck, Dakota Johnson, and Jason Segel; *Vanguard* directed by Stanley Tong and starring Jackie Chan; *The Secret: Dare to Dream*, directed by Andy Tennant and starring Katie Holmes. For more information, please visit www.gravitassventures.com, and follow @GravitassVOD on Twitter and @gravitassventures on Instagram.