

1. "If I could have my ideal school, I guess I would have seats on the toilets and enough paper to clean myself."  
-Sarafina, the daughter of migrant workers in California
  
2. Message on Principal's Answering Machine:  
7:09 AM: "Dr. Brown? Mary Gkeldh. Laura never came home last night. Will you call me if she shows up at school? 297-6666. Thank you."
  
3. "I'd like a teacher who really knows math and knows how to teach it. All through high school I don't think I ever had a teacher really qualified in math. When I heard there was a math Regents test, I knew I wasn't prepared. So I left. No diploma." (Jacob's high school of approximately 3,700 students had two certified math teachers.)  
-Jacob, an African American junior from the South Bronx of NYC.
  
4. "Wouldn't it be nice when there was a problem on campus if we had students form teams with their teachers and go through this process, looking for gangs, safety, lunch problems, whatever. Then we would be empowering students to find solutions."  
-High School teacher
  
5. "My neighbor is a freshman who has a 99 average in biology and she has a private tutor for that. Imagine [what it's like] for a kid who doesn't have a 99 average and who doesn't have the money to put into that...Maybe you need to have a job every day after school Even beyond high school, you're limited by what college you can go to depending on what you can pay. And it puts severe limitations--- especially in a community where the playing field is so uneven— because you're either getting so much because of the money or so little. If everyone I just working on their own merit, then it would be a lot different than people who can get all this extra help compared to kids who can't."  
-Casey, the White daughter of Ivy League educated parents.

6. "Don't look at students just for answers, but look at who we are through the way we act. Not "what's going on in our home life"—be perceptive to what's going on in our classroom. Who we like, what's hard for us, what's easy for us. If you pay attention, you can see it."  
*-Maribel, age 16*
7. "Once I had a math teacher and at the quarter almost no people had passed her test. So she gave us a questionnaire: How can I be a better teacher? What do you like or dislike about this class? How can I make it easier for you to learn? What was your strength or weakness in this class?  
*-Mahogany, age 17*
8. "The people in the state capital just look at this city like it's a #\$\$%hole. They see teenagers as future inmates, not worth the investment... Sometimes I think is anyone really listening to us?' "  
*-Thomas, California sophomore*
9. "My global teacher turns it into personal experience so you can relate to the way you feel. Maybe his grandfather fought in the Vietnam War, so then I get interested in what happened in that war; who was the president, stuff like that. It makes you think: maybe I can relate it to my life."  
*-Lauraliz, age 14*
10. "I'm not adult enough to get a job and have my own apartment, but I'm adult enough to make decisions on my own, know right from wrong, have ideas about the world."  
*-Vance*
11. "In 9<sup>th</sup> grade, when I was trying to get out of the slump I was in, the teacher at the end of the term saw me working more. And he erased some of the days—it allowed me to get caught up."  
*-Porsche*