

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A CALL TO ARMS!

Two moms from Aspen, Colorado have issued a “A Call to Arms!” in honor of Valentine’s Day, February 14, 1994 in an hour-long television presentation entitled “**Getting to the Heart of Education: A Choice for Our Children.**”

“It is time we put a heart into our education process.” states Connie Marlow, mother of three. “The education of a child begins the moment he/she is born. We are all teachers and we teach through who we are, how we respond to and interact with each other and our children. We must accept this awesome responsibility and become conscious of everything we do. We must create an environment, birth through adulthood, that allows free expression of the human heart.”

In this hour-long dialogue Connie Marlow and Sandy Jones, also a mother of three, have presented a framework within which “a community can create the conditions which will enable its children to reach their highest potential”, a charge from the State of Colorado in HB 93-1313, its latest education reform bill. They explored a third option to the two possibilities facing our schools today: Outcome-based education, being promoted by the Department of Labor and Back-to-Basics, a reactionary movement spearheaded by the religious right, a well-organized group of Christians who already control 2,200 school boards across the country.

“We draw on the good points of both options and explore a synthesis that brings something that will work, first for the hearts, minds and spirits of our children, and second for the Department of Labor, the religious right , the liberals, the mainstream, the left field, the right field and the center field” states Sandy Jones. “If it’s good for a child’s heart, it will touch the heart of each person regardless of race, color, or belief. All of those artificial lines of separation will disappear when we come together on matters of the heart.”

Jones and Marlow formed an organization called “Parents for Choice in Education” in the fall of 1993 in response to their concern over the implementation of outcome-based education in the Aspen public schools.

Through letters-to-the-editor in their local papers, and appearances on Grassroots TV, their local public access TV station, they presented information to “broaden the perspective of the residents of the Roaring Fork Valley on the subject of education so that communities may give mandates to their school boards that reflect choice and innovation rather than apathy and confusion.”

This information blitz resulted in raising the awareness of the Aspen public to the level that the Aspen School District chose to abandon the steam-roller approach to implementing outcome-based education. “The signs are that the Aspen School District is proceeding thoughtfully toward an appropriate educational format which will reflect the needs and desires of the community, incorporating the direction from the Department of Labor and the charge from the State of Colorado in its latest education reform bill.” states Marlow who works closely with the schools. “Sandy’s and my job is to ensure that the community sees that at the heart of education lays the heart of each unique and beautiful child.”

In their talk Marlow and Jones gave a mission statement that is mind-stretching and paradigm-challenging. “We must examine every basic assumption that has been driving our culture for thousands of years if we want to pull ourselves and our children through these challenging times and lay the foundation for a future in which the human being can show the world what it really came here for. It’s time to open our hearts and our arms.” declares Jones.

This show was filmed in the studios of Grassroots TV, a community access station by Bob Vhrin, Station manager.

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Tape available.