

Philadelphia Public School NOTEBOOK

Volume 14, No. 4

Summer 2007

Student lenses zero in on schools

Starting in January 2007, 15 Philadelphia high school students were given 35mm cameras with black-and-white film, workshops in documentary photography, and the opportunity to record what they thought was important for the public to know about the education they are receiving in their North Philadelphia high schools.



"Library"

"The library wasn't open for about 10 years, and there were about 2 books on each shelf."

— Shanay Harper, Grade 10, Olney HS
Photo by Jasmine Garnett, Grade 10, Olney HS

All of the students are part of Youth United for Change (YUC), an organization dedicated to developing young leaders and empowering them to improve the quality of education and services in their communities to better meet their needs.

Training was provided by Critical Exposure, an organization that teaches youth how to use the power of photography and their own voices to become effective advocates for school reform and social change.

These photographs will be used as part of YUC's efforts to improve public education in Philadelphia and as part of the Pennsylvania Education Funding Reform Campaign, led by the Education Law Center and Good Schools Pennsylvania. Using these photographs and student stories about their experiences, these organizations are working to ensure that adequate resources support the education of public school students in Philadelphia and across the state.



"Bathroom"

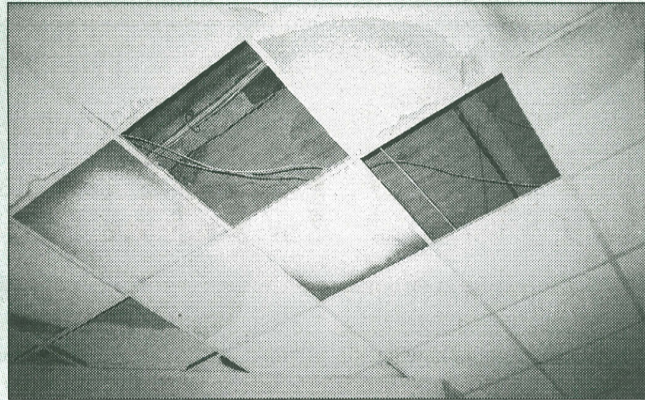
"The boys' bathroom in the school is always dirty, we never have hand soap, the hand dryer doesn't work, there are missing doors on the stalls, the toilets are always clogged, and there's graffiti all over the place."

— Ruben Correa, Grade 12, Edison HS, Motivation Academy



"Alarm"

"The alarm got broken due to kids being allowed to pull it, and it never got fixed."



"Ceiling"

"This is the ceiling next to the gym and across from my locker. It's falling apart, leaking, and you can see all the gross stuff on the other side of it. This is a safety issue because that ceiling is falling and leaks, which can lead to injuries. The ceiling is like this all over the school."

- Carmen Rosa, Grade 10, Edison HS, Business Academy



"Water"

"There's no water and no way to get drinks. We don't have funding for water or renovations."

-Christina Holley, Grade 10, Olney HS

These and other student photos will be displayed during the month of June at the Journey Home Gallery and Community Center, 948 N. 8th St., Philadelphia. A public reception for the exhibit will be held on June 13, 2007 from 6 - 8 p.m.