

Fine

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said. "We have 5000 safety officers in New York schools, and they all work for the NYPD."

"If you live in New York you cannot separate education from criminalization. So watch out because it's coming here too."

"The primary public sectors waiting for Black kids right now are prisons and the military."

Fine told the story of New York principal Mark Federman, who was arrested after trying to intervene when police arrested a senior who had arrived at school early to study and meet with a teacher. Teachers, not police should be in charge of school discipline, she said.

In a talk that ranged from budget cuts in education to how to do research with youth, Fine urged the audience to look carefully at who benefits from budget and policy decisions and how they affect young people.

The move to judge schools by test scores and to close down schools that don't do well has benefited the testing companies, she said. Yet across the country schools are closing in the name of accountability.

"We need to be asking, 'Why are you spending money on all those tests you're cutting teachers and closing schools,'" she said. "What is your evidence that testing is effective? What is your testing that closing schools is effective?"

The only study on the impact of closing schools, (by the Stanford University's CREDO research center) suggests that students lose out, she said.

"The evidence is that there is an academic loss the year of the closing, because it is

so traumatic.

"And what happens to those dispersed bodies? Most kids get enrolled in equally crummy schools. Some never enroll in a new school and become part of the dropout/pushout statistics."

Fine pointed to the differences between schools serving poor students and schools serving well-off families. She said Brandeis High School, for example, was closed down before being reopened as four different schools: two serving poor students of color; a third that also serves poor students was a "second chance school" offering credit recovery courses; and the Frank McCourt School for Journalism, which selects students based on grades. The result is separate and unequal system, a kind of educational apartheid, Fine said.

"In New York, we're closing down schools for Black and Brown kids and reopening them for the gentry."

Recently, Fine has been working with youth through the Public Science Project to document young people's experiences. About 40 youth worked on the 'Polling for Justice' survey of 1000 of their peers. The

'What is your evidence that testing is effective? What is your testing that closing schools is effective?'

survey looked at young peoples' experiences with school, family, police and health care. It also asked about illegal drug use, sexual risks and violence.

When youth are involved in scientific inquiry, they ask different questions because they have knowledge that adults don't have, Fine said.

The youth researchers rejected calls from adult researchers to ask what they saw as overly intrusive questions about sex, for example. But they added questions that delved deeply into the way young people are treated in public spaces.

"I would not have known about 60 percent of the negative interactions with cops in the last six months," Fine said. "It relates to depression, it relates to missing school."

The research into "Circuits of Dispossession," showed that the youth who have the most difficult life experiences are likely to be from high-poverty neighborhoods, to be youth of color, and/or to be LGBT(Lesbian, gay bisexual or transgender). Boys tended to be more affected than girls.

But the survey also showed that between 30 to 44 percent those 'most dispossessed' youth were not using illegal drugs, taking risks with sex or behaving violently. Two factors showed up as protecting youth from

harm: belonging to a youth group and having a supportive adult in their lives.

That's important to know, Fine said.

"So many kids live in circumstances where if they just stand still, they are in harm's way."



Lewis & Clark's Michelle Maher, left, with Michelle Fine, keynote speaker for the college's School of Education and Counseling commencement

Free Community Clinics for Whooping Cough Vaccinations in Vancouver

Clark County has experienced an alarming increase in whooping cough (pertussis), with nearly 140 confirmed cases reported since January 1, 2012. Only 23 cases were reported at this time last year. The Washington Department of Health has declared a whooping cough epidemic in the state, with more than 1,500 reported cases. Whooping cough spreads easily through coughing

and can cause life-threatening illness in infants under 6 months old.

In a coordinated effort to contain the spread of the disease, Clark County Public Health is partnering with Kaiser Permanente Northwest to provide free vaccinations against whooping cough for uninsured or underinsured children and adults. Vaccination clinics will be held each Thursday and Friday in

June from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Kaiser Permanente Cascade Park Medical Office, 12607 SE Mill Plain Blvd. in Vancouver. There also will be a Saturday clinic, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. June 16.

"We are especially concerned about babies because they are just beginning their immunization series," said Diana Antoniskis, MD, a Kaiser Permanente infectious disease specialist. "Babies most often catch whooping cough from a family member or caregiver, and the infection can be life-threatening. It's essential that parents, teachers, health care workers, and others who are in close contact with infants get vaccinated." All adults and teens should receive the adult booster shot, called Tdap, if they have not already received one.

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