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MS. LUSANE: In 1967 I was a student at Arts High School and I was living at the time on Bergen Street right where the hospital is today. So I saw what happened.

Today I work in the schools. I happen to be fortunate right now that I work in a new magnet high school where students have to take a test to get in and they have to be admitted, and you'd be surprised the number of parents who come literally crying to get their children into a school where they feel that they can get a quality education.

But I try to think about what is so different today for our students than it was for us, and two words came to me. One is hopelessness because our students do feel a sense of hopelessness in the City of Newark today.

The problems that urban students face have always existed for us in this country. If you read Claude Brown's *Manchild of the Promised Land*, Nathan Hale's -- it's a book about *Makes Me Wanna Holler*, even Malcolm X's autobiography, you know that these problems always existed, but there was always some kind of network of support. Our children don't have that anymore. So there is a sense of hopelessness that they feel because the future does not look bright.

The prison industrial complex did not exist the way it does today. The criminalization of young people did not exist for us. We didn't even know people who were having to deal with that. So they feel very hopeless, and for many of them it is a question of simply survival.

Yesterday at my school something pretty extraordinary happened. The Reverend Jessie Jackson came to our school and he addressed our student body and he gave them a wonderful address.

He talked to them about pride. He talked to them about believing in themselves. He talked to them about dignity. He talked to them about overcoming whatever hardships and difficulties they had in their lives, and he had them stand and affirm a belief in themselves and in their possibilities.

And he talked to them about wearing their pants hanging down and how, you know, this -- you know, where it came from and so forth, and they listened to him and they acknowledged him and they understood.

But I want to tell you that at the end of that school day when the day was over and they had to leave to go home, they lowered their pants again, okay, because they have to survive in those streets.

They have to try to make it home alive, and that's the fear that they all live with and that is the growing alienation.

That's the other word I want to talk about, alienation between them and us. The alienation between the civil rights generation and the hip-hop culture, which they manifest, which is simply an expression of the experience that they have had in this country.

There are no answers that I can give you, but the one last thing I want to say, and I see my minute is almost up, you know, my grandmother, whom I love dearly, just passed away. She was in her 90s. And my grandmother's grandfather had been a slave and used to talk to her about the slave experience, which she was able to talk to me about and which I can talk to my children about.

This country still does not want to acknowledge slavery. It's still with us. Okay? The children that go to our schools today are the grandchildren, the great grandchildren of slaves. Their grandparents came to Newark for a better life. They left the -- literally the plantations. There's no longer plantations, but they left the farms where their ancestors had been slaves.

So until this country comes to terms with slavery and what it has done, we will never solve this problem, and as the lady said before, we will be here ten years from now and on still trying to deal with this.

Thank you.