

We need for a Declaration of **INTER**dependence in education—where diverse people from across the community come to the table to join with others to make something greater – to make this world more habitable, prosperous and compassionate. This is the deepest purpose of education. It is a great way to make a difference in the aftermath of September 11.

At OSPI we are rethinking our work. We intend to tackle this challenge through the programs I spoke of earlier: School Improvement Assistance, Washington Reads, our State Improvement Grant in special education and an improved Bilingual Program. We will seek partners in the ESDs, school districts, community-based organizations and the A+ Commission. We will work to unite communities of color with their schools through the **UNITY** Project. I ask all of you to join me in this initiative. Our joint OSPI/ A+ legislative package will request goal setting authority on disproportionality and dropouts, but we are starting now on a voluntary basis with accelerated goals in our agency.