

## Discussion Guide for Use by the Table Facilitators

Each group needs to have a recorder, who will just sketch main points to be turned in at the end of the evening.

### First Wednesday Night

#### Reading Assignment:

Chapter 33, *The Pattern on the Rug*

This gives some good history about Diane and her own philosophical transformation as well as solidifies her themes.

Chapters 1-14

What are the myths? What are the realities?

#### Discussion Questions

##### Beginning Questions to Refresh People's Memories and Help Summarize for Those Who Haven't Read

In the first and final chapters of the book (both of which we read for tonight) Ravitch sketches a brief history of (1) how what she calls corporate school reform is defined, and (2) how it came to be supported by political leaders of both major political parties, (3) how federal laws and programs have come so much to dominate what is happening in our schools, and (4) what the consequences have been.

**Who will review a little of this history for us?**

**Do we need to add some other pieces to this explanation to connect the dots?**

In the first fourteen chapters of her book, Ravitch sets out to examine the myths being promoted by what she calls today's corporate school reform movement.

**Let's review some of the myths she sets out to disprove.**

**After each myth is named, discuss the evidence she presents to disprove it.** (There won't be time to go through each one.)

In Chapter 4, "The Language of Corporate Reform," Ravitch looks at the code language that has become part of this conversation---terms that don't really mean what they seem to mean (p. 34).

**What are some of the terms she presents?**

**How do the corporate school reformers define each term?**

**How does Ravitch re-define it?**

##### Broad Questions to Open Wide, and We Hope, Very Safe and Non-Threatening Conversation

**What surprised you or made a really strong impression in what you read and what we have discussed tonight?** (Need to make time for a very safe conversation here, not letting anyone correct or reject what surprised each person and ensuring that all participants at the small table have plenty of time to speak and reflect.) After each person who wishes to speak has described the surprises or take-aways, **ask whether there are one or two other surprises we haven't covered.** Cut it off after two.

**What has struck you in our reading or in our conversation tonight that seems relevant to what you may have noticed happening in Ohio or in our CH-UH school district?** (Need to make time for a very safe conversation here, not letting anyone correct or reject what surprised each person and ensuring that all participants at the table have plenty of time to speak and reflect.) After each person who wishes to speak has described what seems most important and timely to him or her, **ask whether there are any additional relevant points we haven't covered.** Cut it off after two.

**As we come back together, the overall moderator might want to surface two or three surprises/strong take-aways and two or three of the most relevant issues to Ohio and CH-UH from among the small groups.**