

# The Birmingham News

## Conference to take a hard look at urban education

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The National Urban Alliance begins a three-day conference on Teaching for Intelligence: Believe to Achieve today in Birmingham, bringing more than 1,200 educators from across the nation to examine the strengths and weaknesses in urban education.

More than 40 educators who will attend the conference were given tours Thursday of five Birmingham city schools that participate in the Training and Retaining Urban Student Teachers Initiative. The National Urban Alliance, the University of Alabama at Birmingham and Birmingham city schools are partners in that initiative.

"NUA has chosen Birmingham to focus on the effects of race, poverty and class on student learning, which is a central concern as we highlight the essence of what our nation must do to turn around decades of neglect for equality in education," said Eric Cooper, founder and president of the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education. "The neglect that urban schools are facing in America is staggering and manifesting more worrisome outcomes for our children and their future."

Birmingham school officials helped coordinate the conference, which begins at 8:20 a.m. today at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex Sheraton. Birmingham Superintendent Stan Mims and Mayor Bernard Kincaid will speak at the opening session.

Other featured speakers include Reuven Feuerstein, founder of the International Center of the School of Education at UAB, and Jonathan Kozol, a nonfiction writer, educator and civil rights activist who is best known for his books on public education in the United States.

The conference will examine the major education issues confronting teachers, administrators, students and parents. In addition, participants will review teaching methods that increase student performance.

For more information or for a schedule of conference events and workshops, visit

<http://www.believetoachieve.org/>