



Education and Housing Equity Project Records.

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Education & Housing Equity Project

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To: EHEP Board Members **From:** Dick Little / Executive Director

Fax: Reminder MMEP Forum 11-18-99 **Pages:** 2 - memo and flyer

Phone: (612) 330-1505 **Date:** 11/15/99

Re: **CC:**

Urgent **For Review** **Please Comment** **Please Reply** **Please Recycle**

Please plan to attend the MMEP Forum, "An Intergenerational Dialogue on School Integration"

*Thursday, November 18, 1999
6:30 - 9:30 p.m.
Minneapolis South High School
3131 19th Avenue South*

Bring someone of a generation other than your own as your guest.

Your presence is important because this forum is so clearly related to the work of EHEP; all Community Circle participants have been invited and it is hoped that many of them will attend.

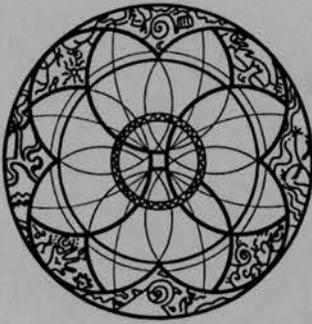
Special thanks to Barb Bearman and Emily Chen for their work on the planning committee for this forum!

MMEP's 1999-2000 Issue Forum Series

November 18, 1999

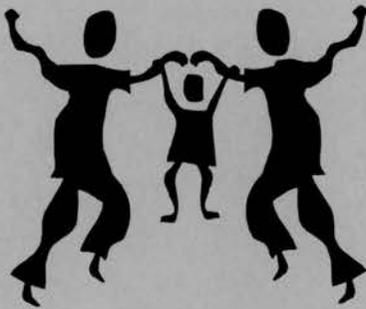
6:30—9:30 p.m.

Minneapolis South High School
3131 19th Avenue South



An Intergenerational Dialogue on School Integration Jim Gambone of Points of View Incorporated, Facilitator

For over 20 years we have worked to integrate our schools. From the struggles of busing to the opportunities created by magnet schools, school desegregation has had a tremendous impact on our schools. Despite these changes, racial isolation in our schools still exists and an achievement gap between white students and students of color persists. Minnesota is charting a new course for school integration that relies on the voluntary efforts of schools and citizens. Will this change mean less money for schools? Will the new approach increase achievement for students? We invite you and your children to join us as we explore these questions and discuss how to create schools where all students achieve.

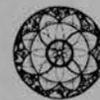


Jim Gambone, Ph.D., of Points of View Incorporated, has developed *The Intergenerational Dialogue Tool™* that brings together participants from the five living generations to solve problems and/or create new opportunities. This model has been used successfully in communities of color across the United States to break down the barriers of isolation and separation between the generations.

Minneapolis South High School is located East of 35W, 1½ blocks South of Lake Street on 19th Avenue South.

Co-Sponsors

Active Citizenship School ■ African American Citizenship Initiative ■ Center for Excellence in Urban Teaching ■ Citizens League ■ College of Education & Human Development — U of M ■ Education & Housing Equity Project ■ Hopkins School District ■ Institute on Race & Poverty ■ MnSCU Policy & Planning ■ MN Dept. of Children, Families & Learning ■ MN Private College Council ■ Minneapolis Urban League ■ Next Innovations ■ Robbinsdale Area Schools ■ University of Minnesota ■ Urban Coalition ■ West Metro Education Partnership



Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, Inc.

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Education & Housing Equity Project

Memo

To: Community Circle Sponsors
From: Pam Jewson
CC: Dick Little & Barbara Blackstone/Community Circle Facilitators **EHEP BOARD MEMBERS**
Date: 04/07/99
Re: *Important Upcoming Events!*

Congratulations on your participation in a current or upcoming Community Circle discussion. We would like to take this opportunity to let you know about some very important upcoming events.

1. The fair housing play "*Like Waters Rolling Down*" created and produced by MICAH and the Illusion Theatre that we are co-sponsoring with about 26 other groups, will take place on April 25, at the Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church, from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

2. *Hate Crimes & Bias Incidents: A Challenge to Inclusive Communities*, sponsored by MICAH and the Minnesota Fair Housing Center will take place Tuesday, April 27, from 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., also at the Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church.

3. "Citites at Work", which we are co-sponsoring in Saint Paul, will present 2 forums: "*Stop Talking, Just Do It!*", on Wednesday April 28, from 5:00 - 8:30 p.m., at Arlington High School, 1459 Rice Street, St. Paul, MN and "*Face to Face*", on Tuesday May 18, from 5:00 - 8:30 p.m. at Bandana Square.

These three very important events need to be conveyed to the people who are or will be participating in your Community Circles. Please find enclosed more information about each event. We would like you to distribute the fliers and other brochures about these events to your participants.

Please call our office for further information and to let us know how many fliers & brochures you will be needing.

Sincerely,



Pam Jewson
EHEP Administrative Assistant

Memo

To: EHEP Board Members and Guests
From: Dick Little, Executive Director (612-330-1505)
CC: Amy Rodquist, new Intern, and Kesha Tanabe, outgoing Intern
Date: September 15, 1998
Re: EHEP Dinner Meeting with John Lukehart of the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities, September 17, 1998

As you know, we are hosting a dinner meeting with Mr. John Lukehart, Vice President of Chicago's Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities this **Thursday evening at Augsburg College**. The dinner conversation will take place in the **Minneapolis Room** on the second floor of the **Christensen Center** (see map attached). The College has reserved the Minneapolis Room for our use between 6:00 and 9:00 p.m. Board members and their guests should:

- Arrive at the college at approximately 6:00 p.m. (but well before 6:30 p.m., when the college cafeteria closes).
- Park in either Lot C or E (see map – no permit is required in these lots after 4:30 p.m.) or on any street where parking is permitted.
- Proceed to the Christensen Center, second floor (see no. 6 on map).
- Select your meal choices in the cafeteria on the second floor (Each board member and guest will pay for their own meal; board members may want to pay for their guest's meal. EHEP will pay for the speaker's meal).
- Proceed to the Minneapolis Room, also on the second floor. A sign will direct you.

We intend the gathering to be informal. Although I have asked our guest to say a little about the Leadership Council and their experience in Chicago, our intention is to open the gathering up to questions and conversation. The conversation should help

to inform our work in identifying promising practices and leadership approaches that may be applicable to the issues of equity, diversity, discrimination and segregation facing municipalities and school districts in our metropolitan area. Our guest is also very interested in learning more about our work in the Twin Cities.

Mr. Lukehart will also be speaking at the "Building Inclusive Communities" Conference which we are co-sponsoring with the Minnesota Fair Housing Center the following day. Seven EHEP board and staff members will be attending the conference. At the conference, he will be making a presentation on the Oak Park, Illinois experience as a case study of a community that successfully established and sustained integrated housing and schools.

We should have an interesting evening. I look forward to seeing you and your guest if you bring one.

Memo

To: EHEP Board Members
From: Dick Little, Staff (330-1505)
CC: Amy Rodquist (Community Circles)
Russ Adams (Alliance for Metro Stability)
Date: 11/18/98
Re: Board Endorsement of the Inclusionary Housing Initiative

Attached for your review is the most recent draft of the Inclusionary Housing Position Paper and Proposal that is being prepared for consideration by the 1999 State Legislature.

As many of you know, EHEP staff has been involved in the development of this concept and proposal since last spring (through our participation on the Inclusionary Housing Task Force, through our sponsorship of the Building Inclusive Communities Conference, and through our membership in the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability).

I would like to see EHEP go on record endorsing this proposal and possibly being named a sponsor (with other organizations) of this proposal to be sent to the legislature.

We can arrange for a presentation of the paper by its drafters if board members would like more information. Although we have no time to discuss this at Friday's board meeting, I recommend that the board either take this up at a special meeting and/or act at Friday's meeting to endorse the proposal in principle.

The inclusionary housing concept represents one of the fruits of our earlier work; it is an idea that flows from the 1997 community circle conversations. Those conversations placed major emphasis on proactively removing barriers to affordable housing in the suburbs and promoting integrated housing developments as two of the best ways to address segregation in our schools and metropolitan community.

Please be prepared to decide how to handle this item at our meeting on Friday. I will also be bringing to your attention two other legislative ideas EHEP is submitting to our board member, Representative Myron Orfield, for use in preparing his proposals for the next legislative session.

A Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, Inc. (MMEP), Urban Coalition and the Education and Housing Equity Project Sponsored

Issue Forum

The New School Desegregation Rule: Will it Increase Student Achievement?

Thursday, October 29, 1998

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Urban Coalition

Conference Room

2610 University Avenue W.

Saint Paul, MN

Please register by contacting The Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, Inc. offices at 612/330-1645 or by email to MMEP@visi.com

Participants are encouraged to bring a bag lunch; refreshments will be served.

The State of Minnesota's Department of Children, Family and Learning is on the verge of implementing a new school desegregation policy. After years of required desegregation for schools that have disproportionately higher numbers of students of color, the State is considering a change to a more voluntary approach to school desegregation. This change in policy could have a tremendous impact on the success of Minnesota students of color.

It is important for people concerned about the educational achievement of students of color to be heard on this very important issue. The current time frame for commenting on the proposed policy change ends on **November 5**, so it is important for people to act quickly.

The issue forum will be an opportunity for the community to learn more about the proposed change in the State's desegregation rule, to discuss its potential impact on the success of students of color and to have their voice heard on this important issue. ***There may be no more important meeting for people concerned about the success of students of color to attend this year than this issue forum.***

If you would like more information about the proposed desegregation rule, contact the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, Inc. at 612/330-1645 and ask for Bruce Vandal or the Urban Coalition at 612/348-8550 and ask for Claudia Fuentes.

Directions to the Urban Coalition

The Urban Coalition is located at the corner of Curfew and University, one block West of Route 280.

From Minneapolis, take University Avenue east to Curfew, turn right and park across Curfew in the lot.

From Saint Paul, you can take University Avenue. Cross 280 and go one block to the first break in the median. Turn left onto Curfew and park on the left (East) side of Curfew.

Take I-94 from East or West to the 280/University exit. Take the University Avenue ramp to the first light (Franklin Avenue). Turn left onto Franklin and go two blocks to Curfew. Turn right onto Curfew and park in the lot on the right side of Curfew.

The offices are on the second floor in room 201. Take the elevators to the second floor and turn right.

ATTENTION

STATE SEEKING PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED DESEGREGATION RULE

The Commissioner of Education, Robert Wedl, is seeking public comment on a newly proposed State desegregation rule by NOVEMBER 5, 1998.

The proposed desegregation rule would replace the existing rule which requires schools to be desegregated if the enrollment of students of color in the school is 15% or above their school district enrollment of students of color.

The proposed rule would eliminate this requirement and would instead take an approach that includes the following three strategies:

- 1) Require evaluation of data to determine if certain school sites are racially identifiable due to intentional discrimination: if so, a plan to end the discrimination; is required; if not, ..
- 2) Review the data to determine if certain school sites are racially identifiable due to having a percentage of protected students that is disproportionate as compared to the district average; if so, the district and its community collaboration council will provide a plan to encourage site balance while preserving choice; and
- 3) Review the data to determine if certain districts are racially isolated when compared to the protected students populations of adjacent districts; if so, those districts and their multi-district collaboration councils will provide plans to encourage inter-district balance while preserving choice.

To receive a copy of the proposed desegregation rule or to provide written or oral comments, contact:

Mary Lynne McAlonie
Room 731, Capitol Square Building
550 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55101-2273
Phone: (651) 297-7820 or 1-800-657-3927
TDD/TTY: (651) 297-2094
Fax: (651) 282-6779

Ms. McAlonie must receive public comment by
4:30 PM on NOVEMBER 5, 1998.

DRAFT For Discussion

Minnesota Department of Children, Families & Learning Proposed Permanent Rules Relating to Desegregation

3535.0100 PURPOSE.

The purpose of parts 3535.0100 to 3535.0180 is to:

- A. recognize that there are societal benefits from schools that are racially integrated as the result of the voluntary choice of parents and students, while also recognizing that many factors beyond the control of the Commissioner and the control of districts, such as housing, jobs, and transportation, can impact the ability to racially integrate schools;
- B. prevent segregation, as defined in this rule, does not occur in public schools;
- C. encourage districts provide opportunities for students to attend schools that racially balanced compared to other schools within the district;
- D. provide a system that identifies the presence of racially isolated districts and encourages adjoining districts to work cooperatively to improve cross-district integration while giving parents and students meaningful choices; and
- E. work in conjunction with rules that address academic achievement, including graduation standards and the inclusive education program rules, by providing equitable access to resources.

3535.0110 DEFINITIONS

Subpart 1. **Scope.** As used in parts 3535.0100 to 3535.0180, the terms defined in this part have the meanings given them.

Subp. 2. **Enrolled American Indian students.** "Enrolled American Indian students" means those students who live on or off a reservation and are enrolled in a federally recognized tribe. Enrolled American Indian students have dual status as protected students under subpart 4 and members of sovereign nations.

Subp. 3. **Commissioner.** "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the Department of Children, Families & Learning.

Agency Contact Person. Written or oral comments, questions and requests for a draft of the planned rules should be addressed to:

Mary Lynne McAlonie
Room 731, Capitol Square Building
550 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55101-2273
Phone: (651) 297-7820 or 1-800-657-3927
TDD/TTY: (651) 297-2094
Fax: (651) 282-6779

Alternative Format. Upon request, this Request for Comments can be made available in an alternative format, such as large print, Braille, or cassette tape. To make such a request, please contact the agency contact person at the address listed above.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will not be included in the formal rulemaking record when a proceeding to adopt the rules is started.

Sept 18, 1998
Date

Robert Wedl
Robert Wedl
Commissioner

Subp. 4. **Protected students.** "Protected students" means:

A. students who self-identify or are identified in the general racial categories of African/Black Americans, Asian/Pacific Americans, Chicano/Latino Americans, and American Indian/Alaskan Native; and

B. multiracial students who self-identify or are identified as having origins in more than one of the categories described in item A.

Subp. 5. **Racial balance.** "Racial balance" means the increased interaction of protected students and white students within schools and between districts that is consistent with the purposes of parts 3535.0160 to 3535.0180.

Subp. 6. **Racially identifiable school within a district.** "Racially identifiable school within a district" means a school where the enrollment of protected students at the school within a district is more than 20 percentage points above the enrollment of protected students in the entire district for the grade levels served by that school.

Subp. 7. **Racially isolated school district.** "Racially isolated school district" means a district where the districtwide enrollment of protected students exceeds the enrollment of protected students of any adjoining district by more than 20 percentage points.

Subp. 8. **School.** "School" means a site in a public school district serving any of kindergarten through grade 12. For purposes of parts 3535.0160 to 3535.0180 only, school does not mean:

A. results-oriented charter schools under Minnesota Statutes, section 120.064;

B. area learning centers under Minnesota Statutes, section 124C.45;

C. public alternative programs under Minnesota Statutes, section 124.17, subdivision 4; and

D. contracted alternative programs under Minnesota Statutes, section 126.23;

E. school sites specifically designed to address limited English proficiency;

F. school sites specifically designed to address the need of students with IEPs; and

G. secure and non-secure treatment facilities licensed by the Department of Human Services or the Department of Corrections.

Subp. 9. **Segregation.** "Segregation" means the intentional act or acts by a school district that has the discriminatory purpose of causing students to attend or not attend particular programs or schools within the district on the basis of their race and that causes a concentration of protected students at a particular school.

A. It is not segregation for a concentration of protected students or white students to exist within schools or school districts;

(1) if the concentration is not the result of intentional acts motivated by a discriminatory purpose;

(2) if the concentration occurs at schools providing equitable educational opportunities based on the factors identified in part 3535.0130; and

(3) if the concentration of protected students has occurred as the result of choices by parents, students or both.

B. In addition to the factors in item A, it is not segregation for concentrations of enrolled American Indian students to exist within schools or school districts:

(1) if the concentration exists as a result of attempting to meet the unique academic and culturally related educational needs of enrolled American Indian students through programs developed pursuant to the federal government's trust relationship with American Indian tribes or through an agreement with an American Indian tribal government; and

(2) the concentration exists as the result of voluntary choices made by American Indian parents, enrolled American Indian students, or both.

3535.0120 DUTIES OF DISTRICTS.

Subpart 1. **Report.** A school district shall annually submit to the Commissioner, concerning each school site within its district, a report that includes:

A. the racial composition of each school within its district; and

B. the racial composition of the grade levels served by each of the schools:

The report shall be submitted according to the Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS) deadlines as established annually by the commissioner and notice to all districts.

Subp. 2. **Data collection.** A district shall collect for all students except American Indian students in subpart 3, the information required in subpart 1 by using one of the following racial identification procedures in the following order:

A. parent or guardian identification;

B. age-appropriate student self-identification, when parent or guardian identification is not an option;

C. if parent, guardian, or student self-identification methods are not possible, sight counts administered by the principal or designee, pursuant to written guidelines developed by the district.

Subp. 3. **American Indian students.** In districts where the American Indian population is ten or more students, the parent education committee under Minnesota Statutes, section 126.51, subdivision 1, in consultation with the American Indian parents the committee represents, may select as their identification procedure one of the following:

- A. parent or guardian self-identification;
- B. the process for identification specified in United States Code, title 20, section 7881; or
- C. the racial identification procedure used by the district for other students.

3535.0130. DUTIES OF THE COMMISSIONER

Subpart 1. **Review of data.** The commissioner shall review the data provided by a school district under part 3535.0120 within 60 days of its receipt. If the commissioner determines that there is a racially identifiable school within a district, or if the commissioner receives a complaint alleging that a district is engaged in acts of segregation, the commissioner shall request further information to determine whether the racial composition at the school or schools in question results from acts motivated at least in part by a discriminatory purpose. The commissioner's finding of a discriminatory purpose must be based one or more of the following; except that the commissioner shall not rely solely on D. or E. or both;

- A. the historical background of the acts which led to the racial composition of the school, including whether the acts reveal a series of official actions taken for discriminatory purposes;
- B. whether the specific sequence of events resulting in the school's racial composition reveals discriminatory purpose;
- C. departures from the normal substantive or procedural sequence of decision making, as evidenced, for example, by the legislative or administrative history of the acts in question, especially if there are contemporary statements by district officials, or minutes or reports of meetings that demonstrate a discriminatory purpose;
- D. whether the racial composition of the school is the result of acts which disadvantage one race more than another, as evidenced, for example, when nonwhite students are bused further or more frequently than whites; and
- E. whether the racially identifiable composition of the school was predictable given the policies or practices of the district.

Subp. 2. **District information.** In order to determine whether a racially identifiable school exists as the result of acts motivated by a discriminatory purpose, the commissioner shall request

and the district shall provide the following information related to the factors described in subpart 1:

A. information about how students are assigned to schools within the district, including:

(1) for schools which have been newly added or renovated or if attendance zones have changed, a description of what the attendance zones were and what the racial composition of each zone was at the time the school was planned and added or renovated;

(2) a description of the assignment and transfer options at each of the schools serving the grade levels in question, and the outreach efforts that were made to ensure parents received information about and were able to understand the availability of those options; and

(3) a comparison of the racial composition of the attendance area of the school in question as it relates to the composition of the district as a whole;

B. a list of curricular offerings;

C. a list of the extracurricular options available at each of the schools serving the grade levels in question;

D. a list that breaks down, by race and school, the teachers assigned to all of the schools serving the grade levels in question and, considering the average percentage of nonwhite teachers in the district, an explanation of any concentration of nonwhite teachers assigned at a school at issue;

E. a list that shows how the qualifications and experience of the teachers at the racially identifiable school compares to teachers at the sites which are not racially identifiable;

F. evidence that the racially identifiable school has been provided financial resources on an equitable basis with other schools which are not racially identifiable;

G. a comparison of the facilities, materials, and equipment at the racially identifiable school with schools that are not racially identifiable;

H. information that would allow the commissioner to determine whether the extent of busing is disproportionate between white students and protected students; and

I. any nondiscriminatory circumstances that explain why a particular school has exceeded the districtwide enrollment of nonwhite students by more than 20 percentage points.

Subp. 3. **Integrated alternatives.** If the enrollment of protected students at a school is more than 25 percent above the enrollment of protected students in the entire district, or if the enrollment of protected students exceeds 90 percent at any given school, whichever is less, the district must provide affirmative evidence to the commissioner that students in that school have

alternatives to attend schools with a protected student enrollment that is comparable to the districtwide average.

3535.0140 RESPONSE OF DISTRICTS.

Subpart 1. **Providing information.** School districts shall respond to the commissioner's request for information under part 3535.0130 within 60 days of its receipt. If supplemental information is requested by the commissioner, the district must respond within 30 days of request.

Subp. 2. **Remedy.** If the commissioner has made a finding of segregation, student assignments based on race that are made to remedy the finding of segregation are permissible in a mandatory desegregation plan, so long as they are narrowly tailored to remedy the act of segregation.

3535.0150 DEVELOPMENT OF MANDATORY DESEGREGATION PLAN; ENFORCEMENT.

Subpart 1. **District plan.** If the commissioner determines that segregation exists, the district shall provide a plan within 60 days that proposes how it shall remedy the segregation. The plan shall address the specific actions that were found by the commissioner to contribute to the segregation. The plan shall be developed in consultation with the commissioner. If the commissioner rejects any or all of the plan, the commissioner shall provide technical assistance to help the district revise the plan. However, if the district and the commissioner cannot agree on a plan within 45 days after the original plan was rejected, the commissioner shall develop a revised plan to remedy the segregation that the district shall implement in the time frame specified by the commissioner.

Subp. 2. **Extension.** The commissioner may extend the time for response from a district under parts 3535.0140 and 3535.0150 if it would impose an undue hardship on the district, for example, if the information is not easily ascertainable or the plan requires a complex remedy that includes consultation with outside sources.

Subp. 3. **Enforcement of desegregation.** If the district fails to submit data required by the commissioner, fails to provide or implement a plan to remedy the segregation, or fails to implement a plan developed by the commissioner as provided in subpart 1, the commissioner must:

A. notify the district that its aid shall be reduced pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 124.15;

B. refer the finding of segregation to the Department of Human Rights for investigation and enforcement; and

C. report the district's actions to the education committees of the legislature by March 15 of the next legislative session with recommendations for financial or other appropriate sanctions.

3535.0160 INTEGRATION OF RACIALLY IDENTIFIABLE SCHOOLS NOT THE RESULT OF SEGREGATION.

Subpart 1. **Notice to district of voluntary plan.** If it is determined that a racially identifiable school reviewed under part 3535.0130 is not the result of segregation, the district shall be notified that it must develop a plan, in a format to be determined by the commissioner, that provides incentives to help integrate the racially identifiable school, and submit the plan to the commissioner. A plan is not required for schools where 35% of the students are enrolled American Indian students, and where the nearest school site serving the same grade levels is more than 10 miles away.

Subp. 2. **Community collaboration council.** The district shall establish and utilize a community collaboration council to assist in developing the district's plan under this part. The council should be reasonably representative of the diversity of the district. In communities with ten or more American Indian students, representation from the American Indian parent committee required under Minnesota Statutes, section 126.51. If a district has an existing committee whose composition reasonably reflects the diversity of the district, for example, school site councils or district curriculum advisory councils that committees may be used to provide the planning. The community collaboration council shall identify integration issues at each racially identifiable school and action goals designed to address those integration issues. After identifying issues and goals for each school, the council shall develop a plan for integration at each school that may include, for example, incentives contained in subpart 3 below.

Subp. 3. **District report.** After receiving the plan required in subpart 2 from its community collaboration council, the district shall provide a report to the commissioner that describes the integration efforts the district plans to implement at each racially identifiable school. The report shall be written and adopted by the end of the academic year in which the district received notice under subpart 1, or six months later, whichever is longer. The report shall include:

A. the extent of community outreach that preceded the plan;

B. integration issues identified;

C. goals of the integration effort;

D. an integration plan that indicates how the integration goals will be or are being accomplished. All integration plans must be educationally justifiable and contain incentives for intradistrict integration that may include, for example:

(1) duplicating programs that have demonstrated success in improving student learning at schools that are racially identifiable;

(2) providing incentives to help balance racially identifiable schools, for example: (a) providing incentives to low-income students at racially identifiable schools to transfer to schools that are not racially identifiable; (b) providing transportation; and (c) providing interdistrict opportunities and incentives for collaborative efforts with other districts;

(3) providing incentives to teachers in a way that will more carefully balance the distribution of teachers of all races at schools across the district, including:

(a) staff development opportunities;

(b) strategies for attracting and retaining staff who serve as role models; and

(c) strategies for attracting and retaining staff who have a record of success in teaching protected students;

(4) greater promotion of programs provided at racially identifiable schools designed to attract a wide range of students;

(5) providing smaller class sizes, greater counseling and support services, and more extracurricular opportunities and other resources at racially identifiable as compared to schools that are not racially identifiable; and

(6) providing programs promoting instruction about different cultures, including options uniquely relevant to American Indian students, including, for example, American Indian language and culture programs under Minnesota Statutes, section 126.48.

The format of the integration plan should be consistent with, and if possible, included into a district's comprehensive plan.

Subp. 4. **Commissioner's duties.**

A. The commissioner shall:

(1) evaluate any plans developed under this part at the end of each academic year after which a plan is implemented;

(2) each academic year after a plan is implemented, report to the house and senate education committees any reduction in the percentage of protected students at racially identifiable schools; and

(3) each academic year after a plan is implemented, report to the state board and the house and senate education committees if the enrollment of protected students remains constant or increases at racially identifiable schools.

B. The commissioner may recommend financial incentives that are aimed at compensating or rewarding districts for programs or activities that have been successful.

C. The commissioner may make recommendations for appropriate legislative action to address the condition of racially identifiable schools within the district.

Subp. 6. **Timeline.** Each integration plan shall remain in place for three years from the date of approval by the commissioner, unless earlier modified by the district and approved by the commissioner. Schools that are newly identified as racially identifiable or that were included in a plan under this part but remain racially identifiable after three years from the date of approval by the commissioner shall be subject to the procedures outlined in parts 3535.0130 to 3535.0160.

3535.0170 INTEGRATION OF RACIALLY ISOLATED SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

Subpart 1. **Evaluation.** The commissioner shall annually evaluate the enrollment of protected students in each district to determine whether the district as a whole is racially isolated. If the commissioner determines that a district is racially isolated, as defined in part 3535.0110, subpart 8, the commissioner shall immediately notify the district and adjoining districts. The commissioner may also send notice to other districts which are not adjacent if he determines that it would be geographically feasible for such districts to participate in cross-district planning. In districts where 35 percent of the students are enrolled American Indian students, and where the nearest school site serving the same grade levels in an adjoining district is more than 10 miles away, the district shall not be required to follow subparts 2 to 6.

Subp. 2. **Establishment of multidistrict collaboration council.** Upon receiving notice under subpart 1, the isolated and adjacent districts shall establish a multidistrict collaboration council, as provided in subpart 3, to develop a plan under this part. The council shall work as provided under subpart 4 to identify ways to improve cross-district integration.

Subp. 3. **Membership of multidistrict collaboration council.** Each isolated district and each of its adjoining districts shall appoint individuals to participate in the multidistrict collaboration council. The council shall be reasonably representative of the diversity in the participating districts. If any of the participating districts have an American Indian parent committee formed under Minnesota Statutes, section 126.51, a representative of those committees shall also be appointed.

Subp. 3. Districts which are members of joint powers boards, that have advisory councils meeting the requirements of subpart 3 may use those joint powers boards and advisory councils in lieu of creating a new council under subpart 3.

If the participating districts have an existing committee whose composition reflects the membership requirements of this subpart, that committee may be used to provide the planning required under this part.

Subp. 4. **Council cooperation and plan.** The multidistrict collaboration council shall identify interdistrict integration issues resulting from the condition of racial isolation and action goals designed to address those integration issues. After identifying the issues and goals of cross-district integration, the council shall develop a joint collaboration plan for cross-district integration that may include the incentives contained in subpart 5, item D.

Subp. 5. **District report.** After receiving the plan required in subpart 4 from its council, each district shall review, modify if necessary and ratify the integration plan. Each district shall provide a report to the commissioner that describes the interdistrict integration efforts the district plans to implement. The report shall be completed and ratified no longer than twelve months after the district receives notice under part 3535.0180, subpart 1. The report shall include:

- A. the extent of community outreach that preceded the interdistrict plan;
- B. cross-district integration issues identified;
- C. goals of the integration effort;

D. a collaboration plan that indicates how the goals will be or are being accomplished. All collaboration plans must be educationally justifiable and contain incentives for interdistrict integration that may include, for example:

- (1) providing cooperative transportation that helps balance a racially isolated district;
- (2) development of cooperative magnet program or schools designed to increase racial balance in the affected districts;

(3) cooperative programs designed to enhance the experience of students of all races and from all backgrounds and origins;

(4) cooperative efforts to recruit staff in races that have historically been underrepresented, teacher exchanges, parent exchanges, cooperative staff development programs;

(5) shared extracurricular opportunities, including, for example, community education programs that promote understanding, respect, and interaction among diverse community populations; and

(6) in districts with ten or more American Indian students, documentation as to how American Indian students are able to participate in program options uniquely relevant to American Indian students, including, for example, language and culture programs under Minnesota Statutes, section 126.48, and how the students may participate in the district's voluntary integration efforts.

Subp. 6. Limits on participation in multi-district collaboration councils. Notwithstanding 353.0170, subp. 2, the following shall not be required:

A. An isolated school district shall not be required to be part of two or more collaboration councils.

B. Adjoining districts shall not be required to be part of two or more collaboration councils.

C. Two adjoining racially isolated school districts shall not be required to participate together on the same collaboration council.

D. If a racially isolated district is a member of a joint powers board under subp. 4, the adjacent districts shall not be required to participate on the joint powers board.

Subp. 7. Timeline for reports. Once a multidistrict collaboration plan has been filed with the commissioner, it does not need to be renewed for a period of four years from the date of filing.

3535.0180 EVALUATION OF COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS.

The commissioner shall biennially evaluate the results of collaborative efforts under part 3535.0170 to determine whether the collaboration plan was implemented and whether the action goals have been substantially met. After reviewing the results, the commissioner shall report to the house and senate education committees whether a district implemented its collaboration plan and substantially met its action goals. The commissioner may also make recommendations for appropriate legislative action.

UNCODED LANGUAGE

Application to a district with an existing plan.

A school district with an approved desegregation plan in place on the effective date of this rule must prepare a voluntary plan under this rule for all sites previously covered by a desegregation plan.

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Star Tribune

Oct 12, '98

Our perspective

School desegregation

New state plan must value integration

A proposed state policy that would end so-called "racial quotas" in public schools is expected to be well received by the Minnesota Legislature in the 1999 session. This departure from the desegregation policy of the past 20 years is almost inevitable, given the frustration with previous efforts, the strong support for neighborhood schools and the emphasis on boosting achievement.

But if lawmakers do away with racial percentages in schools, they must establish other ways to foster integration. It is not only a crucial component of efforts to improve academic achievement, in this multicultural, multiracial nation it is also important that children interact with peers from other cultures and backgrounds for reasons that go beyond education.

Developed by the Department of Children, Families and Learning following years of discussion, the new policy would undo the 1973 law that required districts to move students around for racial balance. That balance became more difficult to achieve in recent years as the minority inner-city populations grew and white students left urban schools. Consequently, the state has backed off enforcement of its own rule; both Minneapolis and St. Paul schools have received waivers or been allowed to opt out in order to work toward creating more neighborhood schools.

According to the Education Commission of the States, about 750 districts operate under desegregation orders. Some have been released from those orders during this decade, but

others still struggle to address the moving target of changing demographics. Strategies that include busing, magnet schools, open enrollment and massive new spending have been successful in some districts while failing miserably in others.

The new Minnesota proposal encourages school districts to work together to correct racial imbalances. For that to work, lawmakers must generously fund those kinds of projects. And though the new plan does away with district and building quotas, it says that schools with high populations of children of color must devise plans to promote desegregation. It would identify as "racially isolated" any school district with a minority enrollment 20 percentage points higher than that of nearby districts.

But the concept of "racial isolation" should apply to any school or district that is racially homogenous. If a school district is mostly white it should be required to offer special programs or work with other districts that are more diverse. Even for districts doing well academically, there are benefits to exposing children to races and cultures other than their own.

Ultimately one of the best ways to integrate schools (and all other major institutions for that matter) is to ensure that each community enjoys a mix of people from all races and equally distributed across the income/education spectrum. When both cities and suburbs have a cross section of cultures, backgrounds and family incomes, then schools will desegregate naturally.

Plan would end state's race quotas for schools

The proposal to let districts design their own desegregation plans is expected to get a favorable reception from legislators.

By Norman Draper
Star Tribune Staff Writer

Minnesota schools no longer would have to meet "mandatory race quotas" and could come up with their own ways to achieve racial desegregation, under a proposal unveiled Monday by the state Department of Children, Families and Learning.

If adopted, the rule would cancel out the current desegregation rule, which since 1973 has required students to be moved around within their home districts to achieve racial balance.

The new rule prescribes a number of measures that schools and districts can use to promote desegregation. In effect, though, it legalizes the status quo, which has students attending neighborhood schools in most communities, or attending magnet schools and interdistrict schools set up in some districts as voluntary efforts to promote desegregation.

Turn to **SCHOOLS on A10** for:
— An attorney for the NAACP called the proposal "disturbing."

SCHOOLS from A1

New plan for desegregation in effect legalizes the status quo

Education Commissioner Bob Wedl said the new rule would mean "that districts will not be able to set certain percentages of kids of color or white kids [that have to be] at certain sites. . . . There are no mandatory race quotas."

The new rule also would end years of dithering over desegregation by the State Board of Education, which was set to approve a similar proposal in spring 1996, and again last fall, but put it on the back burner. This time, the board isn't even involved in the issue, having been removed from the process by the state Legislature during the 1998 session.

After a hearing Nov. 5, the rule will be submitted to the Legislature in January, where it's likely to be received favorably.

'Not a minor change'

"I think there will be very little resistance, if any, from state leg-

Desegregation proposal

If approved by the state Legislature, the new rule would:

- **Do away with racial quotas** for school and school district student populations.
- **Identify schools with minority populations** of at least 20 percentage points higher than the district averages for similar grades. The schools would be required to devise plans to promote school desegregation or improve the schools by such means as lowering class sizes, encouraging more multicultural education and helping low-income students transfer to other schools.
- **Distinguish between intentional and unintentional** racial segregation.
- **Introduce the concept of a "racially isolated" school district:** one with a minority enrollment more than 20 percent higher than any adjoining district.
- **Encourage adjoining school districts to work together** to correct racial imbalances. Such arrangements might lead to more interdistrict schools and programs, as well as other methods for moving students across district lines.

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"The question should not be what is the racial makeup of a particular classroom, but what are students achieving in any particular classroom," she said.

But the proposed rule came under fire immediately from John Shulman, the attorney who represents the Minneapolis branch of the National Association for

the Advancement of Colored People in a lawsuit charging that the state hasn't provided an adequate education for the city's poor and minority children.

He said that the proposal is "a very disturbing document" that "tries to lock children of color into inferior, segregated schools."

"This is an attempt to say the state has a desegregation rule," he said. "It would more properly be called a segregation rule."

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"It only identifies a segregation as too many children of color, so an all-white school is not segregated, or racially identifiable," he said. "It describes children of color as if they were a disease because it says you can have too many children of color but never too many white children in a school . . . That's a powerful, awful message to give the state of Minnesota."

But Kelso also contends that the current rule is unworkable.

For one thing, Minneapolis schools have been allowed to opt out of the current rule in order to work toward a more neighborhood-based system of school attendance.

In fact, while a number of districts are not in compliance with the current rule, the state has not acted to make them comply.

In 1995, the State Board of Education had considered a much different approach: It would have required suburban districts to participate in planning for metrowide desegregation. That approach died after meeting stiff opposition in the

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In the end, anything stricter than the current proposal would be too politically unpalatable for legislators. "The choices here are keeping the old rule, when it's so clear it's not going to work, or applying the rule across district lines . . . which I think would inevitably come down to some kind of forced busing," Kelso said.

Sunday
OCTOBER 11, 1998

Metro/State

B SECTION
www.startribune.com/metro

StarTribune

District wrestles with racial imbalance

In the northwest suburbs, the Osseo school board has pledged to focus its new attendance boundaries on managing growth, not on remedying racial disparities — much to the relief of parents worried about busing.

By Mike Kaszuba
Star Tribune Staff Writer

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For much of the year, though, busing to correct racial imbalance has been the concern in Osseo-area schools, where 27 public schools stretch out over Maple Grove, Osseo, Plymouth, Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center. It has the fifth-largest enrollment among Minnesota districts,

and, at 66 square miles, is one of the most unwieldy.

The flash point has involved race. Or, more precisely, what should be done with a district in which one side is overcrowded, affluent and largely white and the other side is underutilized, poorer and more heavily minority?

After a summerlong series of meetings and testy confrontations, the six-member school board last week decided to redraw school attendance boundaries to address the district's spiraling growth but not necessarily to improve its racial imbalance. Instead, the school board — with the support of many parents — pledged not to have the new boundaries worsen the existing

racial disparity.

The school district has become an example of the anti-desegregation climate in Minnesota, a climate that was underscored last week by a new state plan that would no longer require schools to meet mandatory race quotas. The proposal by the state Department of Children, Families and Learning, if adopted, would abolish a 25-year-old rule that requires school districts to bus students across the district to achieve racial balance. The proposal would allow individual districts to come up with their own solutions to segregation.

In the Osseo School District, that approach is being met with sighs of relief. And those in the

district who want a more ambitious approach have been shunted.

"I could care less about the ethnic makeup of the school," said Tammy Holbeck of Brooklyn Park, whose third-grader attends Edinbrook Elementary School two blocks from home. "I just want my kids close to home."

Holbeck showed up at a school board meeting in August to lobby against more busing to achieve desegregation and later said she hoped she would not be known as a racist.

Turn to **SCHOOLS** on B9
Also on B9:

— A map of the district.

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SCHOOLS from B1*Osseo district won't use busing to address racial imbalances*

The school board members who want more desegregation, she argued, are "afraid that we're going to get fined."

Among the district's 20 elementary schools, Edinbrook — with a 19 percent minority enrollment — sits at about the district average. But the range between individual schools can be staggering. Zanewood Elementary, located close to Brooklyn Park's lower-income apartment complexes, has a 57 percent minority enrollment. Across the district in Maple Grove, Rush Creek Elementary has just over 4 percent minority students.

While the district has adjusted attendance boundaries every three to four years, Zanewood's minority population — and that of other schools on the district's eastern side — has risen steadily. Birch Grove Elementary, another school in Brooklyn Park, has seen its minority population rise from 12 percent in 1993 to 33 percent.

Six of the district's elementary schools, all of them in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center, were cited by state officials last year for exceeding racial composition standards. Those standards prohibit an individual school from having a minority population 15 percent higher than the average for all the district's schools that serve students at the same grade level.

Osseo was one of 19 school districts statewide — there are 350 — that were cited last year. Of the 19 districts, four were in the Twin Cities suburbs.

With state officials indicating they soon may no longer enforce such rules, many district residents consider it a moot point.

"What the public wants us to do is move forward," said school board member Ruth Soby at a September board meeting that was crowded with parents.

The issue has rekindled unpleasant memories for some observers. During much of the early 1990s, Maple Grove received widespread criticism for opposing developers who wanted to build more housing in the city for lower-income and minority residents. The school district's dilemma, and how it is being handled, is seen as simply more of the same. Four of the all-white school board's six members live in Maple Grove.

'Wrong to be poor'

"I think they're tied together," Barb Thornbrough, a mother of two students in Plymouth, said of how Maple Grove's residents view the housing and school issues. "They bought houses with big yards and lots of amenities. They don't want their kids going

to school [with kids] that don't have the same backgrounds they have. It's suddenly become wrong to be poor, or to be more middle class."

On a larger level, the debate also has attracted the attention of the Minneapolis chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which is continuing its lawsuit against more than 20 defendants claiming that students in the heavily minority Minneapolis school system are receiving an education that is unlawfully segregated by race and income. The NAACP has subpoenaed records from the Osseo School District, as well as other suburban districts, in an attempt to show the disparity in educational opportunities in the metro area.

"Certain board members [in the Osseo district] believe segregation of African-Americans is appropriate, and they have said that publicly," said John Shulman, an NAACP lawyer who said he has attended the school district's board meetings. "We have a concern there is a real current of racism underlying the positions of some of those white school board members," he added.

Shulman also said many parents and school district officials were trying to attach a negative connotation to busing when it is used to achieve racial balance. Seventy percent of the students already ride buses daily because of the sprawling district's size.

As the school board wrestled during the spring and summer with what to consider while redrawing school boundaries, its members for a time were deadlocked and tempers flared. In May, the board twice deadlocked 3 to 3 on whether to make racial balance a primary goal.

Richard Krambeer, the school board chairman, said the ordeal was marked by "a lot of very, very deep feelings."

Scott Brokaw, another board member, said he at one point was referred to as being "David Duke-like," a reference to the prominent former Ku Klux Klan figure.

Just neighbors

Parents, meanwhile, organized to lobby for neighborhood schools and against increasing the use of busing to achieve racial balance. "I've got two black families in our neighborhood. They're not black, they're neighbors. I don't want them bused across the district, either," said Jim Reynolds, a Maple Grove resident who has three children in the school system.

Reynolds said those supporting neighborhood schools "are

saying, 'fine, spend the money, make those better schools [in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center], just don't bus from east to west and west to east.'

"No, it's not a race issue and, no, it's not a class issue," said Cindi Scheffler, a Plymouth mother of two school-age children. Even the raising of those issues, she said, is "irritating."

Makolle Williams, a father of four students who lives in Brooklyn Park, said he remains suspicious of many parents' motives and also those of the school board. "They still need scrutiny. They still need watching," he said. "Don't go back to the old days where you say, 'This is our area . . . [and] that is their side,'" he said.

With the school board having set its course, some parents predict the district will continue to separate, with one half getting progressively more affluent and the other becoming poorer.

At seven-year-old Oak View Elementary in Maple Grove, where minorities make up 8 percent of the enrollment, the future looks bright. The parent volunteer organization, which raised \$26,000

for the school last year, is on its way to meeting a \$37,000 goal this year. Volunteers contributed more than 18,000 hours of their time at the school a year ago.

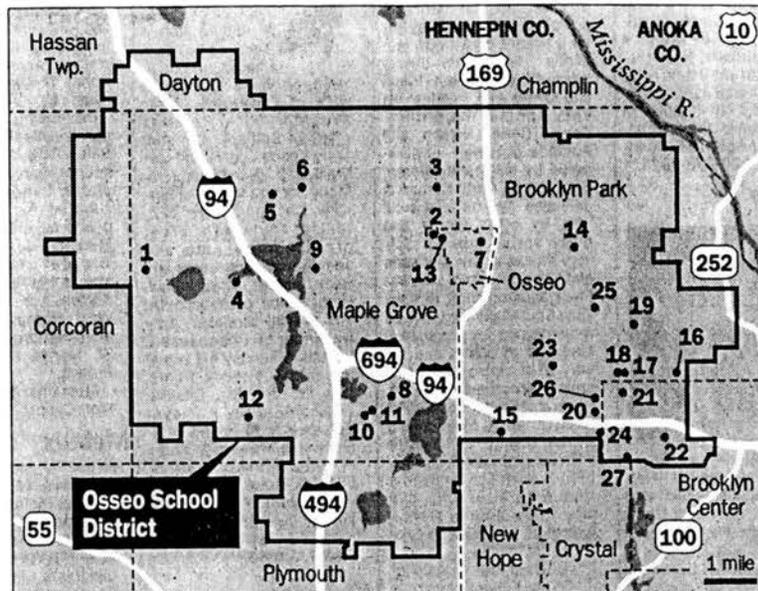
"Is it any wonder why I consider myself the luckiest principal?" said a smiling Mark French, the principal at Oak View.

French had just listened as a school choir serenaded visiting school board members with the Oak View school song:

"You're a grand old school, you're a high-ranking school, you're the best, in the west, we all say . . ."

Racial disparity in schools

Minority enrollments in the big Osseo School District vary greatly by school locations. The school board has pledged it won't allow the disparity to grow.



Percent minority enrollment		Percent minority enrollment	
1. Rush Creek Elem.	4.2%	15. Edgewood Elem.	26.3%
2. Osseo Junior High	4.9	16. Palmer Lake Elem.	27.7
3. Elm Creek Elem.	5.4	17. Brooklyn Junior High	29.9
4. Weaver Lake Elem.	5.6	18. Park Center High	32.6
5. Fernbrook Elem.	5.8	19. Birch Grove Elem.	32.8
6. Maple Grove High	6.0	20. North View Junior High	39.2
7. Osseo Elem.	6.3	21. Willow Lane Elem.	41.2
8. Maple Grove Junior High	7.6	22. Garden City Elem.	43.2
9. Rice Lake Elem.	7.9	23. Park Brook Elem.	45.9
10. Oak View Elem.	8.2	24. Fair Oaks Elem.	47.9
11. Cedar Island Elem.	8.9	25. Crest View Elem.	48.2
12. Basswood Elem.	11.3	26. Zanewood Elem.	56.9
13. Osseo High	15.9	27. Orchard Lane Elem.	57.5
14. Edinbrook Elem.	18.9		

Source: Osseo School District

Star Tribune graphic by Jane Friedmann

saying, 'fine, spend the money, make those better schools [in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center], just don't bus from east to west and west to east.'

"No, it's not a race issue and, no, it's not a class issue," said Cindi Scheffler, a Plymouth mother of two school-age children. Even the raising of those issues, she said, is "irritating."

Makolle Williams, a father of four students who lives in Brooklyn Park, said he remains suspicious of many parents' motives and also those of the school board. "They still need scrutiny. They still need watching," he said. "Don't go back to the old days where you say, 'This is our area . . . [and] that is their side,'" he said.

With the school board having set its course, some parents predict the district will continue to separate, with one half getting progressively more affluent and the other becoming poorer.

At seven-year-old Oak View Elementary in Maple Grove, where minorities make up 8 percent of the enrollment, the future looks bright. The parent volunteer organization, which raised \$26,000

for the school last year, is on its way to meeting a \$37,000 goal this year. Volunteers contributed more than 18,000 hours of their time at the school a year ago.

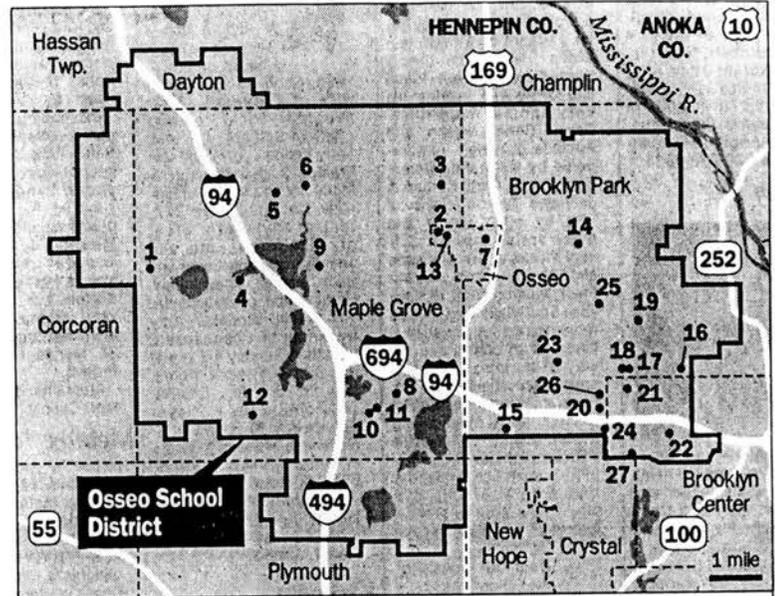
"Is it any wonder why I consider myself the luckiest principal?" said a smiling Mark French, the principal at Oak View.

French had just listened as a school choir serenaded visiting school board members with the Oak View school song:

"You're a grand old school, you're a high-ranking school, you're the best, in the west, we all say . . ."

Racial disparity in schools

Minority enrollments in the big Osseo School District vary greatly by school locations. The school board has pledged it won't allow the disparity to grow.



	Percent minority enrollment		Percent minority enrollment
1. Rush Creek Elem.	4.2%	15. Edgewood Elem.	26.3%
2. Osseo Junior High	4.9	16. Palmer Lake Elem.	27.7
3. Elm Creek Elem.	5.4	17. Brooklyn Junior High	29.9
4. Weaver Lake Elem.	5.6	18. Park Center High	32.6
5. Fernbrook Elem.	5.8	19. Birch Grove Elem.	32.8
6. Maple Grove High	6.0	20. North View Junior High	39.2
7. Osseo Elem.	6.3	21. Willow Lane Elem.	41.2
8. Maple Grove Junior High	7.6	22. Garden City Elem.	43.2
9. Rice Lake Elem.	7.9	23. Park Brook Elem.	45.9
10. Oak View Elem.	8.2	24. Fair Oaks Elem.	47.9
11. Cedar Island Elem.	8.9	25. Crest View Elem.	48.2
12. Basswood Elem.	11.3	26. Zanewood Elem.	56.9
13. Osseo High	15.9	27. Orchard Lane Elem.	57.5
14. Edinbrook Elem.	18.9		

Source: Osseo School District

Star Tribune graphic by Jane Friedmann

SCHOOLS from B1*Osseo district won't use busing to address racial imbalances*

The school board members who want more desegregation, she argued, are "afraid that we're going to get fined."

Among the district's 20 elementary schools, Edinbrook — with a 19 percent minority enrollment — sits at about the district average. But the range between individual schools can be staggering. Zanewood Elementary, located close to Brooklyn Park's lower-income apartment complexes, has a 57 percent minority enrollment. Across the district in Maple Grove, Rush Creek Elementary has just over 4 percent minority students.

While the district has adjusted attendance boundaries every three to four years, Zanewood's minority population — and that of other schools on the district's eastern side — has risen steadily. Birch Grove Elementary, another school in Brooklyn Park, has seen its minority population rise from 12 percent in 1993 to 33 percent.

Six of the district's elementary schools, all of them in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center, were cited by state officials last year for exceeding racial composition standards. Those standards prohibit an individual school from having a minority population 15 percent higher than the average for all the district's schools that serve students at the same grade level.

Osseo was one of 19 school districts statewide — there are 350 — that were cited last year. Of the 19 districts, four were in the Twin Cities suburbs.

With state officials indicating they soon may no longer enforce such rules, many district residents consider it a moot point.

"What the public wants us to do is move forward," said school board member Ruth Soby at a September board meeting that was crowded with parents.

The issue has rekindled unpleasant memories for some observers. During much of the early 1990s, Maple Grove received widespread criticism for opposing developers who wanted to build more housing in the city for lower-income and minority residents. The school district's dilemma, and how it is being handled, is seen as simply more of the same. Four of the all-white school board's six members live in Maple Grove.

'Wrong to be poor'

"I think they're tied together," Barb Thornbrough, a mother of two students in Plymouth, said of how Maple Grove's residents view the housing and school issues. "They bought houses with big yards and lots of amenities. They don't want their kids going

to school [with kids] that don't have the same backgrounds they have. It's suddenly become wrong to be poor, or to be more middle class."

On a larger level, the debate also has attracted the attention of the Minneapolis chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which is continuing its lawsuit against more than 20 defendants claiming that students in the heavily minority Minneapolis school system are receiving an education that is unlawfully segregated by race and income. The NAACP has subpoenaed records from the Osseo School District, as well as other suburban districts, in an attempt to show the disparity in educational opportunities in the metro area.

"Certain board members [in the Osseo district] believe segregation of African-Americans is appropriate, and they have said that publicly," said John Shulman, an NAACP lawyer who said he has attended the school district's board meetings. "We have a concern there is a real current of racism underlying the positions of some of those white school board members," he added.

Shulman also said many parents and school district officials were trying to attach a negative connotation to busing when it is used to achieve racial balance. Seventy percent of the students already ride buses daily because of the sprawling district's size.

As the school board wrestled during the spring and summer with what to consider while redrawing school boundaries, its members for a time were deadlocked and tempers flared. In May, the board twice deadlocked 3 to 3 on whether to make racial balance a primary goal.

Richard Krambeer, the school board chairman, said the ordeal was marked by "a lot of very, very deep feelings."

Scott Brokaw, another board member, said he at one point was referred to as being "David Duke-like," a reference to the prominent former Ku Klux Klan figure.

Just neighbors

Parents, meanwhile, organized to lobby for neighborhood schools and against increasing the use of busing to achieve racial balance. "I've got two black families in our neighborhood. They're not black, they're neighbors. I don't want them bused across the district, either," said Jim Reynolds, a Maple Grove resident who has three children in the school system.

Reynolds said those supporting neighborhood schools "are

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Metro/State

B SECTION
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StarTribune

Plan for Edina school with Minneapolis pupils is resisted

Racial diversity among the issues; council meets tonight

By Mark Brunswick
Star Tribune Staff Writer

Some residents of the Morningside area of Edina would rather see Minneapolis' water in their neighborhood than Minneapolis' schoolkids.

A plan by a collaborative of nine school districts to build an elementary school on land in the neighborhood was recently scotched by the Edina school board after outraged residents packed a board meeting to protest. It was the second rejection of an Edina site for the school.

The collaborative, the West Metro Education Program (WMEP), touts the plan as a possible answer to issues that confront Edina and many west suburban districts: school crowding and a lack of diversity in largely white districts.

While minority enrollment in Edina's public schools is 5 percent, it's projected that about 40 to 50 percent of the new school's students will be students of color, mostly from Minneapolis.

The plan for the Morningside site now calls for the city of Minneapolis Water Works Department, which has owned the land since 1961, to build a water finishing station, which would stand 22 feet tall, would be surrounded by a 10-foot fence and could be the size of a 1,000-car parking ramp.

Like many suburbs, Edina wrestles with the concept of diversity, and the issue is exemplified in its schools. They have been long heralded for academic excellence and parental involvement, and 92 percent of the district's graduates begin post-secondary education.

Coupled with its overwhelming success is Edina's overwhelming whiteness. In a district of almost 6,600 kids, 410 (about 6 percent) are students of color. In neighboring Minneapolis, 60 percent of the students are members of minorities.

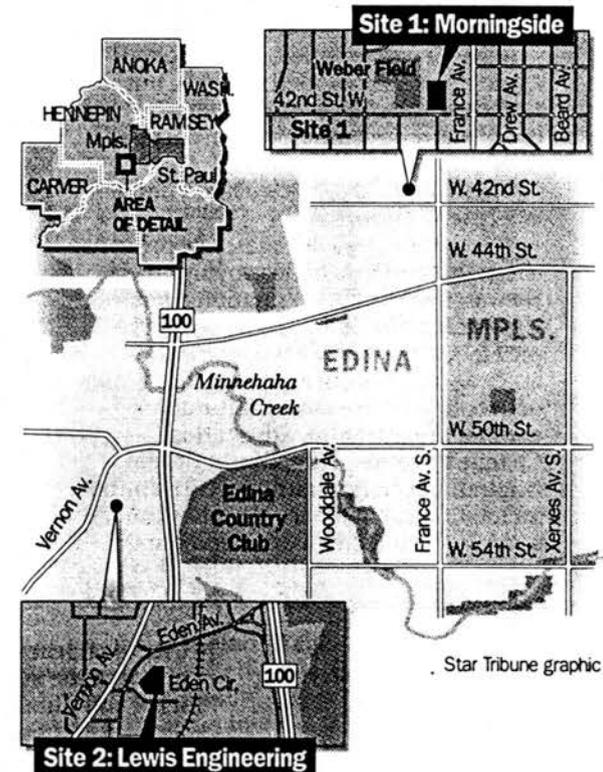
Race is always a factor in the debate. At a meeting in September, Edina Superintendent Ken Dragseth pointed to a survey of residents showing that 83 percent supported the idea of students of color from Minneapolis going to school in Edina and 70 percent supported sending white students from Edina to school in Minneapolis.

"That flies in the face of the stereotype of Edina," he said.

Turn to SCHOOL on B2

Two sites, many obstacles

Edina residents have opposed the building of a multidistrict elementary school in the Morningside area, so officials are taking another look at a site west of Highway 100.



Scaring up a yard full of Halloween monsters

Ex-DNR

SCHOOL from B1

But with legal action looming, the goodwill of those survey respondents may be put to the test. The Minneapolis chapter of the NAACP, in a lawsuit against more than 20 defendants, claims that students in the heavily minority Minneapolis school system are receiving an education that is unlawfully segregated by race and income.

While Edina is not part of the legal action, the suit has the potential to force the creation of a metropolitanwide school district, a concept that would challenge long-cherished community control over suburban schools such as Edina's.

The threat to autonomy is serious enough that the Edina school board received a briefing from a lawyer last week.

Listing a series of options that Edina could face in connection with the suit, the lawyer, Dennis O'Brien, who specializes in school financing law, warned "of the adverse political consequences of challenging the NAACP."

Under that cloud comes the WMEP, designed to be one way to avoid the complications of mandatory desegregation. Three interdistrict schools are slated for the west metro area. One is operating in downtown Minneapolis. A second is scheduled to open in the fall in Robbinsdale, and one is still looking for a site in Edina.

Edina City Council considers school

- **Who:** The West Metro Education Program and the Edina City Council.
- **What:** Meeting to discuss the education program's latest plan for development of a multidistrict, multicultural school in Edina. The proposal includes a senior center and library at the site, which is on Eden Avenue off Hwy. 100.
- **When:** 7 p.m. today, at the City Council's regularly scheduled meeting.
- **Where:** Edina City Hall, 4801 W. 50th St.

They are supposed to bring with them the glow of multiculturalism and the shimmer of unique programs and experiences. But Minneapolis' new Interdistrict Downtown School, with 320 students in grades three through eight, has been beset with problems from the start. A principal was removed just after the school year started, and there has been a shortage of such basic supplies as books and water coolers. Of the 18 Edina students who began there in September, 11 have returned to the Edina system.

The West Metro concept also has been criticized by the

NAACP's attorney in the suit, who challenges the idea as a cosmetic "nickel and dime" effort that will do little to address large-scale disparities between Minneapolis schools and suburban ones.

Dwindling options

So far the WMEP concept has been a hard sell in Edina, too. At the multidistrict's first choice, the former site of the Lewis Engineering Co. on Eden Avenue near Hwy. 100, city officials were interested in commercial development for the area, hoping not to lose property tax revenue. That site also lost ground when the Legislature appropriated \$3.1 million to buy property but nothing to build a school.

At the Morningside site, near 42nd St. and France Av. S., residents objected to the potential destruction of a cherished park, were concerned about crowding and complained of traffic and water drainage problems if the school were built.

Neighbors crowded into the school board meeting, made phone calls and sent e-mail. A petition opposing any additional use or change of the Weber Field park was signed by 589 residents. School officials assured opponents that the park was not going to be included in the development of the school and that West Metro school-

children wouldn't be using it. But residents were not reassured.

After losing the Morningside site, WMEP officials are proposing going back to the Lewis Engineering site. While the Morningside site is in a residential area, the Lewis Engineering site is bordered by a gas station, a convenience store, railroad tracks and a pet hospital.

Mayor Glenn Smith, who said he would not reveal his opinion of the WMEP concept for fear of "fueling the flames," remains open-minded about the Lewis Engineering site. "We will look at it like any other development," he said last week. But Smith has expressed doubts in the past about the development of a regional school that few Edina students would use.

The West Metro group hopes to sweeten the deal with the City Council by adding a senior center and library, as well as possible commercial development. In addition, they will point out that Edina residents can use the gym once the schoolchildren are gone.

The state Department of Children, Families and Learning is proposing \$14 million in state funds for construction of a possible school in Edina. But WMEP officials must find a suitable site before the legislative session begins in January.

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StarTribune

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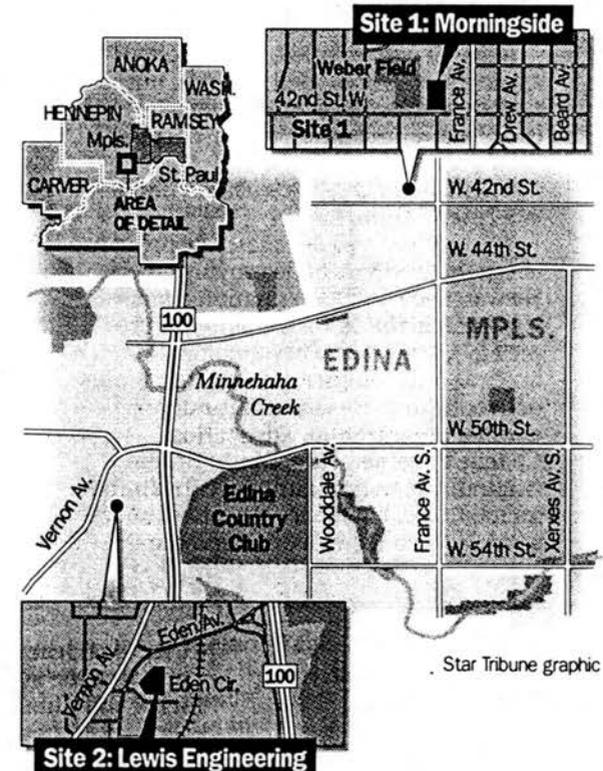
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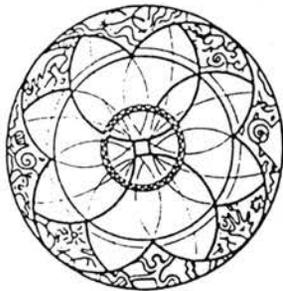
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SYNERGY

Summer 1998 THE MINNESOTA MINORITY EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP, INC.'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

SYNERGY —

"THE INTERACTION OF DISCRETE AGENCIES OR AGENTS SUCH THAT THE TOTAL EFFECT IS GREATER THAN THE SUM OF THE INDIVIDUAL EFFECTS."



Minnesotans collaboratively weave the basket of MMEP with their talents and resources, encircling students of color and encouraging their success.

MMEP MISSION —

"TO INCREASE THE SUCCESS OF MN STUDENTS OF COLOR IN MN SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES."

From the Director's Chair . . .

Carlos Mariani-Rosa

Mediate or Litigate?

Whose Responsibility are Students of Color?

Three lawsuits, one by the NAACP, one by parents in Minneapolis and one by St. Paul Public Schools, all against the State, charging that urban core students are being denied an adequate education due to segregation (Minneapolis) and inadequate funds (St. Paul) are headed for trial dates this November and February. *This is a historical moment, for what is at stake involves the future of our children, particularly children of color.* The court's decision will either provide these schools more resources and involve more of our Metro area's educators in the students' lives or it will affirm that their education is solely the responsibility of the school district they live in and that the State's current level of funding meets the legal extent of its obligation. Looking at it from a poor student of color's perspective, the decision will decide how much adults care for their success.

The range of issues to mediate are daunting. On one hand are the macro-issues: desegregating housing and jobs across the region; integrating schools across district boundaries; and equalizing funding. On the other hand are the micro-issues: hiring more teachers of color; developing diversity inclusive curriculum; and using new best practices to reflect the diverse student population. Both would require a new culture of institutional behavior, which as anyone who has worked with students knows, is difficult to effect in and of itself. Pursuing the macro strategies alone will not result in maximum success for students of color, it most likely will just spread the patterns of system failure over a larger geographic area. However, just implementing the micro strategies will similarly fail as the use of best practices in segregated classrooms will do little to prepare students for successfully participating in a diverse society. We must develop the political and spiritual will to do both.

Recently, about 80 people from different communities and perspectives got together to discuss whether it made more sense to mediate the lawsuits as opposed to letting a judge decide and impose his/her own mandates on the Metro community. The group saw a powerful opportunity for us to collectively fashion a micro/macro desegregation and resource strategy that could enjoy broad based

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

support if — and that is a big “if” — all the key players would negotiate respectfully. With some of the important decision makers deciding not to participate, I felt less than optimistic that the lawsuits could be mediated and that a court would order a macro “solution” which would alienate the White middle class. The resulting resistant political movement would handicap desegregation efforts as it has in the past in jurisdictions under similar orders. This same movement would make it harder to pursue the micro resources and strategies that are needed to ensure success in minority communities. Are we so unwilling to assume collective ownership of our kids, especially children of color, that we would rather run the risk of having lawyers and judges give us half a solution to their future? Shouldn't we decide this together? In the coming months, the Metro area will learn whether it is a functional or dysfunctional family.

M'MEP Staff

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Lynnea Atlas,
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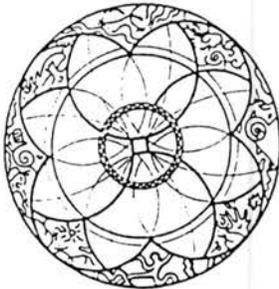
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