



Education and Housing Equity Project Records.

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"COMMUNITY CHOICES"
COMMUNITY CIRCLE INFORMATION REPORT
SUMMARY ANALYSIS (Updated as of 8/22/97)

To Community Circle Sponsor and Facilitator:

Purpose:

To learn more about the *Beyond Busing* Community Circles, we are asking community circle sponsors and facilitators to *work together* to complete the following information report. This report will be used in the on-going evaluation of the project, in planning for future efforts, and to report results to funders and other stakeholders. Your input is critical. Thank you in advance for your assistance in these efforts !!! Please return the completed form by August 1, 1997.

• **BASIC INFORMATION**

Number of respondents: 23 (80 surveys mailed to Facilitators & Sponsors) 28.8% responded.
 20 (80%) of 25 active Community Circles have returned survey.

<u>List of Community Circles Responding</u>	<u>Sponsor Organization(s)</u>	<u>Contact Person(s)</u>	<u>Facilitator(s)</u>	<u>Recorder(s)</u>
Hennepin County	Hennepin Co. Children&Family Svcs.	Ree Ah Bloedow* Brenda Louise*	Ree Ah Bloedow Brenda Louise	grp. Mems.
Sabathani Community Center	Sabathani Community Center	Art Serotoff*	Kristin Lund	A. Serotoff/ K. Lund
Holy Trinity	Holy Trinity Lutheran/ Longfellow United for Youth&Families	Rev. Ron Johnson	Joy Nelson*	L. Meeks
Richfield Community Circle	Richfield Board of Education Richfield League of Women Voters City of Richfield	Supt. Barbara Devlin	Emily Day* Joan Helmberger Margaret Severe Mary Supple*	M Supple
St. Paul	Jewish Community Center of St. Paul	Shelly Rottenberg*	Shelly Rottenberg Sunny Floum*	
Hopkins Community Study	Hopkins School District 270/ Hopkins Human Rights Commission	Diane Cowdery*	Nadine Knibb Wanda Phillips	D. Cowder
South Central Minneapolis	St. Joan of Arc Parish / Southside Neighbor- hood Services	Rich Nymoen*	Mary Ann McCoy* Howard Kroll	H. Clap R. Nymoen
Waite Park	Waite Park Community Council& Community School	Ray Lewis*	Jerry Anderson Ray Lewis	
Seward Mathews Center Group	Minneapolis Schools	Scott Bol* Karima Bushnell*	Scott Bol Karima Bushnell	K. Bushnell
Southwest Area Roundtable	Minnesota's Talking Project	Syd Devin*	35 monthly moderators	C. Hall
Edina Community Circle	Edina Public Schools	Laura Tueting Nelson*	Laura Tueting Nelson	J. Deitte
Minnesota Fair Housing Center Study Circle	Minnesota Fair Housing Center	Charmaine Sprengelmeyer*	C. Sprengelmeyer E. Moriatis	C. Sprengelmeyer
Bayport Community Circle	Minneapolis Public Schools	Scott Bol*	Scott Bol	
Oakdale-Oak Terrace-St. Paul Community Circle	CommonBond Communities	Maire McMahon*	M. McMahon Kay Reis Theresa Davis	M. McMahon Howard Homa Kay Reis
Golden Valley Study Circle	Black History Committee of Golden Valley Golden Valley Human Rights Dept.	Walter Gray* Mary Anderson	Walter Gray	M. Anderson G. Sylvester
Edina Community B	First Universalist Church Metro Stability Task Force	Nancy Atchison*	Linda Alton Nancy Atchison	varied
University of Minnesota	The Newman Center, U. of M.	Rosemary Ruffenach*	R. Ruffenach	P. Ruddy
Minneapolis-North-Brooklyn Park-Brooklyn Center Study Circle (2 groups)	Ascension Catholic Church	Sylvia* & John Winkelman	J. Winkelman S. Winkelman Charles Nichols Jan Swanson	J. Braun I. Slator
Minneapolis-Greater Area-D	Greater Minneapolis Day Care Assoc.	Jan Herseth	Barbara Blackstone*	

** NOTE: (Additional surveys to be obtained from Community Circles in Maple Grove / St. Louis Park / Minnetonka / Twin Cites Tenants Union / Minneapolis-Ramsey Fine Arts)

SURVEY &
RESULTS
SUMMARY
ANALYSIS
OF CIRCLES
PROJECT (SOME
MATERIAL IN THESE
ON SUBSTANCE OF
CONVERSATIONS —)

Number attended:

39% (9) Sponsor Kick-off event (Dec. '96)
74% (17) Facilitator Training (Feb. '97)
74% (17) Macalester Forum (May '97)

Number who used the discussion guide,

"Choices for Community"?
74% (17) yes
26% (6) no

Location(s) of community circle:

Rotating place School Board Room Hopkins School District Offices
St. Joan's Church Seward Mathews Center Pershing Park Neighborhood Center
Minnesota Fair Housing Center Bayport People's Congregational Church Oak Terrace Apts. - Oakdale
District Boardroom of Richfield Schools Golden Valley City Hall The Newman Center (U. of M.)
Greater Minneapolis Day Care Assoc.

Meeting times of Community Circles:

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday
13% (3) 22% (5) 22% (5) 13% (3) 4% (1)

Daytime (7AM - 4PM) 26% (6) Rotating times: 13% (3) Over Meals: 4% (1)
Evening (5PM - 10PM) 48% (11)

How many times did your community circle meet? _____

Range: 1 - 7 meetings
Median: 4.5 meetings

How long was each meeting? _____

Range: 1 - 3 hours
Median: 1.94 hours

How would you describe the attendance of participants? excellent good only fair poor

(4) (3) (2) (1)

of respondents: 1 1 8 3 5 2

Range: "poor to excellent"
Median: "fair to good" (2.6)

• THE PARTICIPANTS

How many people participated in your community circle?

Total: 263 participants Range: 3 - 25 participants Median: 12.0 participants

How many participants were: men? 26% (69)

women? 64% (168)

youth? 1% (3)

singles without children? 11% (29)

families? 25% (65)

single parent(s)? 11% (30)

seniors? 12% (31)

How many in your community circle represented each of the following cultural groups?

17% (45) African American

2% (5) Hispanic/Latino

2% (4) American Indian/Native American

59% (154) White/European

3% (7) Asian American

2% (4) Mixed Racial Background

8% (21) Don't Know

.8% (2) Liberian / Egyptian Moslem

Using your best judgment, please rate how diverse your group was according to the following categories?

	Very Diverse	Somewhat Diverse	Not Diverse	Have no idea		
Income Levels (ex. low, moderate, high)	1 (3)	(1)	2 (15)	(2)	4 (8)	Total: 43.5/21 Median: <u>2.1</u> "Somewhat (more) Diverse"
Political Affiliations (ex. DFL, Republican)	1 (1)		2 (8)	(4)	4 (8)	Total: 23/13 Median: <u>1.8</u> "Somewhat (less) Diverse"
Political Ideology (ex. Conservative, Liberal)	1 (1)		2 (8)	(7)	4 (5)	Total: 26/16 Median: <u>1.6</u> "Somewhat (less) Diverse"
Housing Situation (ex. home owner, renter)	1 (3)		2 (14)	(4)	4	Total: 41/21 Median: <u>2.0</u> "Somewhat Diverse"

What, if anything, do you know about the religious diversity of your group?

"None" "Nothing"

Protestant, Catholic, & unknown

Catholic, Protestant, Moslem

Diverse

No information

Nothing

No information; Did not come up.

Christian, Muslim, eclectic

Reflects the religious diversity of the population of SW Minneapolis. Probably includes a few agnostics, atheists, or what have you.

Jewish, Christian, and agnostic.

Some Congregationalists, some Bahai, eclectic ? others didn't say.

Christian; Jewish; possible other.

One of our members spoke of being Islamic. Others mentioned Christian churches.

None.

5 were Unitarian Universalist, others unknown.

All Catholic.

A number of St. Joan's Catholics, a number of other

Majority Catholic

Nothing

Which neighborhoods/cities were represented in your community circle and how many people were from each neighborhood/city?

City	Neighborhood	Number of participants
Afton		1
Arden Hills		1
Bayport		3
Bloomington		2
Brooklyn Center		5
Brooklyn Park		6
Burnsville		1
Edina		24
Golden Valley		10
Hopkins		9
Lakeland		2
Lakeville		1
Maple Grove		1
Maplewood		1
Minneapolis	Central	27
Minneapolis	Hyland	4
Minneapolis	Kingfield	3
Minneapolis	Longfellow	10
Minneapolis	LynLake	2
Minneapolis	North	7
Minneapolis	Northeast	1
Minneapolis	Powderhorn	2
Minneapolis	Prospect Park	1
Minneapolis	Seward	1
Minneapolis	Seward, Field-Regina-Northrup	7
Minneapolis	South	9
Minneapolis	Southwest	12
Minneapolis	Waite Park	3
Minneapolis	Willard	3
New Brighton		1
New Hope		1
North St. Paul		1
North Suburb		1
Oak Park Heights		2
Oakdale		8
Other Suburbs		8
Plymouth		1
Richfield		18
Roseville		1
St. Louis Park		3
St. Paul		11
St. Paul	Highland	16
Stillwater		4
Unknown		4

Did participants seem to be satisfied with the dialogue process, or did they express dissatisfaction?

Total: 83% (19) of respondents indicated participants seemed satisfied; please explain:

“Discussion” – process without need to answer all the questions

We used the written guide as a starting place – facilitator rephrased information & presented it orally to get discussion going.

“The study circle was a perfect place for members of the motivation group to practice their leadership development skills. It gave the participants a chance to advocate for their own situation and possibly influence public policy that directly affects their lives. Members of the group were enthusiastic about their participation.”

When we listened to each other, and worked our way to agreements.

Wanted to come again.

Generally satisfied, but some frustration with circular process – just kept going over same material. Didn’t use discussion guide as effectively as needed to bring focus and closure to conversations.

Participants said they enjoyed the process / discussions.

Comments favorable; said “Enjoyed opportunity to discuss with others.”

The group was generally pleased to meet others of different ethnicities in a deep-level dialogue. There was strong group bonding.

Those that continue to seem satisfied with the process; a goodly percentage even enthusiastic about it.

Enjoyed the opportunity to talk and meet others.

Participation was enthusiastic and open.

Liked it, but wanted more guidance. The discussion guide would have helped. It wasn't finished until after we met several times.

Seemed satisfied that they were given a forum from which to be heard – Also felt they were discussing & having input on important subjects.

But did not show up regularly.

I was frustrated, as were others. The topic was too big, too vague & we did not have a roadmap through it.

Most said it was good way to meet others & figure out how they think on these issues.

Many were energized and enjoyed the process.

Really liked having an opportunity to talk about the issue.

Total: 27% (6) of respondents indicated that participants expressed dissatisfaction; please explain:

When the member who tended to dominate with negativity, did so.

Poor attendance said due to other commitments, but may have been due to other issues??

1. Some wanted to "get down to business sooner" – (we did not have the study guide), while others wanted to process issues related to racism / prejudice (process vs. product conflict). Delay in Study Guide caused problems.

Relatively few; most dropouts are because of other commitments, lack of time, too far to come regularly, physical limitations, move out of area, gave birth to youngsters (several have returned as children get older), etc.

Some early in dialogue, most later, wanted to move to action yet were unclear how. Study materials came late.

Lack of study guide was difficult to build on at first.

They found the policy options too broad – difficult to get down to specifics.

Not enough time.

What important comments did participants share with you about their discussions?

Thought that integration of neighborhoods and schools was not the answer.

They chose to continue the group and discuss other matters of importance to them.

"This is a hard issue to have discussion on."

"I shouldn't have talked as much as I did."

Several wrote out comments expressing needed changes in housing & day care.

* We have not met for this Format; Group is divided & new group will (would) have to be formed. We came out of a Community Conversation Format, but this isn't what they want to do.

The group resisted moving the conversation to more regional, metro-wide level. They wanted to stay focused on the Hopkins area & find solutions to local issues.

Never really talked about the discussion per se, but all agreed that such discussions, and prioritizing the needs of the community were important.

Amazement – to learn from others about their "take" on issues – safe environment, encouraged openness.

Did not meet – only 1 other person besides facilitator and I expressed interest in attending another meeting.

One person was amazed to see how she was being perceived – that her comments frightened some.

As regards racism, very, very few have indicated by their remarks or behavior that they are bigoted, that they condone intolerance or segregation or discrimination.

Would like to talk more with those who do not see need for social change & justice – or urgency. Felt like "preaching to the choir".

Problems with educational system and racism.

Concern about lack of Racial Diversity in Schools & Community. Need more affordable housing in Washington County.

They said had concerns but needed more accurate reliable information about the current segregations and especially about the people directly in poverty.

They wanted to make sure something came of it – not just discussion without action.

??

Topic seemed almost too big to discuss adequately.

Some concerned about follow-up. Cynicism – "we've talked before and nothing much changes".

• SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS

Summary Report

a) What perspectives were well represented in your group?

Home owners, middle-age, middle-class

Pro neighborhood school in general. Low income was somewhat represented. Property – owner & renter. School staff. African-American.

Most individuals come to the issues from a background of privilege. They were well able to articulate views about working harder to get ahead. Good advocacy on behalf of strengthening families.

All 3 perspectives presented in the discussion guide were part of our discussion, but larger system factors were addressed in less detail. Very diverse.

Libertarians, middle class America, wholistic community perspective, progressive liberal.

Generally a desire to participate in the democratic process, to be good citizens, to accept responsibility and to be open minded and fair in relations with others.

See report – middle class suburban people of good will who want to see justice, balance & opportunity for everyone.

The homeless and affordable housing advocates.

Social Justice liberal, Democrats / one Libertarian.

Middle class neighborhood concern for values and education.

See minutes (attached).

Our only agreement was that the issues were not mutually exclusive.

Group was mostly liberal, middle class, activist.

Liberal, social justice advocates.

Inner city, liberal

Inner city was very articulate. It was clear most lived where they lived by choice. Also strong “racial” views expressed.

Committed white folks wanting to create change.

b) Which perspectives were missing?

Youth, elderly, suburbs, low-income

Racially, Asian & Hispanic.

The perspective of real poverty – especially generational poverty – was absent. We need to have more of the people affected be part of finding solutions.

In my opinion, people seemed hesitant to really confront the impact of residential segregation on our community, and the tension between suburban and urban areas re: housing issues, poverty issues.

None, really.

No seniors, no juveniles, few people of color, no mainstream conservatives

The younger participants tended to have short run perspectives; the older “senior” citizens took a longer view and not be as susceptible to being unduly swayed by today’s media event.

Low income people.

Representation from African American community was limited and representation from the Chicano/Latino, Southeast Asian, and Native American communities was not heard. English only study circles excluded entire groups of people from participating – groups conducted in Vietnamese, Hmong, Spanish, Somali, etc. would give an opportunity to non-English speaking people to participate.

People within these groups have diverse opinions as well.

Older Adults, youth, more people of color, Republicans.

No first hand information or experience of people in segregated poverty in majority of participants.

See minutes (attached).

?

No people of color. No low income.

Anyone who said “We achieved Edina, so can they.”

Conservative, enough minority input (only 1 or 2 meetings had minorities attending).

We didn’t spend a lot of time on Transportation other than to acknowledge its importance.

Those of people most affected.

c) Did the discussions focus on the two central questions? Yes: 61% (14) No: 17% (4)

As facilitator I kept trying to refocus to that. 1 member repeatedly talked about the renters’ disrespect for property & lack of gratitude from those in poverty.

Yes – housing & schools.

To some extent, but not enough. Our facilitators did not make full use of the Discussion Guide, which would have helped to maintain focus.

To some degree but not completely.

We focused on those topics. However it was generally realized that all social problems and issues are intertwined, so there was much overlapping – for example, income disparity, is affected by racism, lack of education, etc.

In general

Some, as Facilitator, I directed the conversation to the Two questions, on a regular basis but group wasn't drawn to it.

Most on the first.

See minutes (attached).

No – Focused on first central question & decided to continue in the Fall to discuss Golden Valley.

No – they went everywhere but always participants spoke of their personal experiences & then generalized from it.

Pretty much – Education / Housing / Transportation – most on Education.

d) What were your own observations about the dialogue and group process?

Diverse group, some problems with domination of group.

That I had trouble keeping 1 or 2 from dominating.

Group members were very tolerant and respectful of differing viewpoints. Facilitator did a good job laying out ground rules of discussions.

Remarkably free.

It (Discussion) often seemed redundant and not focused on central issues. Greater direction from facilitators would have helped keep it focused & more productive.

Would have benefited from more diversity and a greater commitment to attending each meeting, so that the "flow" was not so disrupted.

Worked well; exhilarating – Time flew !!

Dialogue was very lively and participants were engaged emotionally and intellectually. There was wide variety of viewpoints.

The process is sound. We especially like our group's emphasis on rotating the role of moderator and not having outside speakers as such. Our veteran members are pretty good at helping the moderator keep the discussion within bounds.

Difficult to get people engaged who are not already interested in social justice.

It was a productive night. By the end of the session, participants were talking more, addressing each other directly and relying on facilitators less.

This was not a very committed group; lack of Diversity; limited group momentum, enthusiasm.

Dialogue is a good process. There was some confusion due to multiple means of terms provided in materials.

Process was smooth, however, the dialogue was tempered sometimes, as if trying not to offend others.

As above the questions were too broad – no info on real ramifications – quotes were all opinions not facts.

I came away feeling rather helpless.

Once the concept & "rules" and dialogue were set out, people abided by them and had productive sessions.

It was exciting & meaningful – a fair amount of bonding occurred.

We had an articulate group who were well versed in issues.

e) What did members of the group say about their discussions?

Enjoyed, but frustrating.

One member said he was grateful the facilitator didn't come across as having all the answers. One member expressed dissatisfaction that the same issues were discussed over & over again.

Enjoyed free expressions.

Engaged, but wondered where it would lead, who would listen ?

Not much in particular that I can remember.

Appreciated ground rules; begin & end times set & respected ... by ALL !!

There was consensus that we had very good discussions.

It isn't so much what they say; it's that they keep coming back.

They liked the opportunity to discuss. Some were nervous about political action, some were very anxious to take action.

Everyone committed to coming back to continue the conversation.

What will ...

They apparently wanted to participate but appeared frustrated at inability to reach solutions.

They seemed satisfied.

Overall, very positive. Some found confusing what we were trying to accomplish.

They were surprised at the degree of energy displayed once they got into it.

They liked having an opportunity to talk about these topics and wished others would too.

f) What was the topic of the group's liveliest discussion?

How corporations rule policies in America.

Either the adequacy of schools to adequately educate all children, or a living wage, & affordable housing.

Available low cost housing and day care.

The notion that things are the way they are because of a careful plan to keep them that way – i.e. white privilege entitlement.

The newspaper report on the failure of Minneapolis/St. Paul's school system, and the problems with the area's educational system.

Housing & relation to neighborhood schools –.

Racism, responsibility for ancestors' behavior, individual responsibility.

Their were few topics that weren't "lively" – although that factor varied.

How to engage the broader community.

Schools would be required to implement year long life skills classes ... Our group felt that the Wilder School being constructed in St. Paul's Frogtown area is an innovative idea.

Low income housing particularly Trailer Parks. Why LandFall Trailer Park is more community oriented than Cimmeron Trailer Park.

The first session especially the vision of the future.

The effects of racism – some bristled at the use of the word “racism” and wanted to soften it by calling racism “prejudice” or something else.

“Why are you here?” “Why are you concerned about this?” The role of education – has it failed Kids of Color?

Realities & perceptions of urban vs. suburban schools.

Race and the effects of racism.

Limitations on what has been happening to improve things – lack of general knowledge.

g) What were the areas of general agreement and consensus?

Segregation and poverty impact families.

Housing - Personal accountability Education – Community responsibility transport to suburbs.

Jobs must pay a living wage. More emphasis on community-building – getting to know one another – sharing resources. We haven't yet reached point in process where we've checked for consensus. Work still to be done.

Consensus in most broad areas; we really needed more diversity, especially across class/political lines, I felt.

Housing and neighborhood schools – needs were agreed as great.

The bulk of the people who attend more than one of our sessions would overwhelmingly be comfortable with the 4 points stated in your July 16th cover letter.

Need for region wide response. Need to move breast-beating about the past – issue into the future.

Age appropriate life skills classes and emphasis on education – to foster academic competition among schools. The school would become a source of community pride.

Need Affordable Housing in Washington County. Need Pilot Projects. Need TAX (incentive) for landlord breaks.

See attached (report).

(1) Areas of concern were not mutually exclusive. (2) Solving problems would take a lot of work & a long time. (3)

Resolution would come with public/private cooperation only. (See Summary Reports)

Belief in equal opportunity – need for improvements in education in Mpls., fear of Welfare “reforms”.

People must be educated to be concerned. If the powers that be wanted something done, it would be.

Housing desegregation is necessary but should not necessarily be imposed from above.

They wanted good schools but didn't like busing. They preferred improving inner city schools.

Need to strat with the kids and hang in there.

h) What were areas with little agreement or consensus?

How to solve the problem? What the problem is.

That the poor should be grateful for Welfare.

Specific ideas (details), such as whether or not the current emphasis on volunteerism is valid ...

Actual step by step solutions.

Little about individual liberties, regulations, role of government – all agreed that empowerment was key.

Precise next steps.

See attached (report) – solutions difficult to identify.

??

Specific actions to achieve policy goals.

What should be done.

Whether change will be effected best by enlightening people instead of by political action.

Busing.

None.

i) What suggestions and recommendations came from the group about how individuals might better address the issue?

Become active in the school system, your child, and classroom.

Take responsibilities in all areas.

Show active concern for their neighbors i.e. mentoring, tutoring.

Be involved in Children's education, neighborhoods and in keeping government programs (e.g. schools) accountable.

Take as your own ways to take action – not wait for “others” to do it all.

See Attached Report.

Our group, especially those who now or have served on our Steering Committee, believe that the best approach to improve race relations is, on an individual one on one basis, with the white person first inviting minority persons to visit them and break bread on matters other than “race”.

Engage friends, neighbors, social contacts & organizations (like churches) in actions and service.

The community, parents, and educators would all play a role in insuring the success of the school and the students that attend.

Get involved. Get informed.

Sense of individual responsibility and sense of community.

See Summary Report.

Keep working on anti-racism. Learn more about necessary action to reverse the entrenched culture of separation & discrimination. Individuals have a moral obligation to improve these conditions whether by direct service, increased personal responsibility, or political action.

Mentors & tutors for children needing help.

Waiting to schedule last meeting until convenor returns.

j) What suggestions and recommendations came from the group about how organizations or institutions might better address the issue?

Accountability – more family and community friendly.

1) Education resources be equitable, “relative to population need”. 2) Schools make parental involvement easier. 3) Institute peer parenting & support – unified families.

Set higher standards, be accountable, monitor government, ... * Like the Community Forum, our group never quite got to recommendations.

Continue to meet & confer, in sessions like these – & celebrate positive events!

See Attached Report.

No short answer available.

Dependent on the institution – dialogue between city council & school board planned.

The Wilder School will not only be a school, but a community center, social service center, and health care center: in effect the center of the community. Community members, parents, and educators will have a voice in the planning and a stake in the success of the school.

Need more dialogues and Education.

Some confidence in neighborhood councils.

See Summary Report.

They were submitted (see report).

Churches need to provide more services to poor minorities and become more politically involved to change things structurally.

More involvement from businesses.

k) What suggestions and recommendations came from the group about how government might better address the issue?

Accountability.

1) Enforcement of renter & landlord accountability. 2) More flexible housing codes for large families. 3) More affordable housing everywhere. 4) Encourage personal accountability. 5) Support NRP's. 6) More wide-spread transport. 7) Libraries open more evenings.

Improve education, offer employment. * We agreed that the needs were so large, that it seemed much too difficult to make recommendations given our lack of time and depth/breath of needs.

These were not really addressed, other than need to have neighborhood schools established Now!!

See Attached Report.

No short answer available.

Begin the dialogue – make sure city council is aware of a social justice perspective and is supported by residents.

Issues identified – Exclusionary Zoning.

Tax breaks for low income Housing.

They had some confidence in local city action but almost none in metropolitan; little in State.

See Summary Report.

Want national basic income support. Welfare system that empowers people, provides training support for jobs that pay enough to live on.

They were submitted (see report).

Each municipality must be less exclusionary in its policies.

Increased funding for neighborhood centers and programs. Longer school hours – more teacher training.

• EXPERIENCES OF FACILITATOR AND/OR SPONSOR

Additional Comments (Please feel free to use additional sheets)

a) **Did you have adequate support from your study circle's organizer, or not? Please explain:**

Yes: 35% (8) No: 22% (5)

Copying. Space & set up. Support costs.

I was the organizer --.

I was personally disappointed that I, as a student intern, was the only one able/willing to represent Hennepin County at the Forum. I and the other facilitator organized, coordinated and sought support for the Community Circle, with no more assistance / input or recognition from the Department's Director, or anyone "up there" than approval to use office conference rooms.

We are the organizers -- this can only be answered by participants.

We have no one "organizer".

Yes -- schools are very interested in these issues and superintendent is committed to desegregation and equity.

A question for participants.

As this is a work in progress, it's hard to determine what kind of support should have been expected. Sometimes felt as though we were all unorganized.

? Didn't really receive any -- other than to make an announcement at Mass.

The material was slow getting to us.

Not enough commitment to get large enough group & then to commit to dates agreed on.

b) **Did you have adequate support from the project coordinator, or not? Please explain:**

Yes: 52% (12) No: 22% (5)

Answered calls.

Identification of a facilitator was delayed, resulting in a false start & some loss of momentum / participation.

Mr. Little promptly answered phone calls, offered ideas for additional information, and seemed committed and enthusiastic. Yes, I felt adequately supported from him and appreciated as a facilitator. Info on how other groups went would help me better evaluate our group.

Good support overall.

We became aware of the Collaborative project very late in the game, and because of the long lead time of our scheduling we were unable to conform to the general collaborative format. But it was not for lack of support by the project coordinator.

Materials were very late, but assistance given when speaker needed was very helpful.

It was difficult organizing the study circle group with the date changes from the city wide forum/citizens summit and the editing of the manual.

Adequate.

Yes -- even with time frames very tight.

Fair.

Generally yes. A little frustration resulted from constantly shifting time tables.

Yes! I think because we were among the earliest groups to start, the staff was feeling its way along but they tried to be helpful.

Didn't ask for more support.

c) **What additional support would have been helpful?**

None.

Having the study guide ready when indicated it would be.

More timely pairing of facilitators with groups & of distribution of discussion guide.

• Recognition, a thank you, a representative at the Forum, donuts ... any one of these would have been nice from project sponsor.

Good support received!

Sponsoring organization could have helped supply treats, provide clerical support, copies, etc.

We view this the other way -- what can we do to support the overall aims of the Collaborative? ✓

The group session at Macalester should have moved to solutions. Focus on problems only was not very helpful.

Recruiting participants was challenging. Low income persons had a difficult time with transportation expenses. It would have been nice to be able to provide a snack during the meetings -- we were unable to do this because of our own budget constraints. Allocating money from the Study Circle Collaborative for such items as bus tokens, snacks, etc. would have been helpful.

More help recruiting participants & money for snacks and drinks.

The discussion guide sooner.

??

Some way through the issue. I didn't find the 3 perspectives helpful -- far too narrow. The rewritten booklet (by Syl Jones) came after we had finished our discussions.

Perhaps verbal presentations by experts on the various perspectives.

Initial timelines were somewhat unrealistic which caused some early confusion.

Adding additional participants.

d) If you were to lead another study circle, what would you change (for example: discussion materials, overall organization of project, meeting site, your performance as discussion leader, etc.)?

1) I'd try for better attendance (more members), & keep myself out of the discussion more. 2) I'd do child care a little differently.

I would have recommended that facilitator follow discussion guide more closely.

I've never lead a discussion group before, and so felt very unsure of my facilitation abilities, particularly among this group of experienced professionals ... help with this. Also is there a way of randomly assigning interested group members to groups, for more diversity? Other help in recruiting diversity from one employment site / organization.

There was mention of a stipend for facilitators when we had our training - I would appreciate further consideration of this aspect of the overall organization of the project. Thank you -.

Would seek generational diversity, more support from sponsoring organization.

Not enough participation, yet, to provide a meaningful reply.

Expand participation.

There needs to be more diversity in the study circle groups.

More room for research assistance with Research on Group Questions that come up.

Have study guides ready on time, for groups - Have amore diverse group. - More lead time for starting a group & doing group reporting.

Timely - factual background material; we would need better data re policy options - more focused (specific) options for action.

I felt the organization was chaotic - every thing was last minute.

I would get a more firm commitment from participants for regular attendance.

More follow-up to work on implementing recommendations.

Set dates ahead of time, asking for commitment at brginning.

e) Other impressions, concerns and comments ...

The meeting at Macalester ... meeting process was confusing to me. Overall I think the process was helpful and productive at the local level. The big trick is to ensure that something comes of this work so that it does effect policy. ...after the Macalester meeting, I must say that this last piece is in question in my mind. I look forward to participating in next steps that bring to a focus some of the policy issues.

1) When we "merge" with another group now, would we co-facilitate? I'd much prefer that.

2) I wouldn't want to meet more than 2x/mo.

Concerned that only women would come and return - no men (except one we coerced).

We've had a good beginning, but we need to broaden the discussion to a wider geographic area & to include a broader set of stakeholders.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to facilitate a Community Circles group - Hope to help out again in future.

Vital, interesting discussion; rich diversity of cultures & viewpoints made people want to come back. Excellent group bonding, affection.

The other delegate and myself were impressed with the overall quality of most of those, both other delegates and the leaders of the Macalester general forum.

Focus more on next steps. We have talked about inability to act for too many years with the same community leaders.

The participants at the city wide forum seemed to be predominately middle to upper middle class, middle aged, white people.

It would help to have more men and a more diverse group.

21 people signed up for discussion but could not find a common meeting time. Most were unwilling to commit to more than one meeting time of short duration: 2 - 3 hrs. These attended one or two meetings - No one attended all 4.

Narrow the topic !

It was great !!!

Do more integrated groups if possible.

Participant Roster (Please include sponsor(s), facilitator(s), recorder(s))

Hennepin County

Holy Trinity

Hopkins Community Study Circle

Seward Mathews Center Group

Edina Community Circle

Minnesota Fair Housing Center Study Circle

Bayport Community Circle

Oakdale-Oak Terrace-St. Paul Community Circle

Richfield Community Circle

Golden Valley Study Circle

Edina Community B (First Universalist) Circle

University of Minnesota (Newman Center) Study Circle

Minneapolis-North-Brooklyn Park-Brooklyn Center / Ascension Church

Minneapolis Greater Area-D / Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association

Community Circles meet in metro-wide dialogue

Representing study groups from Stillwater and Bayport on the east, to Minnetonka on the west, and from Eagan and Apple Valley on the south, to Champlin on the north, participants in the Community Circle project met at Weyerhaeuser Chapel at St. Paul's Macalester College May 29 for an evening's discussion about the challenges of education, housing and racial segregation.

The evening drew a multi-racial crowd of 122 people, including both Community Circle participants and invited guests. George Latimer, former mayor of St. Paul, and Vivian Jenkins Nelsen, director of INTER-RACE, moderated the event.

"I think we had a very good discussion about segregation and about race," said Community Circle coordinator Dick Little. "That was a breakthrough." Little added: "there was honesty that evening. We got past Minnesota Nice."

MICAH is a sponsor of the Community Circle project, which seeks to bring a diversity of metro residents together to examine the impacts of segregation on housing and children and to propose solutions.

The project has published a study guide which examines the scope of the problem and outlines policy options.

A second round of Community Circle study groups will begin this fall, building on the lessons learned this spring

To participate, or to get more information, contact Dick Little, executive director of the Education and Housing Equity Project: 871-8980.

Community Circle Collaborative

Community Circles, Round 2: Identifying Solutions
Autumn 1998

Communications Plan

This is an internal working document for use by
employees and board members of the
Education and Housing Equity Project.

Another version will be published for use by
Funding Partners, Organizing Partners and Resource Associates.

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Situation

The CCC organized a series of Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan community circle discussions in the spring of 1997. The CCC is made up of about twenty *organizing partners*, led by the Education and Housing Equity Project, and five justice-oriented *funding partners*. Many additional *resource associates* provided valuable assistance. Thirty-five community groups acted as *sponsors* to host the discussions. There were over 500 individual *participants*. The discussions focused on the following questions:

How does *racial and economic segregation of housing*
affect *education and life opportunities* for people
in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan community?

What *can and should citizens do*, individually and collectively,
to **enhance** *education and life opportunities* for all people?

The process will continue with another series of community circle discussions in the Autumn of 1998. The 1997 series was successful. The 1998 series will build on that success, with the following improvements:

- More structure established by the organizing partners, with clearer expectations, to enhance productivity
- Greater diversity within discussion circles, and broader geographic reach
- Stronger action-orientation, connecting citizens to action opportunities

Objectives

The objectives of the communications program are to:

PHASE I

⇒ **Enroll** at least 1000 people from at least 75% of 7-county metro-area municipalities

PHASE II

⇒ **Catalyze** a concerned citizenry to action by provide factual data to inform the discussions

PHASE III

⇒ **Connect** people to action opportunities to create racially and economically inclusive communities

PHASE IV

⇒ **Analyze** vehicle and message effectiveness to provide directions for future campaigns

Audiences

Our key audiences are:

- ⇒ Past, committed and prospective funding partners
- ⇒ Past, committed and prospective organizing partners
- ⇒ Past, committed and prospective resource associates
- ⇒ Past, committed and prospective sponsors
- ⇒ Past, committed and prospective participants
- ⇒ Media and government contacts
- ⇒ Other influencers, such as related advocacy groups

Strategy:

Expand partnership base to lend credibility and infrastructure, share workload, and reach a wider scope of constituents to increase overall participation.

Communications will be tailored and targeted to specific audiences for maximum impact. A robust database of these key constituents will serve as the foundation for all of our communication efforts. We will maintain the database in electronic format to facilitate segmentation for targeted communications, as well as analysis and reporting on effectiveness of specific campaigns. We will refresh the database after each campaign to add new contacts, and update after each interaction. The database will support a fully integrated communication program including publicity, promotion and direct marketing in our areas of concern.

Each record will contain the following data:

- ⇒ Contact name
- ⇒ Addresses
- ⇒ Phone numbers
- ⇒ Facsimile numbers
- ⇒ Electronic mail addresses
- ⇒ Affiliations
- ⇒ CCC participation history
- ⇒ Special interests (education, housing, race, etc.)

Themes

We seek to gain mindshare in an information-overloaded and desensitized world. Copy will be terse, imagery will be innovative. Communications will be created not from our point of view, but from that of the recipients, avoiding hyperbole and patronization. We will continue to reinforce the already established key themes in all communications.

Strategy:
Create themes to demonstrate compatibility of mission with issue-oriented constituents; and to overcome objections to participation from non-involved citizens.

- ⇒ “The problems of segregation and concentrated poverty are *extremely severe* in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan area.”
- ⇒ “You *can* make a difference.”
- ⇒ “Citizens *have a responsibility* to their community.”
- ⇒ “The Community Circle Collaborative is *action-oriented*.”

Components

Phase	Process	Owner	Key Dates
I	Funding partner enrollment	DL	
	Organizing partner enrollment	DL	
	Resource associate enrollment		
	Sponsor enrollment		
	Participant enrollment		
	Sponsor guidance		
	Participant guidance		
	II	Discussion information	
III	Action connection		
IV	Evaluation	NC	

Vehicles and Media

Direct Marketing - Mailings

Promotion - We will host and attend events to create interest and gain enrollment. Face-to-face contact builds relationships with key stakeholders and influencers, increases organizational visibility. Our newsletter and website can work synergistically with other media for maximum effectiveness.

Publicity -

Media relations - We will cultivate relationships with individuals at media that reach our target audience to disseminate information.

Advocacy group relations -

There are five primary types of media: face-to-face, audio/video, audio, electronic/multimedia, and print. We will select media based on desired impact, target audience response to specific media, how those media influence perception and affect the message, budget, and how the media combine to build momentum.

Calendar

Create "user-friendly" participation materials for all levels

Collateral Material Production Schedule				
	Component	Owner	Completion Date	Budget
1	Brochure/Mailer			
2	Program Synopsis			
3	Backgrounder			
4	Sponsor Guide			
5	Facilitator Guide			
6	Discussion Workbook			
7				
8				

Evaluation

For Public Release, May 28, 1999

FFI contact Pam Jewson at (612) 330-1505

Community Circle Dialogues Receive National Recognition

President Clinton's Initiative on Race recently selected the Minneapolis-based Education & Housing Equity Project (EHEP) and the Community Circle Dialogues on Education, Housing and Race in the Twin Cities as a national model of a "Promising Practice for Racial Reconciliation." Directed by Dick Little, the Community Circles project began as a partnership of regional and community organizations, including MICAHA (Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing), MMEP (Minnesota Minority Education Partnership), the Minnesota Facilitators Network, the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution, MCARI (Minnesota Churches Anti-Racism Initiative) and the Wilder Foundation. In May of this year, Mr. Little was one of four representatives of regional projects throughout the country who were invited to address scholars and public officials in Washington, D.C. on innovative approaches to our nation's racial problems. His presentation was delivered as part of a National Issues Forum entitled "Race in America: New Approaches to Bridging the Divide" sponsored by the Brookings Institution on May 6 and 7, 1999.

Matthew Little, long-time civil rights leader in Minnesota, is the president and co-founder of EHEP, and one of its sixteen distinguished board members. EHEP is headquartered at Augsburg College, an urban liberal arts college in Minneapolis. It has been in the forefront of engaging the public in conversations that consider the connection between segregated schools and segregated communities, the impacts of economic and racial segregation on life opportunities and educational achievement of our young people, and promising approaches to achieving more diverse, inclusive communities and access to schools, jobs and social environments that benefit *all* children and adults throughout the metropolitan area. Informed citizen action is one of the intended outcomes of the conversations.

Currently, over 50 Community Circle Dialogues are underway in Minneapolis, Saint Paul and suburbs. In Saint Paul, the Circles are being convened by neighborhood groups, schools and congregations as part of *1999 Cities at Work*, a city-wide initiative on "Race, Connections and Commitment" co-sponsored by the Wilder Foundation. A Citizens Summit focusing on the results of the conversations will be held toward the end of the year and will be co-sponsored by the Minnesota Meeting, Minnesota Public Radio, KMOJ/Insight News and other media partners.

Two outcomes of the Community Circles held in 1997 are the Inclusionary Housing Legislation promoted by the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability and passed by the Minnesota Legislature this spring, and the award-winning fair housing play "Like Waters Rolling Down" produced by MICAHA and the Illusion Theatre. The Community Circles project is one of several initiatives credited with contributing to the largest funding increase in Minnesota history for metropolitan affordable housing by the 1999 Minnesota Legislature. The project has also contributed a reservoir of ideas for consideration in mediating a settlement of the NAACP v. State of Minnesota educational adequacy lawsuit and Saint Paul School District v. State of Minnesota educational equity lawsuit.

Goodwill/Easter Seals Invites You to Join

Community Circle Conversations On Education, Housing, Race and Divided Communities

- WHAT:** Community Circle dialogues were created to discuss the relationships between school segregation and inequality, including the broader issues of housing and divided communities.
- NEEDED:** Eight to 15 participants are needed for each Community Circle for five two-hour discussions.
- WHY:** The faces of St. Paul are changing daily, becoming more varied and diverse. Increasing economic and cultural diversity brings challenge and opportunity. In order to improve our neighborhoods, communities, and city, we need to work in partnership across racial, cultural and economic lines.
- HOW:** Community Circles offer a broad base of citizens the chance to exchange action-oriented ideas and develop community-based solutions for public policy. The discussions are led by a trained facilitator.
- Results will be presented at the 1999 Cities at Work forums in St. Paul and to state and local policy makers.
- WHEN:** 5:15 to 7:15 PM
March 22, 29
April 12, 19, 26
- WHERE:** Goodwill/Easter Seals Main Office
2543 Como Avenue (at Highway 280)
St. Paul, MN 55108
- SIGN UP:** Contact Diana Huseth at Goodwill/Easter Seals, 651/646-2591 x 178
Please reserve space in Community Circle by March 18, 1999.
- NOTE:** A light supper will be served at a minimal cost.

FAX COVER SHEET

Volunteer Services



Goodwill Industries, Inc.
Easter Seal Society of
Minnesota's mission is to
support people with
disabilities or disadvantages
in achieving their goals for
education, employment
and independence.

DATE: 3/3/99

PAGES TO FOLLOW: 1

TO: Dick Little

FAX NUMBER: 612-330-1507

FROM: Mary Danielsen
Volunteer Coordinator, 646-2591 ext. 146

SUBJECT: _____

*It was nice talking with
you.*

Mary



Goodwill/Easter Seal
2545 Ceme Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108
(612) 646-2591 (Voice)
(612) 646-0424 (TTY)
(612) 649-0502 (FAX)
goodwilleasterseal@icchange.com

Community Circle Sponsors 1-15-99

Ramsey Action Programs, Inc.	Ramsey County
Ramsey International Fine Arts School	Minneapolis
City of Burnsville	Dakota County
Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association	Minneapolis
Woodale Lutheran Church	St. Louis Park
Commonbond Communities, Inc.	Saint Paul and beyond
Eden Prairie Human Rights and Div. Comm.	Eden Prairie
Golden Valley Human Rights Commission	Golden Valley
Crystal Human Rights Commission	Crystal
First Universalist Church	Minneapolis
MRA of the Twin Cities	Saint Paul
National Conference for Community & Justice	Saint Paul
Richfield Human Rights Commission	Richfield
First Unitarian Society	Minneapolis
J.J. Montessori Magnet School	Saint Paul
Hiawatha Branch YMCA	Minneapolis
Northeast Metro Affordable Housing Coalition	White Bear Lake
East Metro Women's Council	White Bear Lake
Hope Community	Minneapolis
East Metro Interdistrict Education	Maplewood
Residents for Affordable Housing	Brooklyn Park
Project for Pride in Living	Minneapolis
Metropolitan Council HRA	Metro Area
Bloomington Human Rights Commission	Bloomington
University of St. Thomas	Saint Paul
United Auto Workers Local 813	Saint Paul
Whittier Alliance	Minneapolis
MN Center for Corporate Responsibility	Downtown Minneapolis
Washington County Public Library	Stillwater
St. Louis Park Human Rights Commission	St. Louis Park
Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity	Minneapolis
Cathedral of St. Mark Episcopal	Minneapolis
Saint Paul Area Council of Churches, Interfaith Discussion Group	Saint Paul
American Indian Family Center	Saint Paul
Assoc. for Advancement of Hmong Women	Saint Paul
Frogtown Catholic Charities	Saint Paul
District 5 Community Council	Saint Paul
East Side Neighborhood Company	Saint Paul
Grace Community United Church of Christ	Saint Paul
Hamline-Midway Coalition	Saint Paul
House of Hope Presbyterian Church	Saint Paul
Mac-Groveland Family Center	Saint Paul

Merriam Park Community Council	Saint Paul
West Side Family Center	Saint Paul
Saint Paul Public Schools	Saint Paul
St. Paul UCC	Saint Paul
The Saint Paul Companies	Saint Paul
Multicultural Communities in Action	Saint Paul
St. Timothy Lutheran	Saint Paul
New Brighton UCC/United Theological Seminary	New Brighton
Augustana Lutheran Church	Mendota Heights
First Presbyterian Church of South St. Paul	South St. Paul
KD Steward	Saint Paul
Ascension Episcopal Church	Stillwater
Unity Baptist Church	Saint Paul
St. James AME Church	Saint Paul
San Martin Lutheran Church	Saint Paul
Sacred Heart Catholic Church	Saint Paul
White Bear Lake Unitarian Church	White Bear Lake

Additional Prospects

Black Ministerial Alliance
Center for Asian and Pacific Islanders
Hmong American Partnership
West Metro Education Program (member school districts)
Saint Paul Chamber of Commerce
Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches
Communities of Color Institute
MICAH – additional member congregations (suburban)

Major Project Partners

Education & Housing Equity Project
Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing
Minnesota Minority Education Partnership
The Wilder Foundation
Saint Paul Area Council of Churches
Study Circles Resource Center
Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution
Minnesota Facilitators Network

Additional Recruiting Partners

Association of Metropolitan School Districts
MN League of Human Rights Commissions
Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues of Women Voters
Alliance for Metropolitan Stability

"COMMUNITY CHOICES"
COMMUNITY CIRCLE INFORMATION REPORT
SUMMARY ANALYSIS

To Community Circle Sponsor and Facilitator:

Purpose:

To learn more about the *Beyond Busing* Community Circles, we are asking community circle sponsors and facilitators to *work together* to complete the following information report. This report will be used in the on-going evaluation of the project, in planning for future efforts, and to report results to funders and other stakeholders. Your input is critical. Thank you in advance for your assistance in these efforts !!! Please return the completed form by August 1, 1997.

• **BASIC INFORMATION**

Number of respondents: 22 (80 surveys mailed) 27.5% responded.

<u>List of Community Circles Responding</u>	<u>Sponsor Organization(s)</u>	<u>Contact Person(s)</u>	<u>Facilitator(s)</u>	<u>Recorder(s)</u>
Hennepin County	Hennepin Co. Children&Family Svcs.	Ree Ah Bloedow* Brenda Louise*	Ree Ah Bloedow Brenda Louise	grp. Mems.
Sabathani Community Center	Sabathani Community Center	Art Serotoff*	Kristin Lund	A. Serotoff/ K. Lund
Holy Trinity	Holy Trinity Lutheran/ Longfellow United for Youth&Families	Rev. Ron Johnson	Joy Nelson*	L. Meeks
Richfield Community Circle	Richfield Board of Education Richfield League of Women Voters City of Richfield	Supt. Barbara Devlin	Emily Day* Joan Helmberger Margaret Severe Mary Supple*	M Supple
St. Paul	Jewish Community Center of St. Paul	Shelly Rottenberg*	Shelly Rottenberg Sunny Floum*	
Hopkins Community Study	Hopkins School District 270/ Hopkins Human Rights Commission	Diane Cowdery*	Nadine Knibb Wanda Phillips	D. Cowder
South Central Minneapolis	St. Joan of Arc Parish / Southside Neighbor- hood Services	Rich Nymoen*	Mary Ann McCoy* Howard Kroll	H. Clap R. Nymoen
Waite Park	Waite Park Community Council& Community School	Ray Lewis*	Jerry Anderson Ray Lewis	
Seward Mathews Center Group	Minneapolis Schools	Scott Bol* Karima Bushnell*	Scott Bol Karima Bushnell	K. Bushnell
Southwest Area Roundtable	Minnesota's Talking Project	Syd Devin*	35 monthly moderators	C. Hall
Edina Community Circle	Edina Public Schools	Laura Tueting Nelson*	Laura Tueting Nelson	J. Deitte
Minnesota Fair Housing Center Study Circle	Minnesota Fair Housing Center	Charmaine Sprengelmeyer*	C. Sprengelmeyer E. Moriatis	C. Sprengelmeyer
Bayport Community Circle	Minneapolis Public Schools	Scott Bol*	Scott Bol	
Oakdale-Oak Terrace-St. Paul Community Circle	CommonBond Communities	Maire McMahon*	M. McMahon Kay Reis Theresa Davis	M. McMahon Howard Homa Kay Reis
Golden Valley Study Circle	Black History Committee of Golden Valley Golden Valley Human Rights Dept.	Walter Gray* Mary Anderson	Walter Gray	M. Anderson G. Sylvester
Edina Community B	First Universalist Church Metro Stability Task Force	Nancy Atchison*	Linda Alton Nancy Atchison	varied
University of Minnesota	The Newman Center, U. of M.	Rosemary Ruffenach*	R. Ruffenach	P. Ruddy
Minneapolis-North-Brooklyn Park-Brooklyn Center Study Circle	Ascension Catholic Church	Sylvia* & John Winkelman	J. Winkelman S. Winkelman Charles Nichols Jan Swanson	J. Braun I. Slator

Number attended:

36% (8) Sponsor Kick-off event (Dec. '96)
73% (16) Facilitator Training (Feb. '97)
73% (16) Macalester Forum (May '97)

Number who used the discussion guide,

"Choices for Community"?

73% (16) yes
27% (6) no

Location(s) of community circle:

Rotating place	School Board Room	Hopkins School District Offices
St. Joan's Church	Seward Mathews Center	Pershing Park Neighborhood Center
Minnesota Fair Housing Center	Bayport People's Congregational Church	Oak Terrace Apts. - Oakdale
District Boardroom of Richfield Schools	Golden Valley City Hall	The Newman Center (U. of M.)

Meeting times of Community Circles:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
14% (3)	23% (5)	19% (4)	14% (3)			5% (1)

Daytime (7AM - 4PM) 23% (5)	Rotating times: 14% (3)	Over Meals: 5% (1)
Evening (5PM - 10PM) 50% (11)		

How many times did your community circle meet? _____

Range: 1 - 7 meetings
Median: 4.6 meetings

How long was each meeting? _____

Range: 1 - 3 hours
Median: 1.9 hours

How would you describe the attendance of participants? __ excellent __ good __ only fair __ poor

	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
# of respondents:	1	1	8	2

Range: "poor to excellent"
Median: "fair to good" (2.6)

• THE PARTICIPANTS

How many people participated in your community circle?

Total: 260 participants Range: 3 - 25 participants Median: 12.5 participants

How many participants were: men? 28% (69)

women? 64% (165)

youth? 1% (3)

singles without children? 11% (28)

families? 25% (64)

single parent(s)? 11% (29)

seniors? 12% (30)

How many in your community circle represented each of the following cultural groups?

17% (45) African American	2% (5) Hispanic/Latino
2% (4) American Indian/Native American	58% (151) White/European
3% (7) Asian American	2% (4) Mixed Racial Background
8% (21) Don't Know	.8% (2) Liberian / Egyptian Moslem

Using your best judgment, please rate how diverse your group was according to the following categories?

	Very Diverse	Somewhat Diverse	Not Diverse	Have no idea		
Income Levels (ex. low, moderate, high)	1 (3)	(1)	2 (15)	3 (1)	4	Total: 42.5/20 Median: <u>2.1</u> "Somewhat (more) Diverse"
Political Affiliations (ex. DFL, Republican)	1 (1)		2 (8)	3 (4)	4 (7)	Total: 23/13 Median: <u>1.8</u> "Somewhat (less) Diverse"
Political Ideology (ex. Conservative, Liberal)	1 (1)		2 (8)	3 (6)	4 (5)	Total: 25/15 Median: <u>1.7</u> "Somewhat (less) Diverse"
Housing Situation (ex. home owner, renter)	1 (3)		2 (14)	3 (3)	4	Total: 40/20 Median: <u>2.0</u> "Somewhat Diverse"

What, if anything, do you know about the religious diversity of your group?

"None" "Nothing"

Protestant, Catholic, & unknown

Catholic, Protestant, Moslem

Diverse

No information

Nothing

No information; Did not come up.

Christian, Muslim, eclectic

Reflects the religious diversity of the population of SW Minneapolis. Probably includes a few agnostics, atheists, or what have you.

Jewish, Christian, and agnostic.

Some Congregationalists, some Bahai, eclectic ? others didn't say.

Christian; Jewish; possible other.

One of our members spoke of being Islamic. Others mentioned Christian churches.

None.

5 were Unitarian Universalist, others unknown.

All Catholic.

A number of St. Joan's Catholics, a number of other

Majority Catholic

Which neighborhoods/cities were represented in your community circle and how many people were from each neighborhood/city?

City	Neighborhood	Number of participants
Afton		1
Arden Hills		1
Bayport		3
Bloomington		2
Brooklyn Center		5
Brooklyn Park		6
Burnsville		1
Edina		23
Golden Valley		10
Hopkins		9
Lakeland		2
Lakeville		1
Maple Grove		1
Maplewood		1
Minneapolis	Central	27
Minneapolis	Hyland	4
Minneapolis	Kingfield	3
Minneapolis	Longfellow	10
Minneapolis	LynLake	2
Minneapolis	North	7
Minneapolis	Northeast	1
Minneapolis	Powderhorn	2
Minneapolis	Prospect Park	1
Minneapolis	Seward	1
Minneapolis	Seward, Field-Regina-Northrup	7
Minneapolis	South	8
Minneapolis	Southwest	12
Minneapolis	Waite Park	3
Minneapolis	Willard	3
New Brighton		1
New Hope		1
North St. Paul		1
North Suburb		1
Oak Park Heights		2
Oakdale		8
Other Suburbs		8
Richfield		18
Roseville		1
St. Louis Park		3
St. Paul		11
St. Paul	Highland	16
Stillwater		4
Unknown		4

Did participants seem to be satisfied with the dialogue process, or did they express dissatisfaction?

Total: 82% (18) of respondents indicated participants seemed satisfied; please explain:

“Discussion” – process without need to answer all the questions

We used the written guide as a starting place – facilitator rephrased information & presented it orally to get discussion going.

“The study circle was a perfect place for members of the motivation group to practice their leadership development skills. It gave the participants a chance to advocate for their own situation and possibly influence public policy that directly affects their lives. Members of the group were enthusiastic about their participation.”

When we listened to each other, and worked our way to agreements.

Wanted to come again.

Generally satisfied, but some frustration with circular process – just kept going over same material. Didn’t use discussion guide as effectively as needed to bring focus and closure to conversations.

Participants said they enjoyed the process / discussions.

Comments favorable; said “Enjoyed opportunity to discuss with others.”

The group was generally pleased to meet others of different ethnicities in a deep-level dialogue. There was strong group bonding.

Those that continue to seem satisfied with the process; a goodly percentage even enthusiastic about it.

Enjoyed the opportunity to talk and meet others.

Participation was enthusiastic and open.

Liked it, but wanted more guidance. The discussion guide would have helped. It wasn't finished until after we met several times.

Seemed satisfied that they were given a forum from which to be heard – Also felt they were discussing & having input on important subjects.

But did not show up regularly.

I was frustrated, as were others. The topic was too big, too vague & we did not have a roadmap through it.

Most said it was good way to meet others & figure out how they think on these issues.

Many were energized and enjoyed the process.

Total: 27% (6) of respondents indicated that participants expressed dissatisfaction; please explain:

When the member who tended to dominate with negativity, did so.

Poor attendance said due to other commitments, but may have been due to other issues??

1. Some wanted to “get down to business sooner” – (we did not have the study guide), while others wanted to process issues related to racism / prejudice (process vs. product conflict). Delay in Study Guide caused problems.

Relatively few; most dropouts are because of other commitments, lack of time, too far to come regularly, physical limitations, move out of area, gave birth to youngsters (several have returned as children get older), etc.

Some early in dialogue, most later, wanted to move to action yet were unclear how. Study materials came late.

Lack of study guide was difficult to build on at first.

They found the policy options too broad – difficult to get down to specifics.

What important comments did participants share with you about their discussions?

Thought that integration of neighborhoods and schools was not the answer.

They chose to continue the group and discuss other matters of importance to them.

“This is a hard issue to have discussion on.”

“I shouldn't have talked as much as I did.”

Several wrote out comments expressing needed changes in housing & day care.

* We have not met for this Format; Group is divided & new group will (would) have to be formed. We came out of a Community Conversation Format, but this isn't what they want to do.

The group resisted moving the conversation to more regional, metro-wide level. They wanted to stay focused on the Hopkins area & find solutions to local issues.

Never really talked about the discussion per se, but all agreed that such discussions, and prioritizing the needs of the community were important.

Amazement – to learn from others about their “take” on issues – safe environment, encouraged openness.

Did not meet – only 1 other person besides facilitator and I expressed interest in attending another meeting.

One person was amazed to see how she was being perceived – that her comments frightened some.

As regards racism, very, very few have indicated by their remarks or behavior that they are bigoted, that they condone intolerance or segregation or discrimination.

Would like to talk more with those who do not see need for social change & justice – or urgency. Felt like “preaching to the choir”.

Problems with educational system and racism.

Concern about lack of Racial Diversity in Schools & Community. Need more affordable housing in Washington County.

They said had concerns but needed more accurate reliable information about the current segregations and especially about the people directly in poverty.

They wanted to make sure something came of it – not just discussion without action.

??

Topic seemed almost too big to discuss adequately.

Some concerned about follow-up. Cynicism – “we've talked before and nothing much changes”.

• SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS

Summary Report

a) What perspectives were well represented in your group?

Home owners, middle-age, middle-class

Pro neighborhood school in general. Low income was somewhat represented. Property – owner & renter. School staff. African-American.

Most individuals come to the issues from a background of privilege. They were well able to articulate views about working harder to get ahead. Good advocacy on behalf of strengthening families.

All 3 perspectives presented in the discussion guide were part of our discussion, but larger system factors were addressed in less detail. Very diverse.

Libertarians, middle class America, wholistic community perspective, progressive liberal.

Generally a desire to participate in the democratic process, to be good citizens, to accept responsibility and to be open minded and fair in relations with others.

See report – middle class suburban people of good will who want to see justice, balance & opportunity for everyone.

The homeless and affordable housing advocates.

Social Justice liberal, Democrats / one Libertarian.

Middle class neighborhood concern for values and education.

See minutes (attached).

Our only agreement was that the issues were not mutually exclusive.

Group was mostly liberal, middle class, activist.

Liberal, social justice advocates.

Inner city, liberal

Inner city was very articulate. It was clear most lived where they lived by choice. Also strong “racial” views expressed.

b) Which perspectives were missing?

Youth, elderly, suburbs, low-income

Racially, Asian & Hispanic.

The perspective of real poverty – especially generational poverty – was absent. We need to have more of the people affected be part of finding solutions.

In my opinion, people seemed hesitant to really confront the impact of residential segregation on our community, and the tension between suburban and urban areas re: housing issues, poverty issues.

None, really.

No seniors, no juveniles, few people of color, no mainstream conservatives

The younger participants tended to have short run perspectives; the older “senior” citizens took a longer view and not be as susceptible to being unduly swayed by today’s media event.

Low income people.

Representation from African American community was limited and representation from the Chicano/Latino, Southeast Asian, and Native American communities was not heard. English only study circles excluded entire groups of people from participating – groups conducted in Vietnamese, Hmong, Spanish, Somali, etc. would give an opportunity to non-English speaking people to participate.

People within these groups have diverse opinions as well.

Older Adults, youth, more people of color, Republicans.

No first hand information or experience of people in segregated poverty in majority of participants.

See minutes (attached).

?

No people of color. No low income.

Anyone who said “We achieved Edina, so can they.”

Conservative, enough minority input (only 1 or 2 meetings had minorities attending).

We didn’t spend a lot of time on Transportation other than to acknowledge its importance.

c) Did the discussions focus on the two central questions? Yes: 59% (13) No: 18% (4)

As facilitator I kept trying to refocus to that. 1 member repeatedly talked about the renters’ disrespect for property & lack of gratitude from those in poverty.

Yes – housing & schools.

To some extent, but not enough. Our facilitators did not make full use of the Discussion Guide, which would have helped to maintain focus.

To some degree but not completely.

We focused on those topics. However it was generally realized that all social problems and issues are intertwined, so there was much overlapping – for example, income disparity, is affected by racism, lack of education, etc.

In general.

Some, as Facilitator, I directed the conversation to the Two questions, on a regular basis but group wasn’t drawn to it.

Most on the first.

See minutes (attached).

No – Focused on first central question & decided to continue in the Fall to discuss Golden Valley.

No – they went everywhere but always participants spoke of their personal experiences & then generalized from it.

Pretty much – Education / Housing / Transportation – most on Education.

d) What were your own observations about the dialogue and group process?

Diverse group, some problems with domination of group.

That I had trouble keeping 1 or 2 from dominating.

Group members were very tolerant and respectful of differing viewpoints. Facilitator did a good job laying out ground rules of discussions.

Remarkably free.

It (Discussion) often seemed redundant and not focused on central issues. Greater direction from facilitators would have helped keep it focused & more productive.

Would have benefited from more diversity and a greater commitment to attending each meeting, so that the “flow” was not so disrupted.

Worked well; exhilarating – Time flew !!

Dialogue was very lively and participants were engaged emotionally and intellectually. There was wide variety of viewpoints.

The process is sound. We especially like our group’s emphasis on rotating the role of moderator and not having outside speakers as such. Our veteran members are pretty good at helping the moderator keep the discussion within bounds.

Difficult to get people engaged who are not already interested in social justice.

It was a productive night. By the end of the session, participants were talking more, addressing each other directly and relying on facilitators less.

This was not a very committed group; lack of Diversity; limited group momentum, enthusiasm.

Dialogue is a good process. There was some confusion due to multiple means of terms provided in materials.

Process was smooth, however, the dialogue was tempered sometimes, as if trying not to offend others.

As above the questions were too broad – no info on real ramifications – quotes were all opinions not facts.

I came away feeling rather helpless.

Once the concept & “rules” and dialogue were set out, people abided by them and had productive sessions.

It was exciting & meaningful – a fair amount of bonding occurred.

e) What did members of the group say about their discussions?

Enjoyed, but frustrating.

One member said he was grateful the facilitator didn’t come across as having all the answers. One member expressed dissatisfaction that the same issues were discussed over & over again.

Enjoyed free expressions.

Engaged, but wondered where it would lead, who would listen ?

Not much in particular that I can remember.

Appreciated ground rules; begin & end times set & respected ... by ALL !!

There was consensus that we had very good discussions.

It isn’t so much what they say; it’s that they keep coming back.

They liked the opportunity to discuss. Some were nervous about political action, some were very anxious to take action.

Everyone committed to coming back to continue the conversation.

What will ...

They apparently wanted to participate but appeared frustrated at inability to reach solutions.

They seemed satisfied.

Overall, very positive. Some found confusing what we were trying to accomplish.

They were surprised at the degree of energy displayed once they got into it.

f) What was the topic of the group’s liveliest discussion?

How corporations rule policies in America.

Either the adequacy of schools to adequately educate all children, or a living wage, & affordable housing.

Available low cost housing and day care.

The notion that things are the way they are because of a careful plan to keep them that way – i.e. white privilege entitlement.

The newspaper report on the failure of Minneapolis/St. Paul’s school system, and the problems with the area’s educational system.

Housing & relation to neighborhood schools –.

Racism, responsibility for ancestors’ behavior, individual responsibility.

Their were few topics that weren’t “lively” – although that factor varied.

How to engage the broader community.

Schools would be required to implement year long life skills classes ... Our group felt that the Wilder School being constructed in St. Paul’s Frogtown area is an innovative idea.

Low income housing particularly Trailer Parks. Why LandFall Trailer Park is more community oriented than Cimmeron Trailer Park.

The first session especially the vision of the future.

The effects of racism – some bristled at the use of the word “racism” and wanted to soften it by calling racism “prejudice” or something else.

“Why are you here?” “Why are you concerned about this?” The role of education – has it failed Kids of Color?

Realities & perceptions of urban vs. suburban schools.

Race and the effects of racism.

g) What were the areas of general agreement and consensus?

Segregation and poverty impact families.

Housing - Personal accountability Education – Community responsibility transport to suburbs.

Jobs must pay a living wage. More emphasis on community-building – getting to know one another – sharing resources. We haven't yet reached point in process where we've checked for consensus. Work still to be done.

Consensus in most broad areas; we really needed more diversity, especially across class/political lines, I felt.

Housing and neighborhood schools – needs were agreed as great.

The bulk of the people who attend more than one of our sessions would overwhelmingly be comfortable with the 4 points stated in your July 16th cover letter.

Need for region wide response. Need to move breast-beating about the past – issue into the future.

Age appropriate life skills classes and emphasis on education – to foster academic competition among schools. The school would become a source of community pride.

Need Affordable Housing in Washington County. Need Pilot Projects. Need TAX (incentive) for landlord breaks.

See attached (report).

(1) Areas of concern were not mutually exclusive. (2) Solving problems would take a lot of work & a long time. (3)

Resolution would come with public/private cooperation only. (See Summary Reports)

Belief in equal opportunity – need for improvements in education in Mpls., fear of Welfare “reforms”.

People must be educated to be concerned. If the powers that be wanted something done, it would be.

Housing desegregation is necessary but should not necessarily be imposed from above.

They wanted good schools but didn't like busing. They preferred improving inner city schools.

h) What were areas with little agreement or consensus?

How to solve the problem? What the problem is.

That the poor should be grateful for Welfare.

Specific ideas (details), such as whether or not the current emphasis on volunteerism is valid ...

Actual step by step solutions.

Little about individual liberties, regulations, role of government – all agreed that empowerment was key.

Precise next steps.

See attached (report) – solutions difficult to identify.

??

Specific actions to achieve policy goals.

What should be done.

Whether change will be effected best by enlightening people instead of by political action.

Busing.

i) What suggestions and recommendations came from the group about how individuals might better address the issue?

Become active in the school system, your child, and classroom.

Take responsibilities in all areas.

Show active concern for their neighbors i.e. mentoring, tutoring.

Be involved in Children's education, neighborhoods and in keeping government programs (e.g. schools) accountable.

Take as your own ways to take action – not wait for “others” to do it all.

See Attached Report.

Our group, especially those who now or have served on our Steering Committee, believe that the best approach to improve race relations is, on an individual one on one basis, with the white person first inviting minority persons to visit them and break bread on matters other than “race”.

Engage friends, neighbors, social contacts & organizations (like churches) in actions and service.

The community, parents, and educators would all play a role in insuring the success of the school and the students that attend.

Get involved. Get informed.

Sense of individual responsibility and sense of community.

See Summary Report.

Keep working on anti-racism. Learn more about necessary action to reverse the entrenched culture of separation & discrimination.

Individuals have a moral obligation to improve these conditions whether by direct service, increased personal responsibility, or political action.

Mentors & tutors for children needing help.

j) What suggestions and recommendations came from the group about how organizations or institutions might better address the issue?

Accountability – more family and community friendly.

1) Education resources be equitable, “relative to population need”. 2) Schools make parental involvement easier. 3) Institute peer parenting & support – unified families.

Set higher standards, be accountable, monitor government, ... * Like the Community Forum, our group never quite got to recommendations.

Continue to meet & confer, in sessions like these – & celebrate positive events!

See Attached Report.

No short answer available.

Dependent on the institution – dialogue between city council & school board planned.

The Wilder School will not only be a school, but a community center, social service center, and health care center: in effect the center of the community. Community members, parents, and educators will have a voice in the planning and a stake in the success of the school.

Need more dialogues and Education.

Some confidence in neighborhood councils.

See Summary Report.

They were submitted (see report).

Churches need to provide more services to poor minorities and become more politically involved to change things structurally.

More involvement from businesses.

k) What suggestions and recommendations came from the group about how government might better address the issue?

Accountability.

1) Enforcement of renter & landlord accountability. 2) More flexible housing codes for large families. 3) More affordable housing everywhere. 4) Encourage personal accountability. 5) Support NRP's. 6) More wide-spread transport. 7) Libraries open more evenings.

Improve education, offer employment. * We agreed that the needs were so large, that it seemed much too difficult to make recommendations given our lack of time and depth/breath of needs.

These were not really addressed, other than need to have neighborhood schools established Now!!

See Attached Report.

No short answer available.

Begin the dialogue – make sure city council is aware of a social justice perspective and is supported by residents.

Issues identified – Exclusionary Zoning.

Tax breaks for low income Housing.

They had some confidence in local city action but almost none in metropolitan; little in State.

See Summary Report.

Want national basic income support. Welfare system that empowers people, provides training support for jobs that pay enough to live on.

They were submitted (see report).

Each municipality must be less exclusionary in its policies.

Increased funding for neighborhood centers and programs. Longer school hours – more teacher training.

• EXPERIENCES OF FACILITATOR AND/OR SPONSOR

Additional Comments (Please feel free to use additional sheets)

a) Did you have adequate support from your study circle's organizer, or not? Please explain:

Yes: 36% (8) No: 18% (4)

Copying. Space & set up. Support costs.

I was the organizer –.

I was personally disappointed that I, as a student intern, was the only one able/willing to represent Hennepin County at the Forum. I and the other facilitator organized, coordinated and sought support for the Community Circle, with no more assistance / input or recognition from the Department's Director, or anyone “up there” than approval to use office conference rooms.

We are the organizers – this can only be answered by participants.

We have no one “organizer”.

Yes – schools are very interested in these issues and superintendent is committed to desegregation and equity.

A question for participants.

As this is a work in progress, it's hard to determine what kind of support should have been expected. Sometimes felt as though we were all unorganized.

? Didn't really receive any – other than to make an announcement at Mass.

The material was slow getting to us.

b) Did you have adequate support from the project coordinator, or not? Please explain:

Yes: 55% (12) No: 18% (4)

Answered calls.

Identification of a facilitator was delayed, resulting in a false start & some loss of momentum / participation.

Mr. Little promptly answered phone calls, offered ideas for additional information, and seemed committed and enthusiastic. Yes, I felt adequately supported from him and appreciated as a facilitator. Info on how other groups went would help me better evaluate our group.

Good support overall.

We became aware of the Collaborative project very late in the game, and because of the long lead time of our scheduling we were unable to conform to the general collaborative format. But it was not for lack of support by the project coordinator.

Materials were very late, but assistance given when speaker needed was very helpful.

It was difficult organizing the study circle group with the date changes from the city wide forum/citizens summit and the editing of the manual.

Adequate.

Yes – even with time frames very tight.

Fair.

Generally yes. A little frustration resulted from constantly shifting time tables.

Yes! I think because we were among the earliest groups to start, the staff was feeling its way along but they tried to be helpful.

c) What additional support would have been helpful?

None.

Having the study guide ready when indicated it would be.

More timely pairing of facilitators with groups & of distribution of discussion guide.

• Recognition, a thank you, a representative at the Forum, donuts ... any one of these would have been nice from project sponsor.

Good support received!

Sponsoring organization could have helped supply treats, provide clerical support, copies, etc.

We view this the other way – what can we do to support the overall aims of the Collaborative?

The group session at Macalester should have moved to solutions. Focus on problems only was not very helpful.

Recruiting participants was challenging. Low income persons had a difficult time with transportation expenses. It would have been nice to be able to provide a snack during the meetings – we were unable to do this because of our own budget constraints. Allocating money from the Study Circle Collaborative for such items as bus tokens, snacks, etc. would have been helpful.

More help recruiting participants & money for snacks and drinks.

The discussion guide sooner.

??

Some way through the issue. I didn't find the 3 perspectives helpful – far too narrow. The rewritten booklet (by Syl Jones) came after we had finished our discussions.

Perhaps verbal presentations by experts on the various perspectives.

Initial timelines were somewhat unrealistic which caused some early confusion.

d) If you were to lead another study circle, what would you change (for example: discussion materials, overall organization of project, meeting site, your performance as discussion leader, etc.)?

1) I'd try for better attendance (more members), & keep myself out of the discussion more. 2) I'd do child care a little differently.

I would have recommended that facilitator follow discussion guide more closely.

I've never lead a discussion group before, and so felt very unsure of my facilitation abilities, particularly among this group of experienced professionals ... help with this. Also is there a way of randomly assigning interested group members to groups, for more diversity? Other help in recruiting diversity from one employment site / organization.

There was mention of a stipend for facilitators when we had our training – I would appreciate further consideration of this aspect of the overall organization of the project. Thank you --.

Would seek generational diversity, more support from sponsoring organization.

Not enough participation, yet, to provide a meaningful reply.

Expand participation.

There needs to be more diversity in the study circle groups.

More room for research assistance with Research on Group Questions that come up.

Have study guides ready on time, for groups – Have amore diverse group. – More lead time for starting a group & doing group reporting.

Timely – factual background material; we would need better data re policy options – more focused (specific) options for action.

I felt the organization was chaotic – every thing was last minute.

I would get a more firm commitment from participants for regular attendance.

More follow-up to work on implementing recommendations.

e) Other impressions, concerns and comments ...

The meeting at Macalester ... meeting process was confusing to me. Overall I think the process was helpful and productive at the local level. The big trick is to ensure that something comes of this work so that it does effect policy. ...after the Macalester meeting, I must say that this last piece is in question in my mind. I look forward to participating in next steps that bring to a focus some of the policy issues.

1) When we "merge" with another group now, would we co-facilitate? I'd much prefer that.

2) I wouldn't want to meet more than 2x/mo.

Concerned that only women would come and return – no men (except one we coerced).

We've had a good beginning, but we need to broaden the discussion to a wider geographic area & to include a broader set of stakeholders.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to facilitate a Community Circles group – Hope to help out again in future.

Vital, interesting discussion; rich diversity of cultures & viewpoints made people want to come back. Excellent group bonding, affection.

The other delegate and myself were impressed with the overall quality of most of those, both other delegates and the leaders of the Macalester general forum.

Focus more on next steps. We have talked about inability to act for too many years with the same community leaders.

The participants at the city wide forum seemed to be predominately middle to upper middle class, middle aged, white people.

It would help to have more men and a more diverse group.

21 people signed up for discussion but could not find a common meeting time. Most were unwilling to commit to more than one meeting time of short duration: 2 – 3 hrs. These attended one or two meetings – No one attended all 4.

Narrow the topic !

It was great !!!

Participant Roster (Please include sponsor(s), facilitator(s),recorder(s))

Name	Address	Tel #
<hr/>		
Hennepin County		
<hr/>		
Holy Trinity		
<hr/>		
Hopkins Community Study Circle		
<hr/>		
Seward Mathews Center Group		
<hr/>		
Edina Community Circle		
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Minnesota Fair Housing Center Study Circle		
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Bayport Community Circle		
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Oakdale-Oak Terrace-St. Paul Community Circle		
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Richfield Community Circle		
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Golden Valley Study Circle		
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Edina Community B (First Universalist) Circle		
<hr/>		
University of Minnesota (Newman Center) Study Circle		
<hr/>		
Minneapolis-North-Brooklyn Park-Brooklyn Center / Ascension Church		



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Dick Little, AICP
Executive Director

Amy Rodquist
Community Circles Coordinator

Christine Ganzlin, Grants Manager
The McKnight Foundation
600 TCF Tower
121 South Eighth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55402

August 12, 1999

Subject: Letter of Inquiry

Dear Ms. Ganzlin,

I strongly commend the new focus of The McKnight Foundation. The Education and Housing Equity Project (EHEP) was organized in 1995 sharing the vision you've articulated. We aim to promote racially and economically inclusive communities, and schools that work for all children in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Creating a supportive environment for children, youth and their families is our central purpose, and encouraging regional thinking and planning to accomplish this is a major strategic goal.

Building and maintaining vital, attractive communities where children and families can thrive requires that the region make significant progress in addressing the very difficult, interrelated issues of racial and economic segregation, inequities in education, and access to affordable housing and jobs. Our strategy is to work in collaboration with other groups to facilitate education and deliberative discussion that raises community awareness and understanding of these issues, and that leads to community-building and informed public action. Our project not only enables but motivates citizen interaction and reflection. These in turn help individuals and groups internalize their commitment to act, and direct their agendas and energy into partnerships with other organizations that support their work.

In cooperation with the Wilder Foundation, the Saint Paul "Cities at Work" forums and 20 other regional and community organizations, we have developed a Community Circles Collaborative which has engaged nearly 2,000 people in discussion and action on these issues since 1996.

The Study Circles Resource Center of Pomfret, CT, provided an initial model which we have augmented with attention to the work of the National Issues Forums of the Kettering Foundation, the Communities of Color Empowerment Model of the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership (MMEP), and the Objective-Reflective-Interpretative-Decisional model developed by the Minnesota Facilitators Network and the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution. The latter two groups are primary sources of facilitators for community circle dialogues and action forums, which together comprise EHEP's most visible public strategy. The Minnesota Churches' Anti-Racism Initiative has provided the facilitators introductory training on community and institutional racism. Resource guides for local discussions drew, as a primary resource, upon a paper (now a publication) by John Powell of the Institute on Race and Poverty at the University of Minnesota School of Law, *Examining the Relationship Between Housing, Education and Persistent Segregation*. Other resources and perspectives have been added as the community circle conversations have evolved.

Strong collaborative linkages are vital to the results we seek. The community circle discussions draw upon the work of EHEP's project partners. In turn, the circles have been a crucial resource to our partners in building greater public awareness, involvement, support and commitment to sustained changes needed to achieve a more inclusive and equitable future for all the children and families in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

One major effort in this vein is the growing commitment to fair and affordable housing throughout the metropolitan area. The community circles made important contributions to the idea of mixed income housing and the development of the Inclusionary Housing Act in the 1999 Minnesota Legislature. This effort was spearheaded by the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, one of EHEP's partners. The community circles also paved the way for the engagement of communities of faith by Interfaith Action, the St. Paul Ecumenical Alliance of Congregations and MICAH (the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing) in what evolved into a major citizen push for affordable housing legislation during the 1999 legislative session. Following the legislative victory, a group of partner organizations came together to celebrate and collectively honored EHEP for its 1997 community discussions, which laid the foundation for their later success.

Awareness emerged in many circle discussions of the "NIMBY" (Not in My Back Yard) principle by which many regional residents resist dispersion of affordable housing. Circle participants noted a need to dramatize this issue, through theatre and other media, in order to gain support from and involvement by middle class suburban people and groups. MICAH, one of our closest partners, took the idea to the Illusion Theatre and, together, they developed a theatrical production to address this need. Entitled *Like Waters Rolling Down*, it was funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for six presentations throughout the metropolitan area. Over 7,000 citizens attended the performances, and many of these citizens subsequently took civic action to support affordable housing initiatives in their respective communities and at the legislature.

Circles have also been credited with breaking down stereotypes and barriers between people who are different from one another. This was illustrated by the community circles sponsored by CommonBond Communities, Inc., which brought together residents of one of their developments with surrounding neighbors, many of whom initially had opposed introduction of affordable housing in their neighborhood. Through face to face conversations, these residents are now coming together to develop a common agenda for making their community more hospitable and supportive for all families and children. EHEP and the community circles project were subsequently invited to be a partner in the "Faces of Affordable Housing Campaign" project (with the lead partner, the Minnesota Housing Partnership) funded by the Minneapolis Foundation.

The community circles also have contributed to expanding awareness that residential desegregation is a primary step in the struggle for educational quality and equity. The NAACP, the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, and the Minneapolis Public Schools have been close collaborators with EHEP on issues of race and education. Other city and suburban districts have shown growing interest in including housing in their discussions with city and regional officials. Community Circles are also being planned that will address systemic issues within schools and school districts. Discussions are under way with the West Metro Educational Program (a consortium of west metro school districts) and the East Metro Office of Interdistrict Initiatives concerning what a successful inclusionary school and integrated education should look like. The Minnesota Public Radio Civic Journalism Project, an early partner in the Community Circle Collaborative, has expressed particular interest in these city-suburban and inter-district discussions.

Other vital partners in the effort to build schools and institutions that *work for all kids* include the Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs, the Urban Coalition, the League of Human Rights Commissions and Metro Area Council of League of Women Voters. EHEP was invited by mediating groups to join in efforts to mediate legal action involving school desegregation (e.g., Educational Adequacy and Equity Lawsuits). The results of circle discussions have been used to help inform the mediation efforts, and many circle participants were identified as candidates for participation in early discussions to frame the mediation and potential settlement.

A new component is being developed for the community circle discussion guides that will focus on the linkage between economic development and job access, on the one hand, and equity in housing and education on the other. The Saint Paul "Cities at Work" Community Forums series on "Race, Connections and Commitment" this fall will build on this theme through a forum with business leaders. The discussion guides are also being augmented with a Faith Compendium developed by the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing for use in paired congregational and inter-faith discussions.

The community circle project is designed to lead participants to consider follow-up action. At the conclusion of this letter is a list of the groups that have been highlighted in discussions as opportunity contexts for this work. We relate them to the three broad areas of concern addressed in the Collaborative. Many are active partners in sponsoring or providing resources to community circles, as well. The list also is growing through nurturance of informal relationships. Interfaith Action and the Saint Paul Ecumenical Alliance of Congregations (SPEAC), for example, have utilized the new ideas, focus and energy generated in community circles as a framework for organizing community action among their member congregations.

EHEP and the Wilder Foundation are coordinating planning for a "Call to Action" Forum in November to help motivate new discussions and further focus energy of past participants. A Metropolitan Citizens Summit is planned for next December, in collaboration with the Minnesota Meeting and Minnesota Public Radio, supported by grants from the Minneapolis Foundation and the Saint Paul Foundation. These events will serve to bring the larger public into the dialogue and move the dialogue from discussion toward informed public action and civic commitment.

As we look toward the future, EHEP identifies the following areas needing concentrated development in support of our vision:

- Expanded community circle discussions, with special emphasis on:
 - Increased participation in suburban communities.
 - Increased racial diversity of study circles, with strategies to include pairings between secular or faith community groups connecting predominantly low-income neighborhoods with those of privilege, and inner city with suburb.
 - Increased participation by youth in the study circles.
 - Potential development of "play and talk circles" for younger children, to augment the project's involvement of families.
 - Improved action formation to motivate participants to identify the groups that are doing the work that best addresses the community's needs ('promising or best practices') and that offer them hope and growth.
 - Building of stronger media, public official and business partnerships

- Expanded community collaborations, both to support community circle expansion and to increase the base for future public action - providing the organizing “glue” to reinforce collaborative visions for community change.

To accomplish these aims, EHEP needs to fulfill its plan to extend its staff by two positions. The first will be a full-time Community Circle Coordinator whose immediate priority will be to focus on expanding racial diversity and broadening community outreach. The second will be a civic engagement youth coordinator whose role will be to strengthen youth participation and to explore effective ways to involve children in community circles and partnerships that address their immediate as well as long-term needs and growth potential.

To pursue these goals, EHEP envisions an annual budget of approximately \$125,000. Funding by The McKnight Foundation of a major share of this budget (e.g., \$50,000 per year) for a period of three to five years would enable expansion of community circle discussions to engage the public and private sectors throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area, to fully inform the agendas of partnering communities and institutions, and to create the ‘common ground’ essential to building a metropolitan consensus on needed public actions. This effort would establish a framework for systemic change of major benefit to *all* children and families in our communities.

We look forward to continuing a conversation with the McKnight Foundation about what we are doing, and hopefully receiving an invitation to submit a full proposal. My staff and I, and some of our board members and key partners, are available to answer your questions and clarify or expand on what is presented in this letter. We look forward to hearing from you. Please call me at (612) 330-1505 or (612) 724-5662.

Sincerely,

Dick Little, Executive Director

Attachments: List
 Recent article in *Community Matters*
 Recognition by the President’s Initiative on Race

**PARTIAL AND GROWING LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING
OPPORTUNITY CONTEXTS FOR CIVIC ACTION,
RECOMMENDATIONS AND INVOLVEMENT GROWING OUT OF
THE COMMUNITY CIRCLES DIALOGUES**

Achievement Plus Initiative (education)
Alliance for Metropolitan Stability (housing)
Center for School Change (education)
Family Housing Fund of Minneapolis and Saint Paul (housing)
Frogtown Pluralism Circle (race and cultural diversity)
Hamline Midway Alliance for a Prejudice Free Community (race & social justice)
Hate Bias Response Team (race & social justice)
Institute on Race and Poverty (race & social justice)
Interfaith Action (housing)
Jane Addams School for Democracy Learning Exchange Circles (education)
Jewish Community Action (housing)
Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (housing)
Minnesota Churches' Anti-Racism Initiative (race & social justice)
Minnesota Fair Housing Center (housing)
Minnesota Housing Partnership (housing)
Minnesota Minority Education Partnership (education)
Minnesota Parenting Association (education)
National Conference for Community & Justice 'Hope in Cities' (race/social justice)
Saint Paul Area Council of Churches (race & social justice)
Saint Paul Ecumenical Alliance of Congregations (housing)
Saint Paul Housing Campaign (housing)
Saint Paul Ramsey County Children's Initiative (education)
Support Our Schools (education)
Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity (housing)
Urban Coalition 50/30 Initiative (housing)
2000 by 2000 Initiative (housing)

* a complete list of the Community Circle Collaborative partners (project organizing partners, resource associates, circle sponsors, facilitators and scribes, and media and funding partners) will be included in the full proposal

1999
Community Circle Project
Final Report

Sponsored by the City of Bloomington Human Rights Commission

Community Circle Report

INTRODUCTION

In each of the five Community Circle sessions, a specific format was used by the facilitators to help guide the conversations. This format was referred to as an ORID (Objective, reflective, interpretive and decisional) method. For example, in session #1, personal stories were shared among the participants. Using the ORID method, four questions were asked and are indicated as follows:

- Objective: Where did you grow up?
- Reflective: How do you feel about where you lived/your experience in general?
- Interpretive: How did where you grew-up influence your opinions on race, education and housing?
- Decisional: Why did you decide to participate in this study circle program?

When focusing on the *objective* in each session, the facilitators would ask the group what words and/or phrases stood out as they read the various sections in the study guide. When the participants were guided through the *reflective* part of the discussion, they were asked to describe what feelings, images and associations came up as they read the material. The purpose of the *interpretive* portion of each discussion was an attempt to enter into a deeper understanding of the issue at hand. With the *decisional* aspect of the discussion, a dialog around suggestions and possible next steps was formed in which to bring about positive change.

This report is a summary of each of the five sessions. Each page will highlight a different session, and will include the date, number of participants, and a specific topic that was discussed. Overall, the ORID method proved to be a valuable tool in which to organize and focus each discussion.

Community Circle Report

Sponsoring Organization: Bloomington Human Rights Commission Date: 2/24/99

Session: #1 Number of Participants (today): : 15

Facilitator: Elizabeth Campbell Co-Facilitator: Ellen Hufschmidt

Scribe: Anne Moening

Please describe two or three main themes/ideas discussed today: (1 – 2 sentences each)

Session #1: Getting Started—Personal Stories

1. **Respect—Our Guiding Principal**

Part of the first session was dedicated to a discussion around the word *respect*. This discussion formed the foundation on which the group shared their personal stories on experiences with racism and segregation.

New Insights:

- ◆ It's important that all voices are heard
- ◆ We all have something to offer
- ◆ Actions are just as important as the words we say
- ◆ It is important to have accurate knowledge about another's culture
- ◆ We must all have an inward, genuine intention to listen to one another

2. **Reflection on shared stories**

The group reflected on the personal stories that were shared. Many stories focused on spirituality and its' role in addressing segregation. There was a willingness to share and communicate by all.

New Insights:

- ◆ We are all creations of God
- ◆ Uniqueness of people
- ◆ Racism/prejudices are all too often vague and subtle
- ◆ Institutional racism
- ◆ Trust
- ◆ Excitement and anticipation of what's to come (sessions 2 – 5)
- ◆ Surprised and hurt to learn about others' experiences

3. _____

Please use remaining space to note action ideas, if any, which were mentioned in today's discussion:

Community Circle Report

Sponsoring Organization: Bloomington Human Rights Commission Date: 3/3/99

Session: #2 Number of Participants (today): : 13

Facilitator: Elizabeth Campbell Co-Facilitator: Ellen Hufschmidt

Scribe: Anne Moening

Please describe two or three main themes/ideas discussed today: (1 – 2 sentences each)

Session #2: Segregation in the Twin Cities

1. **Reasons for segregation:**

- ◆ Socialization
- ◆ Racial Prejudice
- ◆ Institutional Racism
- ◆ Public Policy: Zoning

2. **Economics of segregation:**

- ◆ Public Transit
- ◆ Affordable Housing
- ◆ Integrate (Don't segregate)
- ◆ Retain Subsidized Housing
- ◆ Build Family-oriented Housing
- ◆ Tax Incentives
- ◆ Win/Win Affordable Housing Policy
- ◆ Scatter-site Housing

3. **In the Twin Cities, we experience racism in various ways:**

- ◆ Isolation (there's not a lot of meaningful contact with communities of color)
- ◆ Racial prejudices ("Them Mexicans" or "Them Blacks")
- ◆ Institutionalized discrimination (workplace/hiring process)
- ◆ Violence

Please use remaining space to note action ideas, if any, which were mentioned in today's discussion:

Community Circle participants were asked the following: (See attached list of Bloomington's
Community Circle action ideas)

- ◆ What, as an individual, would you do differently?
- ◆ What should be done in the Twin Cities?
- ◆ What ways can we change the socialization level of our children?

Community Circle Report

Sponsoring Organization: Bloomington Human Rights Commission Date: 3/10/99

Session: #3 Number of Participants (today): : 14

Facilitator: Elizabeth Campbell Co-Facilitator: Ellen Hufschmidt

Scribe: Anne Moening

Please describe two or three main themes/ideas discussed today: (1 – 2 sentences each)

Session #3: Housing challenges in the Twin Cities

1. **Zoning**

A good portion of this session was spent discussing zoning and other challenges regarding housing in the Twin Cities. At the end of session #3, there was an enormous sense of appreciation for the dynamic complexity of racial segregation.

- ♦Reduces affordable housing
- ♦"Zones" people out
- ♦Affects housing/property value

2. **Other Challenges**

The group reflected on other aspects that contribute to the housing challenges in the Twin Cities.

- ♦Discriminatory real estate agents
- ♦Social and economic standards (bigger is better)
- ♦Selfishness (people don't want certain cultures living next to them)
- ♦Mandatory laws
- ♦Individual responsibility

3. _____

Please use remaining space to note action ideas, if any, which were mentioned in today's discussion:

A couple suggestions were made regarding housing in the Twin Cities. First, there is a need for zoning to be restructured. It was stated that there needs to be certain requirements to be followed to meet the needs of everyone. Second, a need for mixed-use neighborhoods was suggested. Having houses, apartments and group homes all on one block could be a healthy alternative in opposing segregated housing neighborhoods.

Community Circle Report

Sponsoring Organization: Bloomington Human Rights Commission Date: 3/17/99

Session: #4 Number of Participants (today): : 8

Facilitator: Elizabeth Campbell Co-Facilitator: Ellen Hufschmidt

Scribe: Anne Moening

Please describe two or three main themes/ideas discussed today: (1 – 2 sentences each)

Session #4: Unequal opportunity and achievement in education

1. **An objective and reflective review of the 8 options presented in study guide:**

The group formed a dialogue around the issue of education and the various viewpoints presented in the study guide. The facilitators directed the conversation by asking the follow questions:

- ◆What words and phrases stood out for you?
- ◆What was a surprise or new information?
- ◆What did this option remind you of?
- ◆To what extent does this option address segregation?
- ◆To what extent does this option address education?

2. **Favorite Option—Focus on making schools multi-culturally inclusive**

This viewpoint was chosen, in part, because it honors diversity and true integration. It provides opportunities to communicate with people from different cultures. This option would make it possible for all children to feel that they're a part of the school; feeling a sense of belonging. This option was also viewed as the least "top-down" approach to education. It was noted that this would increase the responsibility of the individual.

3. **Least Favorite Option—Create a metro-wide school district**

After reviewing each of the options, the group was asked to then select the option of which they were most in favor of. Of all the remaining seven viewpoints presented in the study guide, this option came in a close, last-place finish. In fact, there was no discrepancy between the other six viewpoints. The group felt that some options re-enforced or created even more segregation, increased competition, and limited resources.

Please use remaining space to note action ideas, if any, which were mentioned in today's discussion:

The Bottom Line

It is important to have the community, as a whole, accepting others' values. It is difficult to change people's socialization. Kids choices reflect what they see and hear in our society. If the whole community is not "into-it", if teachers aren't "into-it", all the money in the world won't help a specific problem. There needs to be a conscious effort behind every school's intention for the goal of greater integration.

Community Circle Report

Sponsoring Organization: Bloomington Human Rights Commission Date: 3/24/99

Session: #5 Number of Participants (today): : 11

Facilitator: Elizabeth Campbell Co-Facilitator: Ellen Hufschmidt

Scribe: Anne Moening

Please describe two or three main themes/ideas discussed today: (1 – 2 sentences each)

Session #5: Recommendations for ways to respond to racial segregation in housing and education

1. Recommendations

The final session was dedicated to brainstorming action ideas pertaining to the issues that were discussed in the previous sessions. Bloomington's Mayor Coral Houle attended this session and participated in our brainstorming efforts. The action ideas were broken down into three separate categories:

- ◆ Individual actions
- ◆ Community actions
- ◆ Public Policy

2. Next Step

The group determined that a summary of the final report would be presented to the Bloomington Human Rights Commission.

3.

Please use remaining space to note action ideas, if any, which were mentioned in today's discussion:

(Please refer to the attached list of action ideas)

**“COMMUNITY CHOICES”
COMMUNITY CIRCLE INFORMATION REPORT
SUMMARY ANALYSIS**

To Community Circle Sponsor and Facilitator:

Purpose:

To learn more about the *Beyond Busing* Community Circles, we are asking community circle sponsors and facilitators to *work together* to complete the following information report. This report will be used in the on-going evaluation of the project, in planning for future efforts, and to report results to funders and other stakeholders. Your input is critical. Thank you in advance for your assistance in these efforts !!! Please return the completed form by August 1, 1997.

• **BASIC INFORMATION**

Number of respondents: 22 (80 surveys mailed) 27.5% responded.

List of Community Circles Responding	Sponsor Organization(s)	Contact Person(s)	Facilitator(s)	Recorder(s)
Hennepin County	Hennepin Co. Children&Family Svcs.	Ree Ah Bloedow* Brenda Louise*	Ree Ah Bloedow Brenda Louise	grp. Mems.
Sabathani Community Center	Sabathani Community Center	Art Serotoff*	Kristin Lund	A. Serotoff/ K. Lund
Holy Trinity	Holy Trinity Lutheran/ Longfellow United for Youth&Families	Rev. Ron Johnson	Joy Nelson*	L. Mecks
Richfield Community Circle	Richfield Board of Education Richfield League of Women Voters City of Richfield	Supt. Barbara Devlin	Emily Day* Joan Helmberger Margaret Severe Mary Supple*	M Supple
St. Paul	Jewish Community Center of St. Paul	Shelly Rottenberg*	Shelly Rottenberg Sunny Floum*	
Hopkins Community Study	Hopkins School District 270/ Hopkins Human Rights Commission	Diane Cowdery*	Nadine Knibb Wanda Phillips	D. Cowder
South Central Minneapolis	St. Joan of Arc Parish	Rich Nymoen*	Mary Ann McCoy*	H. Clap
Waite Park	Waite Park Community Council& Community School	Ray Lewis*	Jerry Anderson Ray Lewis	
Seward Mathews Center Group	Minneapolis Schools	Scott Bol* Karima Bushnell*	Scott Bol Karima Bushnell	K. Bushnell
Southwest Area Roundtable	Minnesota's Talking Project	Syd Devin*	35 monthly moderators	C. Hall
Edina Community Circle	Edina Public Schools	Laura Tueting Nelson*	Laura Tueting Nelson	J. Deitte
Minnesota Fair Housing Center Study Circle	Minnesota Fair Housing Center	Charmaine Sprengelmeyer*	C. Sprengelmeyer E. Moriatis	C. Sprengelmeyer
Bayport Community Circle	Minneapolis Public Schools	Scott Bol*	Scott Bol	
Oakdale-Oak Terrace-St. Paul Community Circle	CommonBond Communities	Maire McMahon*	M. McMahon Kay Reis Theresa Davis	M. McMahon Howard Homa Kay Reis
Golden Valley Study Circle	Black History Committee of Golden Valley Golden Valley Human Rights Dept.	Walter Gray* Mary Anderson	Walter Gray	M. Anderson G. Sylvester
Edina Community B	First Universalist Church Metro Stability Task Force	Nancy Atchison*	Linda Alton Nancy Atchison	varied
University of Minnesota	The Newman Center, U. of M.	Rosemary Ruffenach*	R. Ruffenach	P. Ruddy
Minneapolis-North-Brooklyn Park-Brooklyn Center Study Circle	Ascension Catholic Church	Sylvia* & John Winkelman	J. Winkelman S. Winkelman Charles Nichols Jan Swanson	J. Braun I. Slator

Number attended:

30% (6) Sponsor Kick-off event (Dec. '96)
 52% (14) Facilitator Training (Feb. '97)
 52% (14) Macalester Forum (May '97)

Number who used the discussion guide,**"Choices for Community"?**

52% (14) yes
 30% (6) no

Location(s) of community circle:

Rotating place	School Board Room	Hopkins School District Offices
St. Joan's Church	Seward Mathews Center	Pershing Park Neighborhood Center
Minnesota Fair Housing Center	Bayport People's Congregational Church	Oak Terrace Apts. - Oakdale
District Boardroom of Richfield Schools	Golden Valley City Hall	The Newman Center (U. of M.)

Meeting times of Community Circles:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
10% (2)	20% (4)	20% (4)	15% (3)			5% (1)

Daytime (7AM - 4PM) 20% (4)
 Evening (5PM - 10PM) 50% (10)

Rotating times: 15% (3)

Over Meals: 5% (1)

How many times did your community circle meet? _____

Range: 1 - 7 meetings
 Median: 4.5 meetings

How long was each meeting? _____

Range: 1 - 3 hours
 Median: 1.9 hours

How would you describe the attendance of participants? __ *excellent* __ *good* __ *only fair* __ *poor*

	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
# of respondents:	1	1	7	2

Range: "poor to excellent"
 Median: "fair to good" (2.5)

• THE PARTICIPANTS**How many people participated in your community circle?**

Total: 238 participants Range: 3 - 25 participants Median: 12.5 participants

How many participants were: men? 26% (61)

women? 64% (151)

youth? .9% (2)

singles without children? 10% (24) families? 20% (46) single parent(s)? 12% (29) seniors? 9% (20)

How many in your community circle represented each of the following cultural groups?

17% (36) African American

1% (3) Hispanic/Latino

2% (4) American Indian/Native American

65% (137) White/European

2% (5) Asian American

2% (4) Mixed Racial Background

10% (21) Don't Know

.5% (2) Liberian / Egyptian Moslem

Using your best judgment, please rate how diverse your group was according to the following categories?

	Very Diverse	Somewhat Diverse	Not Diverse	Have no idea	
Income Levels (ex. low, moderate, high)	1 (3)	2 (14)	3 (1)	4	Total: 38/18 Median: <u>2.1</u> "Somewhat (more) Diverse"
Political Affiliations (ex. DFL, Republican)	1 (1)	2 (7)	3 (3)	4 (7)	Total: 20/11 Median: <u>1.8</u> "Somewhat (less) Diverse"
Political Ideology (ex. Conservative, Liberal)	1 (1)	2 (7)	3 (5)	4 (5)	Total: 22/13 Median: <u>1.7</u> "Somewhat (less) Diverse"
Housing Situation (ex. home owner, renter)	1 (3)	2 (13)	3 (2)	4	Total: 37/18 Median: <u>2.0</u> "Somewhat Diverse"

What, if anything, do you know about the religious diversity of your group?

"None" "Nothing"

Protestant, Catholic, & unknown

Catholic, Protestant, Moslem

diverse

No information

Nothing

No information; Did not come up.

Christian, Muslim, eclectic

Reflects the religious diversity of the population of SW Minneapolis. Probably includes a few agnostics, atheists, or what have you.

Jewish, Christian, and agnostic.

Some Congregationalists, some Bahai, eclectic ? others didn't say.

Christian; Jewish; possible other.

One of our members spoke of being Islamic. Others mentioned Christian churches.

None.

5 were Unitarian Universalist, others unknown.

All Catholic.

Which neighborhoods/cities were represented in your community circle and how many people were from each neighborhood/city?

City	Neighborhood	Number of participants
Minneapolis	South	8
Minneapolis	North	4
North Suburb		1
Minneapolis	Northeast	1
St. Paul		11
Minneapolis	Central	27
Minneapolis	Longfellow	8
Minneapolis	Powderhorn	2
Minneapolis	Seward	1
Richfield		18
St. Paul	Highland	16
Hopkins		9
Edina		23
Minneapolis	Kingfield	3
Golden Valley		9
Other Suburbs		8
Minneapolis	Prospect Park	1
Minneapolis	Waite Park	3
Roseville		1
North St. Paul		1
Oak Park Heights		2
Minneapolis	Seward, Field-Regina-Northrup	7
Minneapolis	Southwest	10
Bloomington		2
St. Louis Park		3
Stillwater		4
Bayport		3
Afton		1
Oakdale		8
Lakeland		2
Maplewood		1
Burnsville		1
Lakeville		1
New Hope		1
New Brighton		1
Unknown		4

Did participants seem to be satisfied with the dialogue process, or did they express dissatisfaction?

Total: **80% (16)** of respondents indicated participants seemed satisfied; please explain:

“Discussion” – process without need to answer all the questions

We used the written guide as a starting place – facilitator rephrased information & presented it orally to get discussion going.

“The study circle was a perfect place for members of the motivation group to practice their leadership development skills. It gave the participants a chance to advocate for their own situation and possibly influence public policy that directly affects their lives. Members of the group were enthusiastic about their participation.”

When we listened to each other, and worked our way to agreements.

Wanted to come again.

Generally satisfied, but some frustration with circular process – just kept going over same material. Didn’t use discussion guide as effectively as needed to bring focus and closure to conversations.

Participants said they enjoyed the process / discussions.

Comments favorable; said “Enjoyed opportunity to discuss with others.”

The group was generally pleased to meet others of different ethnicities in a deep-level dialogue. There was strong group bonding.

Those that continue to seem satisfied with the process; a goodly percentage even enthusiastic about it.

Enjoyed the opportunity to talk and meet others.

Participation was enthusiastic and open.

Liked it, but wanted more guidance. The discussion guide would have helped. It wasn’t finished until after we met several times.

Seemed satisfied that they were given a forum from which to be heard – Also felt they were discussing & having input on important subjects.

But did not show up regularly.

I was frustrated, as were others. The topic was too big, too vague & we did not have a roadmap through it.

Total: 30% (6) of respondents indicated that participants expressed dissatisfaction; please explain:

When the member who tended to dominate with negativity, did so.

Poor attendance said due to other commitments, but may have been due to other issues??

1. Some wanted to “get down to business sooner” – (we did not have the study guide), while others wanted to process issues related to racism / prejudice (process vs. product conflict). Delay in Study Guide caused problems.

Relatively few; most dropouts are because of other commitments, lack of time, too far to come regularly, physical limitations, move out of area, gave birth to youngsters (several have returned as children get older), etc.

Some early in dialogue, most later, wanted to move to action yet were unclear how. Study materials came late.

Lack of study guide was difficult to build on at first.

They found the policy options too broad – difficult to get down to specifics.

What important comments did participants share with you about their discussions?

Thought that integration of neighborhoods and schools was not the answer.

They chose to continue the group and discuss other matters of importance to them.

“This is a hard issue to have discussion on.”

“I shouldn’t have talked as much as I did.”

Several wrote out comments expressing needed changes in housing & day care.

* We have not met for this Format; Group is divided & new group will (would) have to be formed. We came out of a Community Conversation Format, but this isn’t what they want to do.

The group resisted moving the conversation to more regional, metro-wide level. They wanted to stay focused on the Hopkins area & find solutions to local issues.

Never really talked about the discussion per se, but all agreed that such discussions, and prioritizing the needs of the community were important.

Amazement – to learn from others about their “take” on issues – safe environment, encouraged openness.

Did not meet – only 1 other person besides facilitator and I expressed interest in attending another meeting.

One person was amazed to see how she was being perceived – that her comments frightened some.

As regards racism, very, very few have indicated by their remarks or behavior that they are bigoted, that they condone intolerance or segregation or discrimination.

Would like to talk more with those who do not see need for social change & justice – or urgency. Felt like “preaching to the choir”.

Problems with educational system and racism.

Concern about lack of Racial Diversity in Schools & Community. Need more affordable housing in Washington County.

They said had concerns but needed more accurate reliable information about the current segregations and especially about the people directly in poverty.

They wanted to make sure something came of it – not just discussion without action.

??

• SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS

Summary Report

a) What perspectives were well represented in your group?

Home owners, middle-age, middle-class

Pro neighborhood school in general. Low income was somewhat represented. Property – owner & renter. School staff. African-American.

Most individuals come to the issues from a background of privilege. They were well able to articulate views about working harder to get ahead. Good advocacy on behalf of strengthening families.

All 3 perspectives presented in the discussion guide were part of our discussion, but larger system factors were addressed in less detail. Very diverse.

Libertarians, middle class America, wholistic community perspective, progressive liberal.

Generally a desire to participate in the democratic process, to be good citizens, to accept responsibility and to be open minded and fair in relations with others.

See report – middle class suburban people of good will who want to see justice, balance & opportunity for everyone.

The homeless and affordable housing advocates.

Social Justice liberal, Democrats / one Libertarian.

Middle class neighborhood concern for values and education.

See minutes (attached).

Our only agreement was that the issues were not mutually exclusive.

Group was mostly liberal, middle class, activist.

Liberal, social justice advocates.

b) Which perspectives were missing?

Youth, elderly, suburbs, low-income

Racially, Asian & Hispanic.

The perspective of real poverty – especially generational poverty – was absent. We need to have more of the people affected be part of finding solutions.

In my opinion, people seemed hesitant to really confront the impact of residential segregation on our community, and the tension between suburban and urban areas re: housing issues, poverty issues.

None, really.

No seniors, no juveniles, few people of color, no mainstream conservatives

The younger participants tended to have short run perspectives; the older “senior” citizens took a longer view and not be as susceptible to being unduly swayed by today’s media event.

Low income people.

Representation from African American community was limited and representation from the Chicano/Latino, Southeast Asian, and Native American communities was not heard. English only study circles excluded entire groups of people from participating – groups conducted in Vietnamese, Hmong, Spanish, Somali, etc. would give an opportunity to non-English speaking people to participate.

People within these groups have diverse opinions as well.

Older Adults, youth, more people of color, Republicans.

No first hand information or experience of people in segregated poverty in majority of participants.

See minutes (attached).

?

No people of color. No low income.

Anyone who said “We achieved Edina, so can they.”

c) Did the discussions focus on the two central questions? Yes: 55% (11) No: 20% (4)

As facilitator I kept trying to refocus to that. 1 member repeatedly talked about the renters’ disrespect for property & lack of gratitude from those in poverty.

Yes – housing & schools.

To some extent, but not enough. Our facilitators did not make full use of the Discussion Guide, which would have helped to maintain focus.

To some degree but not completely.

We focused on those topics. However it was generally realized that all social problems and issues are intertwined, so there was much overlapping – for example, income disparity, is affected by racism, lack of education, etc.

In general.

Some, as Facilitator, I directed the conversation to the Two questions, on a regular basis but group wasn’t drawn to it.

Most on the first.

See minutes (attached).

No – Focused on first central question & decided to continue in the Fall to discuss Golden Valley.

No – they went everywhere but always participants spoke of their personal experiences & then generalized from it.

d) What were your own observations about the dialogue and group process?

Diverse group, some problems with domination of group.

That I had trouble keeping 1 or 2 from dominating.

Group members were very tolerant and respectful of differing viewpoints. Facilitator did a good job laying out ground rules of discussions.

Remarkably free.

It (Discussion) often seemed redundant and not focused on central issues. Greater direction from facilitators would have helped keep it focused & more productive.

Would have benefited from more diversity and a greater commitment to attending each meeting, so that the “flow” was not so disrupted.

Worked well; exhilarating – Time flew !!

Dialogue was very lively and participants were engaged emotionally and intellectually. There was wide variety of viewpoints.

The process is sound. We especially like our group’s emphasis on rotating the role of moderator and not having outside speakers as such. Our veteran members are pretty good at helping the moderator keep the discussion within bounds.

Difficult to get people engaged who are not already interested in social justice.

It was a productive night. By the end of the session, participants were talking more, addressing each other directly and relying on facilitators less.

This was not a very committed group; lack of Diversity; limited group momentum, enthusiasm.
Dialogue is a good process. There was some confusion due to multiple means of terms provided in materials.
Process was smooth, however, the dialogue was tempered sometimes, as if trying not to offend others.
As above the questions were too broad – no info on real ramifications – quotes were all opinions not facts.
I came away feeling rather helpless.

e) What did members of the group say about their discussions?

Enjoyed, but frustrating.
One member said he was grateful the facilitator didn't come across as having all the answers. One member expressed dissatisfaction that the same issues were discussed over & over again.
Enjoyed free expressions.
Engaged, but wondered where it would lead, who would listen ?
Not much in particular that I can remember.
Appreciated ground rules; begin & end times set & respected ... by ALL !!
There was consensus that we had very good discussions.
It isn't so much what they say; it's that they keep coming back.
They liked the opportunity to discuss. Some were nervous about political action, some were very anxious to take action.
Everyone committed to coming back to continue the conversation.
What will ...
They apparently wanted to participate but appeared frustrated at inability to reach solutions.
They seemed satisfied.

f) What was the topic of the group's liveliest discussion?

How corporations rule policies in America.
Either the adequacy of schools to adequately educate all children, or a living wage, & affordable housing.
Available low cost housing and day care.
The notion that things are the way they are because of a careful plan to keep them that way – i.e. white privilege entitlement.
The newspaper report on the failure of Minneapolis/St. Paul's school system, and the problems with the area's educational system.
Housing & relation to neighborhood schools –.
Racism, responsibility for ancestors' behavior, individual responsibility.
Their were few topics that weren't "lively" – although that factor varied.
How to engage the broader community.
Schools would be required to implement year long life skills classes ... Our group felt that the Wilder School being constructed in St. Paul's Frogtown area is an innovative idea.
Low income housing particularly Trailer Parks. Why LandFall Trailer Park is more community oriented than Cimmeron Trailer Park.
The first session especially the vision of the future.
The effects of racism – some bristled at the use of the word "racism" and wanted to soften it by calling racism "prejudice" or something else.
"Why are you here?" "Why are you concerned about this?" The role of education – has it failed Kids of Color?

g) What were the areas of general agreement and consensus?

Segregation and poverty impact families.
Housing - Personal accountability Education – Community responsibility transport to suburbs.
Jobs must pay a living wage. More emphasis on community-building – getting to know one another – sharing resources. We haven't yet reached point in process where we've checked for consensus. Work still to be done.
Consensus in most broad areas; we really needed more diversity, especially across class/political lines, I felt.
Housing and neighborhood schools – needs were agreed as great.
The bulk of the people who attend more than one of our sessions would overwhelmingly be comfortable with the 4 points stated in your July 16th cover letter.
Need for region wide response. Need to move breast-beating about the past – issue into the future.
Age appropriate life skills classes and emphasis on education – to foster academic competition among schools. The school would become a source of community pride.
Need Affordable Housing in Washington County. Need Pilot Projects. Need TAX (incentive) for landlord breaks.
See attached (report).
(1) Areas of concern were not mutually exclusive. (2) Solving problems would take a lot of work & a long time. (3) Resolution would come with public/private cooperation only. (See Summary Reports)
Belief in equal opportunity – need for improvements in education in Mpls., fear of Welfare "reforms".
People must be educated to be concerned. If the powers that be wanted something done, it would be.

h) What were areas with little agreement or consensus?

How to solve the problem? What the problem is.

That the poor should be grateful for Welfare.

Specific ideas (details), such as whether or not the current emphasis on volunteerism is valid ...

Actual step by step solutions.

Little about individual liberties, regulations, role of government – all agreed that empowerment was key.

Precise next steps.

See attached (report) – solutions difficult to identify.

??

Specific actions to achieve policy goals.

What should be done.

i) What suggestions and recommendations came from the group about how individuals might better address the issue?

Become active in the school system, your child, and classroom.

Take responsibilities in all areas.

Show active concern for their neighbors i.e. mentoring, tutoring.

Be involved in Children's education, neighborhoods and in keeping government programs (e.g. schools) accountable.

Take as your own ways to take action – not wait for "others" to do it all.

See Attached Report.

Our group, especially those who now or have served on our Steering Committee, believe that the best approach to improve race relations is, on an individual one on one basis, with the white person first inviting minority persons to visit them and break bread on matters other than "race".

Engage friends, neighbors, social contacts & organizations (like churches) in actions and service.

The community, parents, and educators would all play a role in insuring the success of the school and the students that attend.

Get involved. Get informed.

Sense of individual responsibility and sense of community.

See Summary Report.

Keep working on anti-racism. Learn more about necessary action to reverse the entrenched culture of separation & discrimination.

j) What suggestions and recommendations came from the group about how organizations or institutions might better address the issue?

Accountability – more family and community friendly.

1) Education resources be equitable, "relative to population need". 2) Schools make parental involvement easier. 3) Institute peer parenting & support – unified families.

Set higher standards, be accountable, monitor government, ... * Like the Community Forum, our group never quite got to recommendations.

Continue to meet & confer, in sessions like these – & celebrate positive events!

See Attached Report.

No short answer available.

Dependent on the institution – dialogue between city council & school board planned.

The Wilder School will not only be a school, but a community center, social service center, and health care center: in effect the center of the community. Community members, parents, and educators will have a voice in the planning and a stake in the success of the school.

Need more dialogues and Education.

Some confidence in neighborhood councils.

See Summary Report.

They were submitted (see report).

k) What suggestions and recommendations came from the group about how government might better address the issue?

Accountability.

1) Enforcement of renter & landlord accountability. 2) More flexible housing codes for large families. 3) More affordable housing everywhere. 4) Encourage personal accountability. 5) Support NRP's. 6) More wide-spread transport. 7) Libraries open more evenings.

Improve education, offer employment. * We agreed that the needs were so large, that it seemed much too difficult to make recommendations given our lack of time and depth/breath of needs.

These were not really addressed, other than need to have neighborhood schools established Now!!

See Attached Report.

No short answer available.

Begin the dialogue – make sure city council is aware of a social justice perspective and is supported by residents.

Issues identified – Exclusionary Zoning.

Tax breaks for low income Housing.

They had some confidence in local city action but almost none in metropolitan; little in State.

See Summary Report.

Want national basic income support. Welfare system that empowers people, provides training support for jobs that pay enough to live on.

They were submitted (see report).

• EXPERIENCES OF FACILITATOR AND/OR SPONSOR

Additional Comments (Please feel free to use additional sheets)

a) Did you have adequate support from your study circle's organizer, or not? Please explain:

Yes: 40% (8) No: 15% (3)

Copying. Space & set up. Support costs.

I was the organizer –

I was personally disappointed that I, as a student intern, was the only one able/willing to represent Hennepin County at the Forum. I and the other facilitator organized, coordinated and sought support for the Community Circle, with no more assistance / input or recognition from the Department's Director, or anyone "up there" than approval to use office conference rooms.

We are the organizers – this can only be answered by participants.

We have no one "organizer".

Yes – schools are very interested in these issues and superintendent is committed to desegregation and equity.

A question for participants.

As this is a work in progress, it's hard to determine what kind of support should have been expected. Sometimes felt as though we were all unorganized.

? Didn't really receive any – other than to make an announcement at Mass.

b) Did you have adequate support from the project coordinator, or not? Please explain:

Yes: 50% (10) No: 20% (4)

Answered calls.

Identification of a facilitator was delayed, resulting in a false start & some loss of momentum / participation.

Mr. Little promptly answered phone calls, offered ideas for additional information, and seemed committed and enthusiastic. Yes, I felt adequately supported from him and appreciated as a facilitator. Info on how other groups went would help me better evaluate our group.

Good support overall.

We became aware of the Collaborative project very late in the game, and because of the long lead time of our scheduling we were unable to conform to the general collaborative format. But it was not for lack of support by the project coordinator.

Materials were very late, but assistance given when speaker needed was very helpful.

It was difficult organizing the study circle group with the date changes from the city wide forum/citizens summit and the editing of the manual.

Adequate.

Yes – even with time frames very tight.

Fair.

c) What additional support would have been helpful?

None.

Having the study guide ready when indicated it would be.

More timely pairing of facilitators with groups & of distribution of discussion guide.

• Recognition, a thank you, a representative at the Forum, donuts ... any one of these would have been nice from project sponsor.

Good support received!

Sponsoring organization could have helped supply treats, provide clerical support, copies, etc.

We view this the other way – what can we do to support the overall aims of the Collaborative?

The group session at Macalester should have moved to solutions. Focus on problems only was not very helpful.

Recruiting participants was challenging. Low income persons had a difficult time with transportation expenses. It would have been nice to be able to provide a snack during the meetings – we were unable to do this because of our own budget constraints. Allocating money from the Study Circle Collaborative for such items as bus tokens, snacks, etc. would have been helpful.

More help recruiting participants & money for snacks and drinks.

The discussion guide sooner.

??

Some way through the issue. I didn't find the 3 perspectives helpful – far too narrow. The rewritten booklet (by Syl Jones) came after we had finished our discussions.

d) If you were to lead another study circle, what would you change (for example: discussion materials, overall organization of project, meeting site, your performance as discussion leader, etc.)?

1) I'd try for better attendance (more members), & keep myself out of the discussion more. 2) I'd do child care a little differently. I would have recommended that facilitator follow discussion guide more closely.
 I've never lead a discussion group before, and so felt very unsure of my facilitation abilities, particularly among this group of experienced professionals ... help with this. Also is there a way of randomly assigning interested group members to groups, for more diversity? Other help in recruiting diversity from one employment site / organization.
 There was mention of a stipend for facilitators when we had our training – I would appreciate further consideration of this aspect of the overall organization of the project. Thank you –.
 Would seek generational diversity, more support from sponsoring organization.
 Not enough participation, yet, to provide a meaningful reply.
 Expand participation.
 There needs to be more diversity in the study circle groups.
 More room for research assistance with Research on Group Questions that come up.
 Have study guides ready on time, for groups – Have amore diverse group. – More lead time for starting a group & doing group reporting.
 Timely – factual background material; we would need better data re policy options – more focused (specific) options for action.
 I felt the organization was chaotic – every thing was last minute.

e) Other impressions, concerns and comments ...

The meeting at Macalester ... meeting process was confusing to me. Overall I think the process was helpful and productive at the local level. The big trick is to ensure that something comes of this work so that it does effect policy. ...after the Macalester meeting, I must say that this last piece is in question in my mind. I look forward to participating in next steps that bring to a focus some of the policy issues.

1) When we “merge” with another group now, would we co-facilitate? I'd much prefer that.

2) I wouldn't want to meet more than 2x/mo.

Concerned that only women would come and return – no men (except one we coerced).

We've had a good beginning, but we need to broaden the discussion to a wider geographic area & to include a broader set of stakeholders.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to facilitate a Community Circles group – Hope to help out again in future.

Vital, interesting discussion; rich diversity of cultures & viewpoints made people want to come back. Excellent group bonding, affection.

The other delegate and myself were impressed with the overall quality of most of those, both other delegates and the leaders of the Macalester general forum.

Focus more on next steps. We have talked about inability to act for too many years with the same community leaders.

The participants at the city wide forum seemed to be predominately middle to upper middle class, middle aged, white people. It would help to have more men and a more diverse group.

21 people signed up for discussion but could not find a common meeting time. Most were unwilling to commit to more than one meeting time of short duration: 2 – 3 hrs. These attended one or two meetings – No one attended all 4.

Narrow the topic !

Participant Roster (Please include sponsor(s), facilitator(s),recorder(s))

Name	Address	Tel #
------	---------	-------

Hennepin County

Holy Trinity

Hopkins Community Study Circle

Seward Mathews Center Group

Edina Community Circle

Minnesota Fair Housing Center Study Circle

Bayport Community Circle

Oakdale-Oak Terrace-St. Paul Community Circle

Richfield Community Circle

Golden Valley Study Circle

Edina Community B (First Universalist) Circle

University of Minnesota (Newman Center) Study Circle

Fax to 339-3288 at Inter-race
Home phone -- 724-5662 Dick Little

Community Circle Collaborative Forum Outline

*By Leonard Witt
February 28, 1997*

Introduction:

The Community Circle Collaborative is gathering groups of people throughout the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area to discuss this central question:

What can we do or should we, as individuals and as a community, do to enhance the educational, housing, economic and life opportunities for all children in the Twin Cities metropolitan area?

We are here because many indicators show that many of our kids are suffering educationally and socially. We believe a society cannot live up to its full potential if its children are not reaching their fullest potential. Each of us coming into this discussion has our own theory of why some of our children are not thriving.

The purpose of these study circles is to learn more about the issues involved and for each participant to give his or her views on the subject. These **meetings should not be seen as a debate** over who is right and who is wrong, but rather as a search for ways to improve the lives of all the children in the Twin Cities.

This study guide is set up to give focus to the discussions, but it is only a guide. Each facilitator and each group might want to adapt it to meet its groups needs. However, all discussions, no matter how circuitous, should aim to help answer the central question stated above.

In the end, each group should feel it has succeeded if it:

- ✓ • Had civil discussions among people with different points of view
- ✓ • Enumerated the Twin Cities strengths and weakness when it comes to offering optimum educational and life opportunities for all its children.
- ✓ • Discovered areas of common ground

- Gave a receptive ear to all ideas presented--even those we personally might not like to hear
- Provided concrete suggestions of how these discussion, if your group found them beneficial, might be continued into the future
- Listed action steps that might be taken in the future to ensure there would be optimum educational and life opportunities for all Twin Cities children
- Wrote a report about your group's discussions, dynamics and findings from which others might gain insight about issues central to providing optimum life and education opportunities for kids.

Session I -- Getting Started

A two-hour session divided into these parts

Hour One -- What's Ahead

Minutes 1-15 -- Facilitator introduces self -- Reiterates why we are here, restates the primary questions we plan to tackle is:

What can we do or should we, as individuals and as a community, do to enhance the educational, economic and life opportunities for all children in the Twin Cities metropolitan area?

To get to the heart of that question we will be talking about:

- **Family, parental and individual responsibility**
- **The community's role**
- **The government's role**
- **Educators' role**
- **Housing patterns and policies**
- **Race relations**
- **Structural impediments to change, when and where change might be needed**
- **Other topics that you think need to be added to the mix**

Finally, we will as a group will come up with ideas to advance the optimum life and educational possibilities for all children.

Minutes 16 -- 30 -- Participant introductions

I. Executive Summary: Principal Findings and Directions for the Future

II. Background: The Community Study Circle Collaborative

"It couldn't happen here." Not in Minneapolis-St. Paul, the political home of Hubert Humphrey: Minnesota, America's sane heartland. . . . The Twin Cities was immune to urban decline, inner-suburban decay, urban sprawl -- and the polarization that has devastated and divided older, larger regions. After all, we were not Chicago, Detroit, or Milwaukee. We were reform minded, and our philanthropic and governmental centers were coordinated and responsive. Then the 1980s hit, marking our Twin Cities with identical patterns of regional polarization. . . . If it could happen here, no American region is immune. Once polarization occurs, the concentration of poverty, disinvestment, middle-class flight, and urban sprawl grow more and more severe.

-- Myron Orfield, Metropolitcs (1997: 1, emphasis added)

State Legislator Myron Orfield was one of the first citizens in the region to realize that Twin Cities communities were becoming increasingly polarized along the lines of race and class. Changes in regional school districts pointed to serious issues of equity in both housing access and public education.

It is within this context that the Community Circle Collaborative (CCC) was launched. CCC is a metro-wide dialogue project that engages citizens from all walks of life, 5-15 at a time, in study circles held throughout the metro area. Originally a partnership among EHEP, the Minneapolis Initiative Against Racism (MIAR), the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership (MMEP), and the Minnesota Fair Housing Center, the CCC initiative has expanded into a wide-ranging coalition of community-based organizations, public staff and officials, and individuals working in a variety of fields, including social justice, race relations, housing, education, religion, law and social research.

CCC's study circles have been charged with discussing two central questions:

- What are the impacts of existing patterns of residential, economic and racial segregation on the educational achievement and life opportunities of Twin Cities area children and families?
- What can or should we do, as individuals and as a community, to enhance educational success and housing and economic opportunities for *all* children in the Twin Cities area?

These are the two critical questions facing the Twin Cities region as it moves toward the 21st Century.

The diversity in our state is greatest among children So this is a long curve. We'd better start getting some of the answers right now, because they're going to affect an entire generation. -- Vivian Jenkins Nelson, INTER-RACE

A. What is a Community Study Circle?

The Community Circle Collaborative process is one way to sample the broadest possible spectrum of opinions within a community. It is also an effective way to generate informed conversations that can lead to new levels of citizenship and civic action. This process has been used all over the country to create a public voice about important issues and to help ensure that that voice is heard by decision-makers. Without the effort to bring people together for informed and civil conversation, the most extreme voices are free to frame the issues. Public-spirited conversation will be drowned out by shrill debate, our communities will become even more polarized, and our common interests and values will get lost in a sea of opposition and conflict. There is a need to create a public voice that recognizes our common interests and generates consensus about, or at least informed consent to, policies and actions designed to further the common good.

Why is this public conversation important? In part, it's because most of what we see today in the media and in public meetings is "positioning" or "posturing" -- that is, highly stylized communication. The purpose of this style is to advocate one point of view or another, at the expense of dialogue and, often, of decorum. Although widely accepted in the media, this type of communication ultimately leads to public cynicism and withdrawal from the political process. Not many people wish to become strident enough to compete in such a contrived forum. Community circles offer a refreshing change from the narrow and often restrictive discussions of the past and the competitive debates encouraged by the political process.

To "converse" means to "share words with others". It carries the implication of equality of opportunity and status, and of the give-and-take of exchange. Conversations, which shares ideas, thoughts and perspectives, are intended to lead to understanding. They help to clear the air by honestly reflecting the differences and similarities among the conversants.

The study circle is a well-tested, practical method for adult learning and social change. In a study circle, 5-20 people meet several times to discuss the various choices the community might make concerning a social or political issue. Complex issues are broken down into manageable pieces, and controversial topics are dealt with in depth. Each discussion lasts about two hours and is directed by a well-prepared discussion leader whose role is to aid in lively but focused discussion. The process is informal, democratic and highly participatory, so that the group can capitalize on the experience of all its members.

People acting as citizens create new ways of working together and new ways of taking responsibility for what is publicly all of ours. -- Dick Little, Education and Housing Equity Project

The community circles process recognizes that agreement is not necessary in order for a conversation to be successful. What *are* necessary are listening, reflecting, and speaking from both the head and the heart. Mutual respect and a belief in the enlightening and healing nature of sharing ideas -- across boundaries of ethnicity, geography, age, gender, socioeconomic status and even language -- can go a long way toward making a conversation rewarding for the community as well as the individuals involved. Moreover, they can become vehicles for community problem-solving and development of action coalitions, composed of individual citizens, community organizations, the business community and government, that are better able to effect meaningful change for the better.

In many cultures, circles are symbols of equality, fairness and completeness. The underlying premise of the Community Circles Collaborative process is that solutions to serious and often divisive issues can be found if we put aside our fears and prejudices and work together.

B. The Need: Residential and Educational Segregation in the Twin Cities

The Education and Housing Equity Project (EHEP) was created in early 1995 by a group of education and housing advocates who shared a belief in the pressing need to link the issue of school desegregation with

the broader issue of housing and neighborhood segregation. EHEP's mission is to act as a catalyst to build broad-based coalitions and engage the community in public conversations about and advocacy for promotion of racially and economically inclusive communities that give families of all incomes, races and ethnic backgrounds access to schools and housing throughout the metropolitan area.

The reason it's critical that we talk is because words have different meanings to different people, and we have different levels of interpretation and reflection from our own experience, our history, our expectations, our own knowledge of where we can go.

-- Dr. Josie Johnson

A few alarming facts highlight the nature and depth of the concerns they wished to address:

- The proportion of people of color who live in poverty is higher in Minneapolis/St. Paul than in any other central city in the nation: 37 percent of African-Americans, 40 percent of Native Americans, 32 percent of Latinos.
- Concentrations of poverty and income disparities between the region's central cities and its suburbs are also among the highest in the nation. The poverty rate in Minneapolis is 18.5 percent, in St. Paul 16.7 percent, but in the suburbs it is only 4.5 percent.
- The central cities are home to only 22 percent of the children enrolled in regional schools, but to 55 percent of the region's impoverished elementary school children.
- Between 1970 and 1984, the population of the metro area increased by 9.7 percent but the land it occupied increased by 25.1 percent.

C. Chronology of CCC Events

The Community Circle Collaborative is now more than a year old. A brief chronology of its activities and related events appears below.

December 1996: The "Beyond Busing" Kick-Off Forum was held for project sponsors. This event was attended by more than 100 people representing a wide variety of organizations: churches, advocacy groups, academia, public agencies and foundations. Significantly, the event took place in the suburbs (in the St. Louis Park City Council chambers), making it clear from the beginning that this was not a central-city effort but a metro-wide effort. The first two speakers, former St. Paul Mayor George Latimer and education expert Josie Johnson, Ph.D., helped to set the context of the project and to encourage and motivate participants. The two speakers who followed them, Curt Johnson, chair of the Metropolitan Council; and Yusef Mgeni, President of the Urban Coalition, provided information and insights regarding the breadth and depth of segregation problems and costs in the metropolitan area. Following the speakers, individuals representing the state legislature, an outer-ring suburban church, an inner-ring suburban school, a nonprofit housing developer, the media and the Minneapolis Mayor's Office all described why they planned to participate in the project and urged others to join them. As the event concluded, many new sponsors submitted their pledges to participate by organizing study circles.

February 1997: Training for study-circle facilitators was held, and the first Discussion Guide for participants was issued.

March-June 1997: Study circle discussion groups met 3-5 times each to discuss the two questions given above. Each group produced a brief report summarizing its discussion and findings. Nearly 350 people

participated in these discussions.

May 1997: CCC held a Community Forum at Macalester College in St. Paul. This forum was attended by many of the individuals who had participated in study circles and gave them a chance not only to share the results of their deliberations and but also to explore the extent of commonalities among the different groups. The Forum featured Martha McCoy, the Executive Director of the (national) Study Circles Resource Center, whose presentation was followed by two "conversations." The first, moderated by Vivian Jenkins Nelsen, President and CEO of INTER-RACE, focused on the first study-circle question (regarding impacts); the second, moderated by George Latimer, addressed the second question, which focuses on potential solutions. (Section III of this report summarizes the findings of all the study circles.)

June 1997: The Institute on Race and Poverty delivers to the McKnight Foundation a report entitled "Examining the Relationship Between Housing, Education, and Persistent Segregation." This report identifies the Twin Cities region as one of the ten most segregated metropolitan regions in the United States.

The Twin Cities have reached an important time to consider which path it will follow. This community has already begun to creep down the path so familiar to many large urban areas. If the Twin Cities community is to reverse its course, it must begin now. This community must seriously examine and confront what is happening here, and it must come together for real, proven solutions. -- The Institute on Race and Poverty, University of Minnesota

July 1997: All study circle reports were submitted to EHEP. In addition, facilitators and group organizers completed a questionnaire intended to help the study-circle organizers to learn more about the process -- successes as well as difficulties -- and to glean suggestions concerning how better to proceed in the next round of discussions.

July-October 1997: Individual participants who represented interested groups made presentations to their respective organizations, local communities and constituencies.

September 1997: The National Conference on Race Relations and America's Public Education System takes place. One of the discussion sites is the Twin Cities. Among the practical issues identified are housing segregation, economic inequity, and the need for long-term solutions rather than quick fixes.

April 1998: The final report of the first round of study circles, "Beyond Busing: The First Metrowide Dialogue on the Challenges of Education and Housing Segregation," is issued.

III. Study Circle Reports

A. Issues

*We are in very deep denial. We believe we aren't like Detroit, but we are;
it's just happening more slowly here.*

The necessary first step in trying to solve thorny social problems is to ensure that those problems are understood in much the same way by all. The Community Circles Collaborative therefore focused its study groups' initial attention on issue identification and discussion.

The issues identified by CCC participants fell into four fairly distinct groupings:

- Issues related to regional growth and equity in terms of investment, employment and social relations;
- Systemic issues related to housing segregation and neighborhood quality;
- Systemic issues related to education; and
- Issues that arise primarily at the level of the individual.

A small degree of liberty has been taken to clarify meaning or to combine similar thoughts expressed in different ways by more than one participant or study circle. Every effort has been made, however, to retain the essence of what appeared in the study circle reports.

Issues shown in italic type were identified by more than one study group.

1. *Issues of regional growth and equity*

When asked to determine how many societies the Twin Cities have become, people responded in two different ways. One group suggested that we have become "three societies: The very rich, working people, and the poor." Another described it differently: "Two -- those who work and those who don't." Regardless of how it is said, though, there was a strong recognition among participants that the region has become polarized into distinct, and often mutually distrusting, camps.

The issues that appear in this grouping deal with the broad context of regional equity -- and inequity. They cluster around three topics: investment, employment and social relations.

Investment:

Spatial mismatch between available fiscal and economic resources and high-order fiscal and social needs -- for example, northern part of region needs more infrastructure

Biases in business lending that shortchange women- and minority-owned businesses

Need for more entrepreneurship programs, e.g., micro-loans, money circles

Perceived and real disadvantages of central-city sites, due to crime, presence of pollutants and an unskilled workforce

A focus on the short-term and the bottom line, disregarding long-standing evidence that a "rising tide" does not lift all boats

Shortage of businesses that are committed to being good corporate citizens

Growth containment affects provision and cost of infrastructure

*Suburbanites like to have the benefits of the city
but do not like to pay for them.*

Employment:

Spatial mismatch between available jobs and many of the unemployed -- e.g., the northern part of the region needs to provide more jobs

Biases in job hiring and wage-setting practices

Shortage of reverse-commute options that can take inner-city workers to suburban jobs

Shortage of quality affordable child care, especially at "non-traditional" work times

Changing workforce demographics: more persons of color, more seniors, more women supporting households

Challenge presented by people who are physically or psychologically unable to "work a 9-5 job"

Underrecognition by business that well-trained employees lead to greater profitability

Lack of benefits with many part-time and low-wage jobs

Jobs accessible to residents of poor communities often go to outsiders

Lack of sufficient interest in and support for entrepreneurship in minority and poor communities

Social relations:

Distortions and stereotypes in media reporting

Reporting of crime that is disproportionate to its occurrence

Need for true justice that is timely, fair and makes wise use of parole and community-service options

Polarization reinforced by racial categories on government forms

General breakdown of family structure and cohesion due to economic demands, lifestyle choices, decline in community support

Perceived need to keep track of people with criminal records (e.g., community right-to-know regulations for known sex offenders)

Tendency for people to remain close to their support networks

Decline in traditional values, especially a decline in personal integrity and responsibility

Lack of courage to make wise but unpopular decisions

*Churches can perpetuate values
but are not always good role models*

2. Systemic issues related to housing and neighborhoods

There was a generally high level of consensus on housing and neighborhood issues, which clustered around two topics: housing stock and neighborhood environment. By far the most often-cited issue was that of exclusionary suburban zoning and development practices, which were mentioned specifically by one-fourth of the reporting groups.

*The people who can afford to pay taxes live out in the suburbs,
and the inner city has been getting poorer and poorer. It will continue
until there is some massive political determination
that we're going to make our inner cities the most attractive places to live,
or at least as attractive for all kinds of people as the suburbs are.*

Housing:

- Lack of investment in poor or declining neighborhoods
- Poor housing stock that repels stable families, discourages investment
- Lead-based paint and other health hazards
- Lack of neighborhood diversity in housing types, which leads to homogeneous populations
- Inflexible central-city zoning and other regulations that prohibit use of many vacant/abandoned buildings as shelter*
- Shortage of affordable housing*
- Punitive rental property taxes
- High cost of land
- Poor enforcement of existing fair housing laws
- Lack of awareness of opportunities and options among low-income households

In Minneapolis, the government is sponsoring the destruction of affordable housing, through zoning, through licensing, through housing codes. The city has destroyed countless affordable neighborhoods.

Neighborhood environment:

- Unequal power in neighborhood/community relations*
- Inadequate resources for general maintenance, including trash pick-up and yardwork
- Lack of resources to facilitate neighborhood involvement
- Transience caused by poor housing stock, low incomes*
- Land-use plans that give highest priority to accommodating cars (e.g., intrusive highway routes)
- Inadequate transit service (frequency, hours, direct routing and choice of destinations)*
- Exclusionary suburban zoning regulations (e.g., minimum lot size and square footage, garage requirements, development fees)*
- Redlining (insurance, lending, cab service, police response)*
- Crime and perceptions of crime*
- Need to improve conditions for those who "remain behind"

More affluent neighborhoods [have] essentially accepted socioeconomic redlining.

3. Systemic issues related to education

Perspectives on the shortcomings of the educational system were quite diverse but fall into two groupings: One focuses on the in-school experience, the other on the interaction between the school and the surrounding community.

The school as educational institution:

- Teachers not living in the community

- Few opportunities to experience diversity
- Institutional discrimination: students receiving differential treatment due to race/color, learning ability, economic status, perceived intelligence, and/or athletic ability, which can lead to artificially raised or lowered expectations
- Focus on short-term results when long-term solutions are needed
- Failure to teach the basics
- Lack of adequate [curriculum] structure
- Classes that are too big
- Inability to sustain children's enthusiasm for school beyond 3rd or 4th grade
- Too few minority teachers
- Insufficient counselors and inadequate counseling
- Schools being asked to do far more than teach academics
- Lack of effective means of dealing with children from problem situations; at-risk children "falling through the cracks"

Where we do get the minorities to move out into the suburbs, they have the money, they have the wherewithal, but we . . . have a problem in the sensitivity of our teachers and our educational system One of the biggest problems that [minority kids] are finding is that their teachers are prejudiced. So we move out into the suburbs, and what we encounter are teachers who will not be fair with these kids They're also scared of being in school, because they're afraid of being called names, and if there's a fight, they get kicked out. So there's a racial imbalance.

The school in the community:

- The school system is not user-friendly or parent-friendly
- Transience disrupting children's stability, ability to learn
- School violence (e.g., children carrying weapons)
- Unequal distribution of school resources, both within and between school districts
- Perception that central-city schools are underfunded
- Special challenges presented by schools impacted by concentrated poverty
- Lack of adequate transportation/transit, which results in reduced access to extra-curricular activities and school choice
- The public-school monopoly -- lack of competition and choice
- Poor nutrition among school children
- Language barriers among recent immigrants
- Under-educated, over-worked parents who cannot adequately help their children
- [Household] stability affects academic achievement
- Need for transitional housing to support schools

*You can't learn
if you are hungry.*

4. Issues related to individuals

These issues reflect more general concerns about the state of our society as a whole as well as the plight of individuals within it. Some of these issues are pandemic -- that is, they plague people in all races, classes and locations; others are more specific to particular circumstances, especially the circumstances of those living in areas of concentrated poverty.

Society-wide issues:

- Substance abuse and addiction*
- Breakdown in the institution of marriage
- Lack of recognition for different family types, e.g., extended families
- Lack of self-esteem in children due to inadequate parenting
- Lack of respect for the rights, beliefs and property of others*
- Lack of respect for teachers and other elders*
- Fear leading to isolation, high levels of stress
- Negative stereotyping
- Racism
- Denial of racism/segregation problem
- Need for more welcoming in the community

*'The white teachers don't like us.
When a white kid does something good, they get praised.
When we do something good, they say nothing.'*

Issues more common in areas of concentrated poverty:

- Low incomes/joblessness leading to extralegal economic activity
- Poor parental supervision of children and lack of other supportive/responsible adults
- Lack of employed role models
- Individuals focused on day-to-day survival unlikely to make education a top priority
- Unwillingness or inability to take personal responsibility (e.g., in housing: use of illegal subleases and presence of unaccounted-for tenants)
- Lack of pride in surroundings
- High level of mobility leading to instability in family, education
- Inability to set and work toward goals
- Entitlement mentality promoted by welfare dependency
- Victim mentality promoted by discrimination and dependency

Describing the problems of the inner city as a result of abstract 'racism' is not helpful because fighting 'racism' seems a futile exercise.

B. Potential solutions

We decided early on that the issues of housing, education and jobs were not mutually exclusive, and that if we had to do anything, we had to do all of them One of the things we said is that if the economic bottom line drives the process, then a rising economic tide should diminish segregation. But does it?

The potential solutions that appear here should be regarded as a valuable first cut. As the Community Circles Collaborative proceeds with its second round of discussions, every effort will be made to deepen participants' understanding of the connections among the issues and to help them develop meaningful and effective responses to those issues.

It is also important to remember that many potential solutions are implicit in the issue statements. For example, to address the issue described as “biases in business lending that shortchange women- and minority-owned businesses,” a potential solution might be to work to eliminate those biases, or to find other ways to make more investment capital available to women and minorities. In this sense, the issues lists should not be dismissed as potential sources of ideas.

Again, as was the case with the issues, every attempt has been made to capture the essence of what emerged from the discussants, while also combining and clarifying ideas where appropriate.

*When something isn't working,
try something new.*

1. Employment and opportunity

Suggestions for increasing employment and economic opportunity generally addressed broad topical categories, such as entrepreneurship and child care.

- Adopt the OxFam approach that sets up micro-loan and revolving credit programs (“money circles”) among groups of inner-city residents. This will help to foster entrepreneurship.
- Increase funding for women- and minority-owned businesses.
- Require basic benefits with all full-time jobs.
- Offer incentives to lenders to make business and home loans to low-income persons.
- Recruit corporations as community partners that can help to provide transportation to job sites, child care, and job offers to center-city residents.
- Improve the transit system by expanding reverse-commute options and using a wider variety of vehicle and service types (e.g., company vans, vanpools, dial-a-ride systems, bus-service rerouting).
- Expand the funding for and availability of adequate child care.

We found ourselves going back and forth. First, someone would say, well, it's an economic solution we need here, or it's an economic cause of this problem. And then right away someone else would counter with, it's lack of community, it's 'heart' things. What we eventually came up with is that we have to have solutions that are addressed to both sides of the problem, because one or the other isn't going to do it.

2. Societal relations and resources

Suggestions related to social relations focused on communities of faith and sources of information:

- Partner churches to offer and encourage multi-cultural experiences for their congregations.
- Provide anti-racism training and materials for media staff members.
- Work more through communities of faith and rely more on faith-based programs, which are [often] more successful than comparable secular programs.
- Keep public libraries open for longer hours, especially evenings and weekends.

*Congregations need to move
'outside the congregational walls.'*

3. Housing and neighborhoods

The most logical breakdown of potential solutions in this category is between housing and neighborhoods.

Housing:

- Mix small apartment buildings with other housing types in new developments.
- Allow mixed-use zoning that permits people to live, for example, above stores.
- Increase the flexibility of various codes to assist large families, for example by allowing three persons in each bedroom.
- Increase the number of duplexes and triplexes with resident owners.
- Fund experiments in shared living.
- Expand the supply of transitional housing.
- Experiment with ways to reduce the profit motive vis-a-vis construction and rehabilitation of affordable housing.
- Reinstitute some kind of fair-share housing requirement regionwide.
- Put teeth in the Livable Communities Act and the Community Reinvestment Act.
- Provide better and more consistent code enforcement.
- Increase resources to make landlords accountable for repairs and treatment of tenants.
- Offer more widespread down-payment assistance to persons of limited means.
- Couple household support programs with housing choice and subsidy.
- Test "money circles" as a source of funding for home improvements and other family/household needs.
- Experiment with payment-assistance programs, similar to existing utility-assistance programs (e.g., voluntary payments by utility customers to help those in need).

Neighborhoods:

- Pair seniors and young parents so they can get to know one another and exchange services, for example swapping occasional child care for lawn mowing
- Expand and support Neighborhood Watch programs.
- Improve emergency support systems, as well as awareness of and access to them.

People like to be with people like themselves.

4. Education

Ideas for improving public education ran the gamut from those promoting general improvement for all students, regardless of race or socioeconomic status, to those specifically targeting at-risk youngsters from a wide variety of backgrounds. These suggestions fell into several groupings: curriculum and teaching, student support, school choice, recognition of diversity and community relations.

If we go back to neighborhood schools, poverty areas must have the best, strongest teachers.

Curriculum and teaching improvements:

- Teach all students life skills, such as money management, parenting, how to look for a job and how to select appropriate housing.
- Eliminate state curriculum standards except for testing.

Require academic tests at the elementary, middle-junior high and senior high school levels.
Rate schools on academic achievement.
Develop different learning tracks, including at least one that provides a good education to those who will not go to [an academic]college.
Expand work-study opportunities that do not allow teen-agers to work in fast-food places -- for example, home construction/rehabilitation.
Encourage/recruit corporate sponsorships and internships. Involve businesses in helping students better visualize careers and career paths and learn the skills they will need.
Educate students for civic participation.
Require community-service hours, even before high school.
Equalize school-district spending per child.
Lengthen both the school day and the school year.

It is time to leave the premise that everyone is qualified to attend college. It is very important for our country to have mechanics, plumbers, carpenters and others who perform such useful tasks. Dignity is in all work and unfortunately that has been lost.

Student support:

Move away from a "fix the kid" approach to a "fix the system" approach.
Enhance programs that prevent drop-outs.
Offer more tutoring.
Expand mentoring programs.
Expand after-school activities, especially in the fine and performing arts and other non-athletic program areas.
Get truants off the streets and into a community center, workplace or community-service setting.
Require uniforms (although not necessarily "traditional" ones).
Provide better and more plentiful counseling that is more holistic and incorporates help with chemical abuse.
Sponsor "burning issues" clubs, lunches or other time to help youngsters deal with issues at home.

Kids are afraid to go to school because of racism, they're afraid because of sexism, homophobia . . . When they're there, the children are so worried about, am I going to get to my next class, am I going to get home, am I going to get beat up on the way home, am I going to have my lunch money for lunch -- that learning is secondary.

School choice:

Allow children to go to any [public] school they want.
Support community schools -- "stop busing madness."
"Bus for programs, not for numbers."

Teachers in the public school system are very unprepared for kids of color. Training needs to address not only multiculturalism but it needs to address some of the factors of poverty and how they impact on kids. They need to look at learning styles. They need to look at how they as teachers can facilitate involvement by parents

and community members.

Diversity:

Fund learning opportunities that bring together or pair students from divergent backgrounds.
Use instruction and programs focused on the environment and ecology to bring together all groups

in the community in a common concern and in common enterprise.

Train teachers in cultural competency.

Imbue the curriculum with diversity, rather than making diversity a “special event” or giving it superficial treatment.

Offer scholarships to students of color who agree to come back and teach for a minimum period of time.

Community relations:

Experiment with “peer parent” and buddy programs that help newcomers feel less isolated and become more involved in their children’s schools.

Strengthen the non-educational/pre-school support system that helps to relieve problems in the schools, which consists of programs like Head Start, parenting education, mentoring, quality child care and non-school recreation.

Incorporate community facilities, such as community centers, social service centers and health-care facilities, within or adjacent to schools to give everyone a “stake” in the success of those schools.

*I remember when there were three black teachers in the Minneapolis public schools.
And yet there were students of color that were going through that school system,
combating racism as individuals, and going on to become successful participants in society.
We can blame a lot of things on racism, but let’s not fall into the trap of using that
as an excuse for a lack of achievement.*

IV. Preparing for the Future

I think a lot of white people believe, but sometimes don't feel that we can say it, that racism is probably a relatively minor cause of the relatively poor performance of minority kids It would be incredibly naive to discount the impact of racism on minority kids in our schools, but it seems to me far more significant causes are the breakdown of the African-American family and the lack of role models for young kids. And the sports culture I think is even more important than racism, the idolization of athletes, and the belief that African-American boys in the Minneapolis public schools have -- something like 85 percent feel they can have careers in professional sports But we don't ever talk about any of those other issues.

A deeper look at the output of the study circles offers mostly good news: An important and meaningful dialogue has begun, all across the Twin Cities, and people of good will from all backgrounds are thinking about economic and racial disparities with an intensity not seen since the 1960s. Most of the participants grasp the gravity of the issues, understand at least in part their nature and connections to one another, and the necessity for action rather than passive acceptance.

Moreover, the dialogue has begun by generating a profile of many of the important issues. The Study Circle Reports (Section III of this report) contain a wealth of information, insights and ideas that can be used to propel further exploration of the role of race, changing economics and spatial segregation on housing and education throughout the region.

Having said that, though, it is worth taking a more critical look at the study circle output, and at the process itself, as a means of preparing the ground for another round of conversations. This section of the report is divided into two parts; the first focuses on issues of substance, both present and future, and the second focuses on issues of process.

A. Issues of Substance

One striking feature of the lists of issues is the virtually total absence of comments about gangs -- in spite of stories in the Minneapolis *Star-Tribune* and elsewhere relating gang activities to the recent upsurge in violent crime, particularly homicides. Perhaps more than any other event, the proliferation and expansion of gangs has contributed substantially to region-wide fears of violent crime. Although "violence in the schools" was mentioned, it was not connected to a broader recognition of the role of gangs in spreading fear in city neighborhoods and institutions.

Another minor shortcoming of the study-circles process is its failure to systematically explore causal connections. As a result, the study circles tended to produce, on the one hand, a litany of problems that is not prioritized, and, on the other hand, a litany of solutions that may be only haphazardly connected and responsive to the identified problems.

Nonetheless, several cause-and-effect relationships were noted by participants or by experts working with them. For example, one participant noted that solving problems of inequity would require a two-pronged attack: one directed at economics (for example, job training, adequate transportation and center-city investment) and the other directed at community (housing, public education and taxes). This approach recognizes that housing and educational segregation cannot be considered in a vacuum, but are affected by family incomes and community context. Similarly, the police chief of St. Louis Park noted that, based on the relatively high percentage of arrests that involve people of color, a great deal of racial "profiling" has taken place. Yet he was quick to add that the majority of such crimes are in fact crimes of *poverty*.

*Although the world has become a global village,
whites are not ready to accept us even though we are equally qualified
I think we should start a program where you interact
with us and get to know us a little better
Racism is alive.*

Unhappily, race and poverty too often go hand in hand in our society. As Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton said in their landmark book *American Apartheid*,

Most Americans vaguely realize that urban America is still a residentially segregated society, but few appreciate the depth of black segregation or the degree to which it is maintained by ongoing institutional arrangements and contemporary individual actions. . . . Residential segregation is not a neutral fact; it systematically undermines the social and economic well-being of blacks . . . [creating] a social environment where poverty and joblessness are the norm . . . (1993: 1-2).

Along the same lines, William Julius Wilson has said:

[T]he wage and employment gap between skilled and unskilled workers is growing partly because education and training are considered more important than ever in the new global economy. At the same time that changes in technology are producing new jobs, they are making many others obsolete. . . . More routine workers face the growing threat of job displacement. . . . The shift in demand has been especially devastating for those low-skilled workers whose incorporation into the mainstream economy has been marginal or recent. Even before the economic restructuring of the nation's economy, low-skilled African-Americans were at the end of the employment queue. Their economic situation has been further weakened because they tend to reside in communities that not only have higher jobless rates and lower employment growth but lack access to areas of higher employment and employment growth as well.

-- William Julius Wilson, *When Work Disappears*, 1996: 28-29

*We know that poverty isn't going anywhere, and racism isn't dead.
-- Vivian Jenkins Nelson, INTER-RACE*

*A lot of times the white culture accepts this one particular way of looking at life,
this very linear, Western type of norms and values, and they think that's reality
Imagine they see a horse and a moose. They don't say, 'Oh, that's a moose,'
they say, 'Oh, that's a bad horse.' We need to not have this invisible centering on
the white and everybody else is 'other,' who is sort of a failed white.*

There may be more agreement on the pernicious effects of economic disparity than on those of race and

discrimination. For example, one suburban group reported that "our circle cited 'institutional racism' as a myth created by many." This group did "not feel that race is a large issue. People are people, no matter what color or culture they are." One school worker remarked that "I don't see racism in the schools. I think there is a generous feeling of people trying. Maybe not always succeeding, but trying."

On the other hand, these remarks hint at what Curt Johnson calls the insidious nature of discrimination in Northern cities. At the "Beyond Busing" forum, he quoted from a letter received from an African-American friend upon his return to Houston after living in the Twin Cities for three years: "I left because of the racism . . . At least in the South, I could see the knife. In Minnesota, I didn't find the blood until I got home. It was so subtle, and I didn't realize until later and began to add it up"

Some connections between minority status, joblessness, educational opportunity and community decay do appear in the summaries of study-circle discussions. However, the fact that they are not clearly stated or explored suggests either (1) that few participants truly understand these relationships, or (2) that participants take them so for granted that they are no longer seen as salient.

This situation is further illustrated by two types of responses that, although not commonplace, view the region through ideological or unfocused lenses. One type essentially rejects all interventions intended to reduce segregation and income disparity: Since government has failed, everything associated with it should go. We should repeal taxes, end the prohibition on drugs, repeal labor laws and occupational licensing regulations, end the public-school monopoly, and rigidly separate business and state.

A second type of response takes the form of broad goal statements that move us no closer to real solutions:

- Limit growth and sprawl.
- Revitalize the urban core.
- Organize people at the grassroots level.
- Build partnerships among business, government and the community.
- Improve housing in the inner city.
- Develop a better public transportation system.

In a few cases, participants focused on "what we can do" without identifying the purpose in doing it -- for example, they said they would "meet with the mayor and the Board of Education," but did not say why.

In short, many of the findings of the study circles cover the surface of the issues but do not probe very deeply. Suggested solutions are uneven in character, time frame, comprehensiveness, relevance and practicality. Moreover, there was as much emphasis on problems that plague everyone, particularly in the realm of public education, as upon problems closely associated with racial and economic segregation.

However, none of this is unexpected in the first round of a citizen effort of this type. Although the effort to develop solutions in the last round of discussions was necessary to give participants a sense of achievement and closure, it was premature in the sense that few people were ready intellectually and emotionally to propose truly innovative or meaningful solutions instead of reiterating "proven" ideas that may have little effect on the identified issues. This, too, is not unexpected: If housing desegregation were easy, it would have been achieved already.

Guidelines for Future Circles

- A packet of short readings should be sent to all prospective participants. Some should re-emphasize regional problems, while others might highlight programs and initiatives being undertaken elsewhere in the country. This may be supplemented by a reading list for those who want to explore further.

Suggestions for this list:

Wilson, William Julius. 1987. *The Truly Disadvantaged*. One of the contemporary classics, this book links racial segregation and economic disadvantage in creative new ways. Wilson, almost single-handedly, reopened a debate that had been closed off for nearly twenty years.

Wilson, William Julius. 1996. *When Work Disappears*. Wilson's follow-up presents data, extracts from interviews with inner-city residents, and policy suggestions.

Massey, Douglas and Nancy Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid*. Another classic, this book takes issue with some of Wilson's conclusions and uses an impressive array of statistics to do so. An outstanding primer on the legacy of segregation.

Orfield, Myron. 1997. *Metropolitics*. An alarming look at change in the Twin Cities region, which also

gives a sense of what can be done at the state level to combat and channel that change.

Sapphire. 1996. *Push*. A first-person account of the life of an inner-city teenager; this book offers a realistic inside look at the challenges of growing up in urban America.

Downs, Anthony. 1973. *Opening Up the Suburbs*. Perhaps the seminal work in this series, it offers some ideas that are as fresh today as they were a generation ago.

Barnett, Jonathan. 1996. *The Fractured Metropolis*. An urban designer's look at what can be done to heal the fractures in our society.

American Planning Association. 1994. *Planning and Community Equity*. A collection of articles addressing the full range of equity issues: affordable housing, transportation, environmental degradation, social impacts, governance, capital investment and citizen participation.

- Focus discussions more tightly. The initial study questions were pretty broad and left a lot of room for interpretation without a lot of direction. Four or five more focused questions would help to structure the dialogue and produce more focused results as well. One question could be used for each study-circle meeting in the next series. Each question could look at a topical study area, perhaps in terms of specific linkages, e.g., economic opportunity and education, economic opportunity and community support (child care, transportation, etc.), affordable housing and desegregation/ deconcentration, public schools and the community, race relations, etc. Each study circle could be given the option of choosing the questions it addresses from a more comprehensive list.

B. Issues of Process

The study-circle process proved its value through not only the output of the discussions but the responses of most participants, who viewed it as a valuable experience they would like to continue or repeat. This occurred even though the process suffered from some initial organizational difficulties. Delays in getting the circles up and running, and in producing and finalizing participant materials, caused some frustration among coordinators, facilitators and participants alike. Scheduling meeting times seems to have been a problem for nearly every circle. In spite of these circumstances, however, there seems to be a general sense that the process was worthwhile, and productive as well.

Creating meaningful change is more art than science. Most organizations that undertake such change fall short of their initial goals. This should not be viewed as "failure." Rather, it should be treated as an invaluable learning experience that could not be gained in any other way -- an experience that should energize and shape ongoing efforts.

Three specific process-related issues arose as a result of the first round of study circles. The first issue relates to group diversity, the second to group facilitation, and the third to group scheduling. These issues are addressed below.

*What you're doing is not a nice thing. . . .
What you want people to say is not that it is a nice thing to do
but that's an absolutely necessary thing to do.
-- Martha McCoy, Study Circles Resource Center.*

Improving Diversity

Race and ethnicity: The full group of participants (350+) was fairly representative of the Twin Cities community as a whole in terms of race/ethnicity. However, individual groups did not reflect this diversity. As a result, some participants perceived that the process was not representative. A number of comments were made regarding how “the right people aren’t here.”

Several methods of improving racial and ethnic diversity might be used. One would be to invite the participation of secular service clubs and congregations that are known to appeal to members of particular groups. Another would be to pair congregations and other sponsoring organizations to promote racial and ethnic intermingling. A third would involve deliberately assigning volunteers of one heritage to join a discussion group dominated by another. Because it is safe to presume that the vast majority of participants are persons of good will and intent, finding volunteers willing to cross barriers should not be difficult. (Besides, isn’t that the whole point of this exercise -- crossing barriers?)

Gender: The group of participants as a whole was not well-balanced by gender. Men made up only about one-fourth of the participants. The all-female memberships of a couple of study circles even remarked on the absence of male counterparts and asked what could be done to “get the men here.”

Although gender imbalance is not uncommon for a volunteer group of this type, gender imbalance needs to be addressed in the next round of circles. One possible approach would be to specifically invite participation by the men’s groups from various sponsoring faith communities. Another would be to invite participation by business owners and managers, who -- for better or worse -- are still predominately male.

*It's important to get the advantaged to understand how they're affected
by [the] plight of low-income minorities.*

Improving Group Facilitation

Good facilitation is the key to good results. The reports from the circles, and the surveys completed by the facilitators themselves, suggest that the quality of facilitation was uneven. This is one of the potential pitfalls of using volunteers, but it need not be a fatal one.

EHEP could turn to professional facilitators to conduct the next round of meetings, but this is not necessary nor even particularly wise. What is needed is better training and support for volunteer facilitators. For example, at least one facilitator complained that the group he or she led frequently strayed from the topic -- without any apparent understanding that it is the job of the facilitator to keep the group focused and moving so it can produce the results it wants within the allotted time.

The facilitator training process and packet reflect this failure to teach the basics. Training emphasized the content of the sessions and cultural considerations -- both critical topics, to be sure, but not to the

exclusion of learning how to lead a productive meeting, keep the group focused, mediate conflict, and handle difficult people ("difficult" here referring to any number of problems, including glibness, silence, stonewalling, attempts to dominate, etc.).

Given that some of the facilitators are relatively inexperienced, having a monitor present to step in and redirect the group's energy can be invaluable. A monitor can keep an eye on several groups at a time and keep tabs on the clock as well. The monitor's presence allows each facilitator to engage fully in the group's discussion and ensure that both substance and direction remain relevant. Moreover, should any facilitator encounter difficulty with a particular group -- belligerence, refusal to focus, etc. -- someone else is present to mediate and help the group get moving in positive ways again. The presence of a monitor can aid neophyte and experienced facilitators alike.

In CCC's case, the difficulties in using monitors are logistical: If each group is meeting at its own place and time, it is simply infeasible for a single monitor to be present. Neither would this be an efficient use of anyone's time. Moreover, the number of monitors available will necessarily be limited by the need for each one to be highly experienced in facilitation and/or team leadership. These difficulties could be overcome through a different approach to scheduling discussions.

Improving Study-Circle Scheduling

Ironically, it is possible that individual groups were given *too much* latitude in scheduling their own meetings -- which means that each person's dentist appointment, TV viewing habits, softball league, family demands, vacation and other prior commitments interfered with circle meetings. Multiply this effect by ten or fifteen circle members, and it becomes clear why scheduling was a problem.

Rather than leaving the scheduling decision wide open, it may be more effective to set up group meeting times in advance. For example, meetings in each round of discussions could be slated to take place at one of four or five predetermined times at one of four or five predetermined locations. Discussants would be asked to select one of those times and places to participate, either for the entire series or on a meeting-by-meeting basis. Advance sign-ups would probably be necessary in order to make sure that all time slots have enough participants; otherwise, intended participants would have to be notified of a change in plans.

Although this approach might entail some additional work on the part of the organizers, it might also eliminate some work by eliminating confusion about who is meeting where, and when. Moreover, sponsoring organizations would remain heavily involved in coordinating meetings and keeping track of participants.

Adopting an approach similar to this one could produce several benefits:

- It would impose some discipline on the groups and indicate that the study circles are not a social event that takes place only when everyone is free, but a formalized process with demands of its own.
- It would allow coordinators to balance the sizes of the circles, eliminating problems caused by poor attendance in some groups while others overflow.
- It would allow individuals who might miss one set time to "make up" a session at a different time, thus facilitating participation in the entire series of discussions.
- It would allow individuals to sample different locations, if desired, thus exposing them to a much wider range of viewpoints and ideas.
- It would enable the circle coordinators at any given location to balance racial and gender representation more effectively, either by pairing sponsoring organizations or by randomly assigning incoming individuals to different discussion groups.
- It would allow for the efficient use of monitors in support of facilitators.

- It would put everyone on essentially the same timetable, with a clear beginning and a clear end.

One potential drawback to this approach is that some groups would lose the continuity and, hence, the familiarity that foster trust and openness. However, the process itself can help to encourage such openness. Moreover, most discussion groups will probably remain essentially intact throughout the entire series due to individual choices.

V. Plans for the Future

VI. Appendices

- A. Background on EHEP, CCC
- B. Findings of facilitator questionnaire
- C. List of sponsors and participants

Memo

To: EHEP Board Members
From: Dick Little, Executive Director
CC: Kesha Tanabe, Intern
Date: 05/29/98
Re: EHEP Board Meeting, June 5, 1998

This is a reminder that the next Board Meeting will be next Friday, June 5, 1998, from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m., in Conference Room 1 at the Minnesota Church Center, 122 West Franklin Avenue. I look forward to seeing you there. RSVP only if you will not be able to attend (871-2519).

Topics to be discussed include but are not limited to:

- The discussion guide (Kesha Tanabe) and Orfield data and maps (Emily Greenwald)
- Funding initiatives (Keith Hardy)
- Communications plan and web page (pro bono services of Nikki Carlson)
- New project partners (e.g., Metropolitan Area Leagues of Women Voters, Minneapolis Community Education, Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution)
- Study Circles Workshop held at Hamline, co-sponsored with the Study Circles Resource Center, on April 25th (Board members who attended)
- MICAH premier performance of fair housing theatre event "Like Rolling Waters" held in Minnetonka on May 19th (Joy Sorensen Navarre)
- Brochure promoting fall 1998 community circles (Jim Lenfestey)
- Meeting of stakeholders to develop strategies for building public support for the mediation of the NAACP educational adequacy lawsuit (Barb Bearman and Matt Little)

Coming Together As a Community

A Metro-Wide Conversation About The
Challenges of Education, Housing and
Segregation

Sponsored By:
The Community Circle Collaborative
and the
Education and Housing Equity Project

Introduction to The Community Circle Collaborative Process

Thank you for ~~agreeing to~~ participate in the Community Circle Collaborative Process, a guided conversation focused on the challenges of Segregation, Housing and Education in the Twin Cities.

Across the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region, perhaps dozens of groups similar to yours will be conducting conversations about this issue. Your participation means that you are part of a small but significant community of people who are taking action to address this difficult and important issue.

For at least three sessions of two hours each – over the course of three to five weeks – you will gather with other members of your circle to share opinions, facts and perspectives. The goal of these sessions is to fully discuss the issue from many points of view and to develop ^{potential} solutions as you and members of your circle see fit. Eventually, we hope to share some of these solutions with public policy makers so that the entire region may benefit from this process.

Before you begin your conversation, please read this guidebook as completely and thoroughly as possible. While it does not cover every perspectives, the guidebook provides background that can help you more fully understand the issue and can assist you in discussing ~~it~~ ^{them} more completely.

How The Circle Process Works

In many cultures, circles are symbols of equality, fairness and completeness. The Community Circle Process has been designed with these qualities in mind. However, ^{we need} your cooperation ~~is~~ ~~required~~ if your Community Circle experience is to be satisfactory. KEEP

In the early days of American Democracy, communities held town hall meetings or sat around pot-bellied stoves or spinning wheels to discuss major issues. Communities were smaller and more homogenous, and the various members of the community usually knew each other well.

The pros and cons of those early American meetings were essentially the same: homogeneity bred greater agreement and

CK-spelling

less conflict; however, other voices in the community -- those of women, slaves, Native Americans, the poor, and immigrants outside the mainstream -- were seldom heard.

As American ^dDemocracy has grown to include a wider variety of individuals, the need to broaden discussion about major issues affecting the nation has increased. Today, ~~inclusivity~~ ^{inclusiveness} is highly prized in such discussions because the Jeffersonian vision of "an informed citizenry," which is essential to a healthy democracy, cannot be fully realized without it.

The Community Circle Collaborative Process is one way to sample the broadest possible spectrum of opinion within a community. A similar process has been used in many parts of the nation to help create a public voice about major issues. The Community Circles themselves are a refreshing change from the narrow and often restrictive discussions of the past and the competitive debates used in present-day political programs. In short, Community Circles are the wave of the future because they are cooperative, not competitive, ~~in nature~~.

Why a "Conversation" ?

Much of what we see in the media and in public meetings today cannot be called conversation for many reasons. Chief among them is the fact that advocacy of one point of view or another, at the expense of decorum, is an integral part of what is often called "positioning" or "posturing." This kind of communication has become an accepted fact in most of the media, but it ultimately leads to ^{public} cynicism and withdrawal from the political process.

On the other hand, to "converse" means to "share words with others" and carries the implication of equality of opportunity and status. A "conversation" is a sharing of ideas, thoughts, and perspectives intended to lead to ~~V~~ understanding. Unity of purpose is inherent in the word; a conversation should clear the air by honestly reflecting differences and similarities.

Agreement, however, is not necessary in order to have a successful conversation. What is important is listening, reflecting and speaking from both the head and heart. Mutual respect and a belief in the healing nature of sharing ideas across boundaries

of ethnicity, geography, socioeconomics and even language differences can go a long way toward making a conversation satisfactory. → successful.

One of the

The goal of the sponsors of this program is to institutionalize the art of guided conversation in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region area. We sincerely believe that solutions to serious and often divisive issues can be found if we put aside our fears and prejudices and work together, ~~to realize our dreams.~~

What The Process Requires From You

Your role as a participant in the Community Circle Collaborative Process includes the following requirements:

- A commitment to the entire 3-5-week meeting schedule
- A promise to share your thoughts honestly and respectfully
- A willingness to listen deeply to others
- A preference for collaboration rather than competition
- A desire to find common ground and creative solutions

What You Can Expect From The Process

When you invest your time and effort in the Community Circle Collaborative Process, you will receive:

- The opportunity to be heard by others
- Challenges to some of your beliefs, attitudes and assumptions
- Moments of great insight and inspiration
- Feelings of confusion and, at times, alienation
- A sense of accomplishment

How To Begin

1. Your facilitator has been trained to help your circle begin discussions. Please follow his/her guidelines as outlined at the beginning of each Community Circle meeting.
2. Read the materials in this guidebook before you begin discussions.
3. Please feel free to conduct your own research using the bibliography in the back or any other materials.

4. Please do not seek to dominate discussion or monopolize the floor at any time. Remember to be courteous.
5. Although the discussion period may vary depending on the size of each Community Circle, keep in mind that it is difficult to sustain sessions of more than two hours.

The Task Of The Community Circles

The Community Circle Collaborative meetings are gathered to discuss the following two central questions:

1. *What are the impacts of existing patterns of residential, economic and racial segregation on the educational achievement and life opportunities of Twin City area children and families?*
2. *What can or should we do, as individuals and as a community, to enhance the educational, housing and economic opportunities for all children in the Twin Cities area?*

These are important questions. The Twin Cities Metropolitan Region is moving toward a crossroads. We have a historic opportunity to confront many of the problems of urban decay that have already overwhelmed other metropolitan areas.

can we find a better word?

We hope that through conversations such as the one in which you are participating today, a greater understanding of these issues can emerge, along with new ideas for solutions.

Part One:

A Snapshot Of Where We Are Today

"What is the relationship between ~~and the impacts of~~ existing patterns of residential, economic and racial segregation ^{and} the educational achievement and life opportunities of Twin City area children?"

Every year when the list of America's most livable cities is published, the Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis are high on the list. The standards used to judge major metropolitan areas -- job growth, access to parks and recreation, good schools and social services, lower crime rates -- Minneapolis and St. Paul are superior to many other cities. In comparison to other areas, the Twin Cities is a wonderful place to live. Yet, we are not immune from the social problems that plague other cities.

This is particularly true of challenges related to segregation, poverty, housing and education:

Segregation & Poverty

- The proportion of people of color who live in poverty is higher in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region than any other central city in the nation. *our metro area?*
- In 1990, per capita income for the region's people of color averaged about \$8500, compared to nearly \$18,000 for whites.
- Less than half the jobs in Minneapolis pay what is considered a livable wage.
- Between 1980 and 1990, 67 percent of new jobs in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region were created in the suburbs.
- The poverty rate in Minneapolis is 18.5 percent; in St. Paul it is 16.7 percent; in the suburbs, it is 4.54 percent. *only?*
- Among African Americans, the poverty rate in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region is 37 percent, more than six times the rate for whites. For Native Americans, Asians, and Latinos, the rates are 40 percent, 32 percent and 19 percent, respectively.

2 → Because of segregation, only 25 percent of whites live in the central cities while over 80% of persons of color reside in the central cities (37)

*include
ANK*

- The highest poverty rate on a city-wide basis is among Asians living in St. Paul -- 6 out of every 10 lives in poverty.
- The United Way recently cited data revealing that the highest incidence of poverty in Minnesota occurs in specific neighborhoods of Minneapolis and St. Paul, ~~The study and concluded that~~ a disproportionate number of those living in poverty are women ^{with} and children and people of color.
- Between 1979 and 1989, the number of children living in poverty increased ~~4 percent, compared with a 1.4 percent increase in poverty in the general population.~~ ^{nearly three times as fast as the general population living in poverty}
- Over 73,000 people in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region suburbs currently live in poverty and the numbers are growing.
- About 60 percent of Minnesota families in poverty have at least one family member in the work force.

Housing

- According to the 1989 American Housing Survey, over 37,000 household in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing. (The federal government considers 30 percent to be affordable.)
- The percent of poor households in the Twin Cities paying excessive amounts for housing is greater than the national average.

*Need
bulletin on
disparities*

Please Note: More Housing Data Needed Here?

Education

- In Minneapolis, students of color make up 65 percent of the total student population; in St. Paul they ~~are~~ ^{comprise} 60 percent.
- In the 1995-1996 school year, 85 percent of the students in the Minneapolis Public Schools ~~were~~ ^{ed} receiving free or reduced lunches. In St. Paul, 75 percent of students of color and 35 percent of white students received free or reduced lunches.

Please note: More Education Data Needed ?

*move
need bulletins
on education*

Legal Issues

- A lawsuit filed by the Minneapolis chapter of the NAACP vs. the State of Minnesota alleges that schools in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region are "inadequate by design and chance."
- The St. Paul School District has also filed suit against the State of Minnesota alleging "inequity of resources" and unfair distribution of state funds for resources.
- ~~Both of these lawsuits are likely to be settled out of court in favor of the plaintiffs because of the overwhelming evidence in their favor.~~

① Also, plug in table here: Comparison of school districts showing the numbers of students of color, students below the poverty line, and education achievement levels.

SCHOOL

Place next to or near the bullets on education

The following charts, graphs and maps further illustrate the situation in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region today:

HOUSING

② 1. Distribution of Affordable Housing in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region Area

Place near bullets on housing

③ 2. Distribution of persons below the poverty line and people of color in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region area.

3. Minneapolis Infant Mortality Rates by Race

4. Minnesota Life Expectancy in Years by Gender and Race, 1980-1990

Place near bullets on poverty + race/segregation

POVERTY + SEGREGATION

Questions For Discussion

These data raise some questions for you to consider:

1. What do you think are the most significant problems facing your immediate community? The broader community?
2. Looking at the bullet points and charts provided above, is there any ~~data~~ ^{information} that surprises you?
3. Do you believe that the Twin Cities is racially and economically segregated? Do we have two (or more) separate societies? Why?
4. How does data about poverty, housing and communities of color relate to your neighborhood? Is it consistent with your experience?
5. What is the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region doing right? What is it doing wrong? Make two lists and compare them.
6. Do some people have more opportunities than others? Why?
7. Do you see life opportunities increasing or decreasing in your neighborhood?
8. What does racism mean to you? Do you believe the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region is a racist area?
9. What impact do you think personal racism has on the quality of life in the Twin Cities?
10. What impact do you think institutional racism has on the poverty, housing and education issues we are discussing?
11. What is your own neighborhood like in terms of race? Class? Ethnicity? National origin?

BEST
LOCATION
OF
THIS
BULLET 2

12. If you were to think of this circle meeting as your community, what characteristics would you say unite you as a group? What expectations do you have of each other?

Part Two: Creating a Vision for Our Future

Now that we've taken a look at the way things are today in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region, it is time to consider our vision for the future. Each individual's vision may be different, but in approaching this exercise, we invite you to think broadly about the community. In fact, we invite you to dream a little what about the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region could be like, what resources would be needed to realize the vision, and what policies or programs would need to be ^{added,} changed, or eliminated.

The assumptions underlying this visioning process are simple:

1. All of us want the best for ourselves and each other.
2. Our success as a community depends on the success of most, if not all, others. *is this ok?*
3. As a community, we have yet to realize our greatest aspirations and must work together to fulfill our potential.

Questions To Facilitate Visioning Our Future

- What do you/we want the community to look and feel like five years from now? 10 years? 20 years?
- What are the underlying values that will be needed to sustain the community in the future?
- What do you need from your community? What does your community need from you?
- In what ways is your community tied to the well-being of other communities in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region?
- As a group, can you articulate a scenario of the future that meets the needs of everyone?

Part Three: What Can We Do?

Three Perspectives

"What can we do, or should we do as individuals and as a community, to enhance the life opportunities (especially ~~and educational~~ ~~educational, housing and economic opportunities~~) for all ^{achievement} children in the Twin Cities area?"

In the pages that follow, three of the major perspectives on the above question are presented. These perspectives are ^{represent different and to some extent conflicting points of view, but are} in ^{not entirely} no way mutually exclusive; nor are they the only ones circulating in the marketplace of ideas. Our purpose in selecting them is to stimulate discussion and provide a framework for your conversation and deliberation.

^{presenting them? -> deeper} They may not be yours or represent the views of any of the participants in your circle group. They do attempt to the essence of some of the public policy choices most frequently expressed by Twin Cities public leaders

Perspective One **Strengthening The Core : Building From Within**

This perspective emphasizes the need to reinvest in the core city as a means of strengthening the entire Twin Cities Metropolitan Region. Through such reinvestment and a re-commitment to the core, issues such as poverty, education and housing will be ameliorated at the neighborhood level.

Key Premises

- Impoverished communities and schools are the result of unequal distribution of resources.
- Schools ^{designed by choice} that are constituted around particular cultural identity by choice improve student self-esteem.
- It is not necessary for children of color to sit next to white children in order to academically achieve.

- Community schools are best equipped to reflect the cultural and community values of students and their parents.
- Neighborhood schools will enable more parent and community participation in the schools.
- Revitalizing the core -- through a reallocation of resources both public and private -- will improve the housing and economic opportunities for minorities and central city residents.
- Desegregation through busing erects significant barriers to a strong sense of community and involvement.

Perspective One --

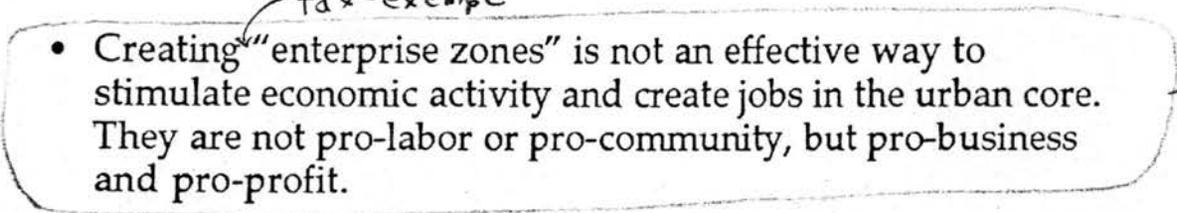
Advocates Say...

- A stable core is ~~key~~ essential for a stable region.
 - If the region cooperates to improve schools, create jobs, and revitalize neighborhoods in the central cities, people will become more self-sufficient in the long run.
 - Rather than spending millions to create new housing and duplicate existing infrastructure in the suburbs, we should use the tremendous human and economic resources in the central cities.
 - If we help rebuild neighborhoods in the core, people of all income levels will have wider choices of where to live. This will help to attract and retain middle income people. *Strong neighborhoods can as widen the housing choices of low income people if tied to a strategy to deconcentrate poverty.*
 - People of color need to build a sense of community around their unique history^{ies} and culture. Moreover, they need to maintain whatever political representation they have. *city diversify housing and*
 - Many people prefer to live in segregated neighborhoods and go to segregated schools as long as ^{those} neighborhoods and schools have ~~equal~~ ^{equal} resources ^{their} to those in other parts of the region *(or, the same?)*
 - Parents, teachers, students and educators must build bridges that ensure the success of locally based schools. *Locally based schools are best suited to accomplishing this.*
 - Hiring more teachers and staff of color who are from the community^{ies} would help students feel a greater sense of self esteem and ~~positively impact~~ ^{they are serving} their academic performance.
 - Neighborhood schools will help to stabilize education and retain the middle class tax base. *community would therefore improve*
- more of the*

Perspective One:

Critics Say...

- Pumping money into the central cities is not the answer. Many of these neighborhoods are so impoverished that revitalization is all but impossible.
- In order to create more regional stability, our communities need to be more economically and racially diverse. Building up infrastructure in the cities will do little good if our communities are still divided along race and class lines.
- The only way to break down the racial hierarchy that currently exists is to integrate. People of color need to enter into the economic and social mainstream where they will have more access to good jobs and good schools. Equally important, whites must diversify and expand their understanding of people of color. If we continue to stay apart, racial stereotypes will fester.
- People need to have real choices about where they live. Since a majority of the new jobs are in the suburbs, and because we have limited mass transit in the region, more low-income housing should be developed in the suburbs.
- Creating "tax-exempt enterprise zones" is not an effective way to stimulate economic activity and create jobs in the urban core. They are not pro-labor or pro-community, but pro-business and pro-profit.
- Reinforcing existing, segregated communities will continue to perpetuate the cycle of socio-economic/racial isolation.



PUT AS CRITIQUE OF PERSPECTIVE 2

these two are very similar

Perspective Two: Market Choice and Individual Responsibility

This perspective emphasizes that it is not the job of government or institutions to improve life opportunities for citizens. It is up to individuals and families to determine their own future. Historically, families have thrived by creating self-sufficiency. Government intervention has tended to create debilitating dependencies.

Key Premises

- We can create opportunities for people with limited resources by subsidizing low-income households with vouchers for education and housing. *for tax credits*
- Promoting *choice and* competition between schools will enhance educational achievement.
- *Providing housing vouchers will make it easier for* low income families *to voluntarily* move to the suburbs, creating demand for affordable housing that will generate a market response (new const.)
- Private institutions (churches, foundations, businesses) are better equipped than government to *serve their local* communities. *meet the needs of*
- In order to promote achievement, we must reward self-sufficiency, *and hard work.* *entrepreneurship*
- Public sector social welfare programs divert capital that could otherwise be invested in job creation in core communities.
- The breakdown of the family negatively impacts educational achievement and economic ~~opportunity~~ advancement.
- A return to traditional values by communities of color would do more to restore their viability than any other single remedy.
- ~~Encourage microenterprise and entrepreneurship.~~

Perspective Two:

Advocates Say...

- The private market system is faster, more creative and flexible than plodding bureaucratic government in responding to job, housing, and education markets. *efficient*
- Local ~~level~~ communities *not regional, state or federal bureaucracies,* are best equipped to answer the needs of their constituents.
- Parents ~~are better equipped/~~ should have ultimate control over their children's schooling (including where their children go to school)

or • Public sector social welfare programs divert capital that could otherwise ^{be} invested in job creation in core communities.

• ~~Allow~~ ^{The} housing market ^{is self-regulating} to regulate itself; if demand is great enough, low-income housing will be developed by those who see economic opportunity in meeting these needs.

• Residence in the more affluent communities must be earned through merit and hard work and should not be granted by government fiat.

• Segregation and Intergration ^{have} ~~also~~ both been tried and have failed because ^{both} ~~both~~ involved too much government interference. ^{they}

or Let the housing market be self-regulating; - - - -

Perspective Two

Critics Say...

- Less than half of the jobs in Minnesota pay a livable wage. Over 60 percent of Minnesota's families in poverty have at least one person in the work force. If we want to create less dependency on the government, we have to create a market system that allows responsible people to sustain themselves.

- Discrimination remains a significant barrier for people of color, no matter how "responsible" they are.

- Poor people do not have the time or money to lobby for their interests and rights. The wealthy, on the other hand, ~~abuse~~ ^{do have the time and money} their power and continue to grow richer at the expense of the poor. ^{they}

- ^{Public subsidies} Subsidies for middle and upper income people already exist (e.g., home mortgage deduction and social security). a subsidy is a subsid whether it comes in the form of a check or a tax deduction. This perspective simply seeks to eliminate lower income families from public support.

- The problem with social welfare policies in this country is not that we've done too much -- creating dependency -- but that we've done too little. Assistance to the poor has declined substantially in the last 20 years and continues to do so.

- The private market system is not designed to accommodate the social welfare needs of people ^{living} below the poverty line.

- Basic human rights, such as housing and education, cannot be left to the whim of the marketplace.

- Race and socioeconomic discrimination operate to eliminate the efficiency of free markets.

compare to
 the other way
 - my view

Perspective Three: Creating Opportunities Region-Wide

This perspective emphasizes dispersing poverty through ~~Twin Cities Metropolitan Region~~ ^{metropolitan-wide} strategies for jobs, housing, transportation and education.

Key Premises

- The current concentration of poverty cannot be ameliorated without a more equitable distribution of affordable housing.
- Racial segregation results from a combination of lack of choice and racial discrimination in the housing markets.
- Segregated communities result in segregated schools, segregated churches, segregated work forces, and segregated social gatherings. Segregation does not further our ^{democratic} objectives.
- Schools segregated by race and income negatively impact educational achievement.
- Residential segregation by race and income isolates communities from the opportunity structure. ^{include def. in glossary (appendix)}
- A ~~Twin Cities Metropolitan Region~~ ^{metropolitan} wide program for low- and moderate-income housing prevents the need for busing as a remedy for segregation.
↳ or precludes?

Perspective Three

Advocates Say...

- Research shows that educational achievement and life opportunities for both white students and students of color improve in desegregated school settings.
- Achievement gains are strongest when desegregation begins in the early grades and is implemented under a ~~Twin-Cities Metropolitan Region-wide~~ ^{metropolitan-} plan.
- People who live ^{and learn} in economically and racially diverse ^{environments} ~~areas-~~ better understand others who are unlike themselves and are better prepared to work and function in a diverse society. Lack of experience with the racial "other," in turn, contributes to the mystification of racial differences and the perpetuation of stereotypes, ^{and} fears, and ignorance.
- The opportunity to live in integrated, middle-income neighborhoods appears to boost employment among adults and school performance among children, ^{from low income - minority background}
- Given the location of most new jobs, economic opportunity would increase if low-income housing were more available in the suburbs.

Evidence from [housing demonstrations in] other metropolitan regions suggest that...

Further Questions To Consider

As you ~~move toward closure of your conversation~~, we'd like you to consider the following questions in relation to each of the three perspectives we have provided, as well as any you have developed: *deliberate on the choices the public needs to make about the Twin Cities' future,*

- What is appealing about this perspective?
- What are the downsides of this perspective?
- Can you tell a story illustrating this perspective?
- Who is hurt by this perspective? Who is helped by it?
- What are the long-term costs and consequences of this perspective?

Harvesting A Public Voice

In this concluding section, we ask you to recognize and articulate two things in order to move forward: *areas of continued difference*; and *areas of agreement*. Both are important aspects of harvesting a public voice. Policy makers need to know where conflict and agreement exists so that they may understand the boundaries and public sensitivities of an issue. To facilitate your deliberation, please consider the following:

1. What are the areas of tension or conflict that seem to be intractable when conversing about this issue?

Please write down the issues where conflict has been unresolved. Be as thorough as you can about defining these areas of difference.

2. Are there areas of agreement on the issues themselves and on potential solutions?

Please write down the issues *and areas of action* where agreement exists. Be as thorough as you can about defining these areas of agreement, or "common ground" that would allow the group to recommend action.

At a public forum and citizen's summit scheduled in the near future, a representative from your community circle will be asked to share your findings and conclusions with decision makers from the region. In this way, you and your group will make a valuable contribution to evolving public policy on segregation, housing and education in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region.

Also, try to identify the "trade-offs" or compromises participants would be willing to make to achieve a *positive* direction or action *aimed at the public good.*

Something like this

ask that 22
deliberate on the choices the public needs to make about the Twin Cities' future,
through your discussions - other perspectives that

individual and collective

Community Circles can add much to the quality of life by providing a framework for getting to know your neighbors and stimulating ~~public and public~~ involvement. In addition, Community Circles can be used as social laboratories for discovering the answers to the most important question of all: How Should We Live Together?

in addressing important community issues.
public?

We sincerely hope you have enjoyed this process and that you will use it again.

ALTERNATIVE =

for helping citizens move from personal opinions to informed public judgment about the difficult issues facing our communities.

School District	1994-95 School Year % Students of Color	% Students Eligible Free/Reduced Lunch	MN Basic Skills Test % Pass Rate (1996)	
			Math	Reading
Minneapolis	61.0	61	43	38
St. Paul	51.9	56	52	44
Brooklyn Center	32.6	44	64	53
Richfield	20.3	22	71	62
Robbinsdale	15.3	22	71	-
West St. Paul	15.1	16	67	61
Bloomington	14.9	16	79	65
Columbia Heights	14.0	31	75	71
Roseville	12.6	18	80	72
Burnsville	11.4	13	74	65
Mounds View	8.2	10	86	71
Rosemount-Apple Valley	7.9	9	78	68
N. St. Paul-Maplewood	7.3	17	73	61
Wayzata	6.6	7	87	71
Shakopee	6.3	15	68	61
Anoka-Hennepin	6.1	15	70	52
Eden Prairie	5.8	4	91	79
Edina	4.8	2	95	88

The inadequacy of public education for Minneapolis children is the direct result of the concentrated poverty and racial segregation which exists in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

The State of Minnesota is permitting and maintaining a public school system in Minneapolis that is segregated on the basis of race and socioeconomic status. The Minneapolis public schools are separate from the school systems in most of the surrounding suburbs in the concentration of students living in poverty and students of color. The growing concentration of poverty in Minneapolis, which is correlated with racial segregation in residential patterns, is the basis for the inadequate education available to students in the Minneapolis public schools.

The 1954 landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown* established, as a matter of law, that segregated schools are not equal to non-segregated schools. Therefore, the segregated education in the Minneapolis public schools is, as a matter of law, unequal and unconstitutional. Moreover, this segregated and unequal education in the Minneapolis public schools represents an inadequate education under the education and equal protection clauses of the Minnesota Constitution.

The Minneapolis NAACP's class-action lawsuit argues that children in the Minneapolis public schools are receiving an inadequate education not only as a matter of law, but also as a matter of fact.

Minneapolis public schools enroll a far greater proportion of children from poor households and children from neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty. This concentration of poverty leads, in turn, to a concentration of social, physical, economic and child development problems that harm both the schools and the students. Carried into the school, concentrated poverty directly results in lower school achievement, wholly without regard to considerations of race. Racial segregation, on top of concentrated poverty, further exacerbates these problems and worsens educational outcomes.

Because of this extraordinary concentration of students living in poverty, the Minneapolis public schools operate at a severe disadvantage compared with suburban school districts in meeting the educational needs of all students — not only those who are poor, but those who are not. The sheer proportion of students living in poverty imposes enormous educational burdens on the individual students, teachers, classrooms and schools within the district. These burdens, which are substantially worsened by racial segregation, have deprived all students in the Minneapolis public

Per Capita Income for Metropolitan Area

	<u>1979</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>% Change</u>
African American	9,100	8,800	-3.5%
American Indian	6,800	8,200	+20.1%
Asian	9,400	8,300	-12.1%
Latino	8,400	9,100	+8.4%
White	14,800	17,900	+21.3%

(Source: Urban Coalition 1993)

School District Composition in Center Cities (% of enrollment)

<u>Minneapolis</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>Change in %</u>
Low-income*	33%	52%	+19%
Students of color	34%	59%	+25%
Whites	66%	41%	-25%
<u>St. Paul</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>Change in %</u>
Low-income*	28%	55%	+27%
Students of color	29%	49%	+20%
Whites	71%	51%	-20%

*denotes students eligible for free or reduced lunch

(Source: Myron Orfield, Metropolitics)

Children in Poverty (changes from 1979 - 1989)

<u>Minneapolis</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>Change in %</u>
African American	38.5	53.9	+15.4
American Indian	48.9	66.3	+17.4
Asian	49.0	55.8	+6.8
Latino	31.3	40.6	+9.3
White	10.3	12.9	+2.6
Total Population	18.0	30.6	+12.6

<u>St. Paul</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>Change in %</u>
African American	33.7	54.2	+20.5
American Indian	24.3	46.4	+22.1
Asian	57.1	68.9	+11.8
Latino	24.3	30.2	+5.9
White	9.9	11.8	+1.9
Total Population	14.4	26.9	+12.5

<u>Metropolitan Area</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>Change in %</u>
African American	34.1	50.6	+16.5
American Indian	35.2	53.3	+18.1
Asian	26.6	39.3	+12.7
Latino	18.8	23.3	+4.5
White	5.6	6.4	+0.8
Total	7.5	11.4	+3.9

(Source: Urban Coalition 1993)

Poverty Rates (changes from 1979 - 1989)

<u>Minneapolis</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>Change in %</u>
African American	30.2	40.5	+10.3
American Indian	41.1	53.9	+12.8
Asian	39.9	45.7	+5.8
Latino	28.3	28.9	+0.6
White	10.7	11.7	+1.0
Total Population	13.5	18.5	+5.0

<u>St. Paul</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>Change in %</u>
African American	25.7	39.2	+13.5
American Indian	23.4	39.2	+15.8
Asian	47.7	60.5	+12.8
Latino	21.0	25.6	+4.6
White	8.9	10.2	+1.3
Total Population	10.9	16.7	+5.8

<u>Metropolitan Area</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>Change in %</u>
African American	26.4	37.1	+10.7
American Indian	29.9	40.6	+10.7
Asian	23.9	32.3	+8.4
Latino	17.3	19.4	+2.1
White	5.7	5.8	+0.1

(Source: Urban Coalition 1993)

**How the Twin Cities Compares with Other Large Cities
for Poverty and People of Color**

Poverty Rates for People of Color in Central Cities

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Central Cities</u>	<u>Poverty Rate for People of Color</u>
1	Mpls/St. Paul	44.6
2	Miami	43.1
3	Milwaukee	41.6
4	Pittsburgh	40.7
5	Cincinnati	38.8

Poverty Rates for People of Color in Metropolitan Areas

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Central Cities</u>	<u>Poverty Rate for People of Color</u>
1	Milwaukee	39.3
2	Pittsburgh	35.0
3	Mpls/St. Paul	34.7
4	Cincinnati	32.1
5	Detroit	31.1

(Source: Met Council -- 1990 Census Data)

EDUCATION & HOUSING EQUITY PROJECT
'CHOICES FOR COMMUNITY'
COMMUNITY CIRCLES PROJECT
1997 REPORT

During 1997, EHEP established the Community Circle Collaborative, a metro-wide dialogue project that engaged over 500 citizens from 35 different municipalities in informed public conversations focused on the challenges of school achievement, housing integration and racial/economic equity in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

These discussions included:

- 1) Twenty-five 'community circles,' each composed of 5-20 participants meeting between three and six times (approximately two hours for each meeting) during the months of March through June. These circles were sponsored by a wide variety of organizations and were convened in central city, suburban and outlying communities. Approximately 25% of the 350 or so participants were people of color.
- 2) A Metropolitan Citizens Forum held at Macalester College Chapel in May moderated by George Latimer and Vivian Jenkins Nelsen, two noted facilitators and leaders on issues of race relations and segregation. Martha McCoy, director of the Study Circles Resource Center, offered a national commentary. 125 citizens and public community leaders, including representatives of community circles who shared the results of their circle deliberations attended the forum.
- 3) A set of town meetings in Minneapolis and St. Paul public schools in September held in conjunction with the National Summit on Race Relations and America's Public Schools and co-sponsored with the President's Commission on Race and the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Approximately 50 adults and youth participated in facilitated, nominal group discussions.

EHEP and its Community Circle Collaborative partners accomplished these dialogues through a sequence of organizing and supporting activities, including the following:

- 1) A sponsor kick-off event *Beyond Busing: A Metrowide Dialogue on the Challenges of Education and Housing Segregation* held in December 1996 at the St. Louis Park City Council Chambers. Over 100 citizens representing nearly as many organizations attended the forum, which introduced the project and provided an overview of the issues. The forum included presentations by 10 civic and government leaders. A sponsor's packet was provided to each participant. Following the forum, approximately 50 different groups (school districts, churches and synagogues, libraries, neighborhood councils, community-based non-profits, housing groups, human rights commissions, chambers of commerce and municipalities) signed pledges of participation, agreeing to sponsor or convene at least one community circle.

- 2) Publication of a newsletter "*Beyond Busing*" in January 1997 to draw attention to the project, announce upcoming activities, provide forms for sponsor, facilitator and participant sign-up, and to cover the "who, what, why, where, how and when" of the project. The newsletter was mailed out to approximately 500 interested individuals and organizations.
- 3) Facilitator training workshops held in February at Augsburg College. Approximately 85 people with backgrounds or experience in facilitating small groups were recruited and received training on the issues and process to be used in the community circles discussions. A team representing the lead partners of the Community Circle Collaborative delivered the training. A facilitator's packet was provided to each participant. Each volunteer moderator/facilitator signed a pledge of participation. Facilitators were subsequently matched with community circles convened by the sponsors. The Community Circle Collaborative worked with the Minnesota Facilitators Network to identify and recruit moderator/facilitators. In addition, many of the sponsor/conveners provided their own experienced facilitators. To facilitate communication between community circle study groups, e-mail services were offered to facilitators at no cost by the Twin Cities Free Net.
- 4) Research and preparation of an issues/discussion guide *Choices for Community: A Regional Conversation about the Challenges of Education, Housing and Segregation in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area*. In the preparation of this document, the Education and Housing Equity Project was assisted by a review team representing the Collaborative; a CURA-funded graduate intern from the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs; and by noted journalist, editorial writer and playwright Syl Jones.
- 5) The Collaborative also produced a resource bibliography that includes over 125 publications and articles to help inform the public discussions. The Librarians for Social Responsibility offered to assist in making these resources available for community circle use at branch county libraries. In addition, the Collaborative supplied resource experts who were available to meet with community circles upon request. Community circle participants were also invited to local conferences and seminars, such as the Institute on Race and Poverty's Spring Conference on housing, education and persistent segregation, to augment their inquiry and knowledge of the issues they were discussing.
- 6) A concluding forum *Coming Together: A Regional Conversation on Schools, Housing and Segregation*, co-sponsored with the Macalester College Department of Urban Studies, the Study Circles Resource Center and the Minnesota Public Radio Civic Journalism Initiative (described above). This event brought together community circle representatives, interested citizens and invited community leaders to achieve a metro-wide conversation and share the results of the individual community conversations.
- 7) An evaluation survey of the community circle sponsors, facilitators, reporters and participants to learn what worked well and what needs to be changed before a second

round of community conversations is held. All participating circles completed the survey, and a summary report of the results has been prepared. A focus group meeting with community circle representatives will be held in the near future.

- 8) A summary report of the community circles' findings, conclusions and recommendations to be made available for public distribution in early 1998. At the conclusion of their deliberations, the community circles submitted over 100 pages of reports. The substance of these reports, along with the results of the fall town meetings at Minneapolis and Saint Paul Schools, are being synthesized and integrated into a summary report. The final document will report on the substance of the conversations, but will also include a critique of the discussions and process recommendations for a second round of discussions and action steps in 1998.
- 9) Video and audio documentation of the project, which was provided by a community circle partner, the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Project.
- 10) The project network directory, which now includes over 1,000 participants and interested citizens.

The results of the community circle conversations are already being used and have had some impact on the Twin Cities civic community:

1. The Project was a major contributor to the winter 1997 edition of Wilder Foundation's *Community Matters*. The entire issue is devoted to "Race and Community." The Project has also received media coverage by:
 - The *Star Tribune of the Twin Cities*
 - The *U.S. News & World Report*
 - Minnesota Public Radio's Midday Program (KNOW-FM)
 - Community Radio Station KFAI in Minneapolis
 - Minneapolis Community Television Network, Channel 34
 - A radio program of the Black Leadership Forum (Yvonne Scruggs) in Washington, D.C.
 - The national newsletter of the Study Circles Resource Center
 - Several Twin Cities-based neighborhood and suburban newspapers

We have also received a request from NBC News for coverage of the second round of conversations in 1998. Our project will also be the subject of a major display at the Minneapolis Public Library in January and February 1998.

2. Project staff and participants were invited to be contributors to two other public conversations in September 1997: The Peoples Summit, broadcast by KTCA as part of its Block by Block television series, and the Metropolitan Initiatives Forum, cosponsored by several Twin Cities foundations and the Citizens League.
3. Several new community-wide discussion initiatives have begun which are inspired by or modeled after the community circle discussions we initiated. One prominent

example is the dialogue and action project begun by Interfaith Action, a social justice ministry of church congregations in the greater Minneapolis area. EHEP assisted them in convening metro interfaith forums on jobs, housing, sprawl, race and poverty. Their discussion guide and "issues map" are taken directly from the Community Circles project. The chief organizers, planners and resource speakers of the Interfaith Dialogues were participants, sponsors or facilitators in the Community Circles project. Partly in response to our initiative, education and segregation issues have been added to their agenda.

4. Following completion of the first round of community circle conversations, EHEP board members and staff, and community circle partners, were invited to:
 - Make presentations to the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership at its annual conference, and the West Metropolitan Education Program (consortium of nine suburban school districts and the Minneapolis school district) at one of its quarterly board/superintendent meetings;
 - Meet with and provide input to the mediation consulting team (CMI) for the NAACP v. State of Minnesota educational adequacy law suit;
 - Participate in updating the Minnesota Milestones measures for state and metropolitan outcomes in education, housing and multicultural diversity; and
 - Develop strategies at the Metropolitan Housing Summit cosponsored by the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing.

EHEP staff and board members have also participated in and helped lead discussions at various conferences focusing on housing and education issues (e.g., the DFL Education Foundation's conference on closing the income gap and the Institute on Race and Poverty's conference on overcoming spatial barriers to welfare reform).

5. EHEP has been contacted by National Days of Dialogue to help promote conversations on race relations in the Twin Cities. The National Days of Dialogue on Race Relations is a coalition effort of national organizations to encourage and highlight dialogue on race relations during the week leading up to Martin Luther King Day. We have also been contacted by the St. Paul Pioneer Press to advise and assist them in establishing a series of community discussions that that would be tied to a newspaper series they will be running on welfare reform and poverty in the Twin Cities.
6. Some of the community circles continue to meet (e.g., the Golden Valley Circle sponsored by the Black History Month Committee of the Human Rights Commission, working with the Twin West Chamber of Commerce and Hopkins School District). EHEP is also monitoring action initiatives that spring from local community circles (e.g., churches getting involved in fair housing initiatives).

7. EHEP formally supported and helped develop MICAH's proposal to HUD for a Fair Housing Initiatives Grant. In the category of "education and outreach – reducing suburban tensions," MICAH was one of only five non-profits in the nation to receive funding. EHEP will be a collaborating partner in this project, which will use theatre as a vehicle for engaging the public in the issues we care about. Other community and congregational organizing groups (e.g., St. Paul Ecumenical Action Council) are approaching us about collaboration in 1998.
8. We have also received requests from local communities (e.g., Maplewood Human Rights Commission) and academic institutions (e.g., Twin Cities area seminaries' joint course on "Solving Urban Problems" and the Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs' Metro Urban Studies Term program) to use our discussion guide as part of their course curricula and community education and outreach initiatives.
9. Also as a result of our accomplishments in 1997, EHEP has been invited to co-sponsor and provide technical assistance and policy direction in developing a comprehensive fair housing training conference for suburban planning officials in 1998.

Our major thrust at the close of 1997 is to plan and organize a second round of community circle conversations and forums in 1998. This round will be built on the results of the first round. The circle discussions will culminate with a Citizens Summit co-sponsored with the Minnesota Meeting and the Minnesota Public Radio Civic Journalism Initiative, and a public action agenda for 1999.

Proposal to the Cowles Media Foundation

A. ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

History & Mission

The Education & Housing Equity Project (EHEP) was created in early 1995 by a group of education and housing advocates who shared a belief in the pressing need to link the issue of school desegregation/integration with the broader issue of segregated housing and neighborhoods. The organization's mission is to act as a catalyst to build broad-based coalitions and engage the community in public conversations and advocacy for the purpose of promoting racially and economically inclusive communities that give families of all incomes, races, and ethnicities access to schools and housing throughout the metropolitan area.

EHEP pursues its mission through a three-part strategy:

- (1) Coalition building and advocacy;
- (2) Community education and public conversation; and
- (3) Assisting communities in becoming more inclusive and integrated.

Activities & Accomplishments

In its first year, EHEP was awarded a start-up grant to develop the organization and hire part-time staff in late 1995. Since that time, EHEP has worked to develop itself as an organization (including obtaining 501(c)(3) status and beginning a process of strategic planning) and collaborated with other organizations and individuals to determine the best strategies for making progress on these issues, which are as complex and daunting as they are immediate.

With staff time limited to a part-time Coordinator's position, EHEP has been involved in the following activities and accomplished the following over the past two years:

Coalition building. EHEP spent its first year in numerous discussions and collaborations. These have led to several specific coalition projects as well as a fuller understanding of the need for an organization that can link these two issues – housing and education – and help develop the desperately needed consensus and leadership to move forward. After several months of one-on-one interviews with a broad range of community leaders and experts in the fields of housing, education, anti-racism, and metropolitan stability, EHEP brought together over 30 organizations to begin the process of building a broad-based coalition that can work on these combined issues. EHEP has also helped expand the base and scope of existing coalitions by connecting the coalitions with related organizations and encouraging the linkage of housing and schools issues in their work. It has worked with a coalition focused on the re-drafting of the State Board of Education's desegregation rule, for example, and linked that

school issue with broader issues of housing segregation and metropolitan stability. Similarly, it has encouraged a coalition working on a fair housing testing campaign in suburban Hennepin County to frame this issue in the context of schools and broader life opportunities.

Community education & conversation. In February 1996, EHEP partnered with the Minneapolis Initiative Against Racism, the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, and the Minnesota Fair Housing Center to create the Community Circle Collaborative (CCC). This is a metro-wide dialogue project in which at least 500 citizens from all walks of life have joined together - 5-15 at a time - in study circles held throughout the metro area to discuss two central questions:

- "What are the impacts of existing patterns of residential, economic and racial segregation on the educational achievement and life opportunities of Twin Cities area children and families?" and
- "What can or should we do, as individuals and as a community, to enhance educational success, and housing and economic opportunities for *all* children in the Twin Cities area?"

The CCC is now a broad-based collaboration of community-based organizations, public staff and officials, and individuals working in a variety of fields, including anti-racism, housing, education, social justice, religion, law, and social research. The early partners included: the Minneapolis Initiative Against Racism; Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton; Toward Tomorrow Together (a St. Paul area anti-racism coalition); the Wilder Foundation; the St. Paul Dept. of Human Rights; the MN Churches Anti-Racism Initiative (of the MN Council of Churches, the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches, and St. Paul Area Council of Churches); the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAH); the Suburban Hennepin Anti-Racism Coalition; and the Institute on Race & Poverty. The Collaboration has been coordinated by the Director of EHEP, Dick Little.

During its second year, the Community Circle Collaborative has expanded to include more than 20 public, civic and community-based organizations that serve as the principal partners (see attached list). Each partner contributes its unique strengths or resources to the Collaborative, assuring a broad-based and comprehensive initiative.

The "Kick-Off" conference for potential sponsor groups and conveners of Community Circle study/discussion groups was held in December, 1996. It brought together representatives of nearly 100 different organizations and was highlighted in a Star Tribune Editorial. Recruitment of facilitators began in early 1997, with the assistance of such organizations as the Minnesota Facilitators Network, and concluded with two major facilitator training seminars organized by the Collaborative in February. Approximately 75 facilitators were trained and volunteered to be "matched" with community circles. Other members of the Collaborative helped prepare and review the discussion guide, Choices for Community: A Regional Conversation About Education, Housing, and Segregation, used by the Community Circles to help inform and focus

their discussions and deliberative process. Additional resources are being provided at metro area libraries with the assistance of Librarians for Social Responsibility.

Beginning in March, 1997, sponsors convened the community circles, in some cases pairing their circles with others to maximize diversity of participants and perspectives. Most circles have included between 6 and 20 individuals and have met four to six times for periods of two hours each. The MPR Civic Journalism Housing Forum Project helped to stimulate participation in the Community Circles. Some 50 Community Circles have been or are still being convened and many groups will be meeting into the summer months.

On May 29th, a forum titled "COMING TOGETHER: A Regional Conversation on the Challenges of Education, Housing and Segregation" was held at Macalester College. This event brought together representatives of different Community Circles meeting from throughout the metropolitan area to share the results of their small group discussions and to converse with each other about the issues they were charged to address. Selected community leaders, academic and business leaders, public elected and appointed officials, and the media were invited to listen and participate in the discussion. 154 citizens registered, and 122 citizens attended the Forum. The results of the Forum conversation were discussed the following day by the moderators, George Latimer and Vivian Jenkins Nelsen, on Minnesota Public Radio's Mid-Day Program.

Many Community Circles will also be convening local forums in their communities with representatives from their sponsor organizations as well as local policy makers, educators, community leaders and other members, to discuss the results of their deliberations. Finally, each Community Circle will prepare a written report of its findings and conclusions. These reports will be synthesized into a single document summarizing the results of the first round of Community Circle conversations. In addition, the various conversations, forums, and training events are being recorded for future use and public broadcast by the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program and Office of Film and Video.

Future plans for the Community Circles project include a second, expanded round of Community Circle discussions to be held in the Fall of 1997. This round will build upon the findings of the first round of community circle discussions and will include additional groups not represented in the Spring round, such as the business community. The discussions will be resourced by metro area libraries with assistance from Librarians for Social Responsibility and will be more clearly focused on issues of building more inclusive communities and moving the discussion to issue identification and action. EHEP and the Community Circle Collaborative will also co-sponsor a Citizens Summit with the Minnesota Meeting and Minnesota Public Radio. The Summit will use electronic key pad technology to elicit focused responses and discussion of specific issues and solutions from Community Circle participants on the best ways the metropolitan community can address issues of educational access and achievement, and housing, community and school desegregation in the Twin Cities area.

Staffing

Dick Little holds the position of coordinator, and is responsible for all aspects of the project: organizing, coalition building, administration and community education. He works under the direction of a Board of Directors. Mr. Little has an extensive background in housing, education, race relations and use of study circles.

Board of Directors

The Board of EHEP consists of:

- Matthew Little, Vice President for Education, Minneapolis Branch NAACP, former Branch President, and longtime activist for racial and social justice;
- Barbara Bearman, member Executive Committee, Minneapolis Branch NAACP, and community activist who participated in the original Minneapolis school desegregation lawsuit in the early 1970's;
- Michael Anderson, East Side Neighborhood Development Company;
- Dr. Josie Johnson, Senior Fellow, College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota;
- Van D. Mueller of the University of Minnesota Department of Education Policy & Administration;
- Joy Sorensen Navarre, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing;
- Georgina Stephens, former President of the Minnesota State Board of Education;
- Jerry Timian, Director, First Call for Help, St. Paul United Way and member, St. Louis Park School Board; and
- Jim Hilbert, Co-Director of Programs, The Institute on Race & Poverty, University of Minnesota Law School.

B. PURPOSE OF GRANT

The Need

Public conversation about the possibilities for inclusive and integrated communities is rare, usually divisive and poorly informed, not conducted on a systematic or sustained basis, and with too few groups and individuals involved. We believe these adverse conditions imperil the chances of building inclusive and integrated communities in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

The principal danger is that public discourse is fast settling into simplistic, distorted polarities - neighborhood schools versus forced busing, quality education versus desegregation, core cities versus suburbs, rich versus poor and, of course, whites versus people of color (especially African-Americans). A climate of public opinion poisoned

by these divisions inevitably limits what policy makers (and, as we've found in our initial discussions, advocates and community leaders as well) feel they are able to do; we speculate that this climate even limits what judges feel *they* are able to do. In the current environment, the issues are captured by the most extreme and negative voices, which are then amplified by the media. The public sits and listens. Few want to get involved, because of the fear of getting burned in the heated controversy and because of the not-unreasonable judgment that little will be accomplished under these conditions.

There is a need to involve many groups and the broader public in civil, informed conversations about the possibilities for integrated communities. There is a need to expand the serious discussion of these issues beyond the courtrooms and the academic halls. As many people as possible in our community should be participating in the conversation about this issue. The discourse should not be limited to the invectives of "talk radio," the well-intentioned opinions of newspaper editorials, the sociological jargon of academia or the legal technicalities of the court.

The issue is developing rapidly. The question is who will be involved in the public discourse, and how will that discourse be framed. Unfortunately, past experience shows that these issues are easily polarized - and stay polarized. We believe that this familiar yet unfortunate outcome can be averted by organizing a wide range of groups that have a potential stake in integration, by engaging broad-based public participation in informed conversations about what segregation and integration involves and by offering assistance to communities as they seek to become better integrated.

Our Response

In response to this need, and based on the experience and information we have gathered over the past two years, we propose to continue and expand our work in coalition building and public education. We want to continue to take the public conversation about racial and economic segregation and integration to neighborhood centers, public libraries, school buildings, places of business, living rooms, and backyards - the places where ordinary people live their lives and where the real task of building inclusive communities must take place. We wish to encourage and inform public conversations that will help lead people to support the principle of integrated communities and to support efforts to move toward that goal. This organization seeks to educate the public - that is, to lead people to a more informed, effective understanding of the effects of segregation, why integration is important, and how it can be accomplished. Through this process, we hope that people come to understand the value of integration for themselves, for other people, and for society as a whole.

We have no illusions that all people will be persuaded, or that all will be willing to participate. There are, after all, real conflicts of interest and conflicts of values. These will not be dissolved by a little talk. But without a concerted effort to bring people together for informed and civil conversations, the most extreme voices will remain to

frame the issue. Public-spirited conversation will be drowned out by shrill debate; our common interests and values will get lost in the sea of opposition and conflict.

Our Project

We propose to continue and expand our current work on three fronts:

- Supporting and linking existing coalitions that are working on these related issues,
- Solidifying a broad-based coalition that can advocate for racially and economically integrated schools and housing throughout the metropolitan area, and
- Sponsoring informed public conversations that will advance the understanding and promotion of inclusive communities.

Each of these elements reinforces the others.

(1) Supporting and linking existing coalitions and organizations. There is a wide range of groups and individuals in the Twin Cities metro area with a potential stake in the cause of inclusive and integrated communities and schools. We have begun connecting and collaborating with many such groups in our first two years, and believe much can be accomplished simply by helping to support and expand existing coalitions that already focus on housing and school issues, but do not necessarily link those two issues in their work. We propose to continue our coalition-building efforts by focusing on faith communities, elected officials (legislators, school boards, city councils, mayors, county boards), neighborhood groups, parent organizations, teacher and staff groups, professional education programs, fair housing and housing advocacy groups, labor unions, business organizations, civic groups, civil rights organizations, human rights commissions, libraries, the media, and others.

These groups all have different interests and different understandings of what integration means for them. Moreover, although we have found that many of them agree on the importance of linking school desegregation/integration with the broader issue of housing, few actively combine those two issues in their work or in their recruitment of additional coalition members.

Over the past two years we have seen – and begun to build on – a great potential for such broad coalition development and support. Yet we also appreciate that it will require a labor-intensive effort to attract the participation of these groups in ways that are appropriate to their interests and capacities. Such an effort is critically needed, however, and these groups constitute the essential infrastructure through which we can develop the broader public understanding and support for integrated communities, and a broader response to the deepening socioeconomic and racial segregation in the Twin Cities area.

(2) Solidifying a broad-based housing/education coalition. The discussions and research we have undertaken so far have convinced us that the building of a single

coalition that can advocate for more integrated schools and communities in the Twin Cities will be challenging and slow-going. We have begun to lay the foundation for such a coalition, however – by working within existing coalitions, by listening closely to both mainstream and community leaders and citizens, and by educating them about the realities and options facing us – and will work to solidify this foundation over the next year. We plan to move from dialogue to issue identification and action, working with the same broad range of organizations and individuals we have identified over the past year, as well as others. As we have found already, once groups have the information and tools they need to delve into these issues and begin to see how the issues must be linked and pursued in coalition, there is a powerful movement to work together. The challenge over the next year will be to support these groups and individuals in figuring out *how* to further efforts toward resolving these issues in a way that is equitable, manageable, and capable of attracting widespread support.

(3) Creating informed public conversation and analysis. The issues of residential and school segregation have become increasingly polarized and complex. There is a palpable sense of ambivalence about what to do about segregation, as both past and present strategies seem inadequate, flawed, or even misdirected. This is true even in those communities most affected by segregation, at every level: citizens, educators, housing advocates, community leaders, and policy makers. Our first two years of work have given us a deep appreciation of this confusion, even as it has frustrated and worried us, and convinced us of the necessity for widespread and well-informed public conversations about these issues. Without such conversations, we fear the silence and ambivalence – to say nothing of poor public policy and lack of leadership – will continue. We propose, therefore, to continue creating such opportunities for education and dialogue at several levels:

- (a) The Community Circle Collaborative and the “Choices For Community” Study Circle Project.** As noted above, EHEP has been a leading partner in this metro-wide collaboration. Through the Community Circle Collaborative, EHEP continues to organize and support “community circles” throughout the metropolitan region, which will meet to explore the questions of how existing patterns of residential, economic and racial segregation affect the educational achievement and life opportunities of Twin Cities area children and families, and what we can do as individuals and as a community to enhance those opportunities. Our focus in the upcoming years will be on: (1) expanding the Collaborative to include a broader range of points of view from organizations, public institutions, and individuals throughout the metropolitan region, (2) promoting and publicizing the project, (3) providing research support to the community circles, (4) fundraising, (5) continuing to recruit and train community circle sponsors and facilitators, (6) evaluating and reporting on the outcomes of community circle deliberations, forums, and subsequent actions, and (7) developing an action component.

(b) **Community and Metro-wide Citizens Forums.** These forums will flow from the study circle conversations and will enable broader engagement and education of the public.

(c) **A ' Blue Ribbon ' Commission / Task Force.** This group will consist of public, business, church and community leaders selected by the Collaborative to focus on engagement and education of public policy and institutional leaders. This group, modeled after the Latimer Commission, which evaluated the implementation of the Metropolitan Livable Communities Act, will have as its major tasks:

- to use the results of the first round of Community Circle conversations to guide the second round of discussions;
- to use the results of both rounds to formulate findings and recommendations for public policy makers; and
- to develop additional strategies for educating and informing the public and "moving the community" to act collectively on needed change.

How Our Project Differs From Other Projects and Organizations

1. Its unique methodology of fostering conversation among disparate members of Twin Cities communities, not only to discuss issues and problems, but to develop action registers and common solutions that can be used by the community at large. Three discussion models for community deliberation have been combined to achieve this outcome: The Study Circles model of the Study Circles Resource Center; the National Issues Forums of the Kettering Foundation; and the Communities of Color Empowerment Model of the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership.

2. Its focus on the region as a whole and on consciously linking the issues of housing, education and employment. No other organization in the Twin Cities, nor nationally, is currently engaged in this kind of collaborative grassroots dialogue and mobilization effort linking housing and education, and race, locally and regionally.

3. Its use of a collaborative of diverse organizations, including principal organizing partners, media partners, funding partners, project coordinators, resource partners, and community circle sponsor organizations. This project brings together anti-racism organizations, along with civic and media organizations, to focus on challenging segregation in housing and education.

4. Its ability to measure success in tangible ways. These measures include the breadth and depth of participation in the study circles by local and regional citizens. Breadth and depth means diversity of participants in terms of ideas, race, place of residence, age, and economic status. It also includes number of participants and conversations. The project's impact will also be measured by having our findings and

recommendations publicly addressed by the State Legislature in its 1998 and 1999 legislative agenda.



Community Circle Collaborative

Community Circles, Round 2: Identifying Solutions
Autumn 1998

Communications Plan

This is an internal working document for use by
employees and board members of the
Education and Housing Equity Project.

Another version will be published for use by
Funding Partners, Organizing Partners and Resource Associates.

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Situation

The CCC organized a series of Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan community circle discussions in the spring of 1997. The CCC is made up of about twenty *organizing partners*, led by the Education and Housing Equity Project, and five justice-oriented *funding partners*. Many additional *resource associates* provided valuable assistance. Thirty-five community groups acted as *sponsors* to host the discussions. There were over 500 individual *participants*. The discussions focused on the following questions:

How does *racial and economic segregation of housing* **affect** *education and life opportunities* for people in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan community?

What *can and should citizens do*, individually and collectively, to **enhance** *education and life opportunities* for all people?

The process will continue with another series of community circle discussions in the Autumn of 1998. The 1997 series was successful. The 1998 series will build on that success, with the following improvements:

- More structure established by the organizing partners, with clearer expectations, to enhance productivity
- Greater diversity within discussion circles, and broader geographic reach
- Stronger action-orientation, connecting citizens to action opportunities

Objectives

The objectives of the communications program are to:

PHASE I

⇒ *Enroll* at least 1000 people from at least 75% of 7-county metro-area municipalities

PHASE II

⇒ *Catalyze* a concerned citizenry to action by provide factual data to inform the discussions

PHASE III

⇒ *Connect* people to action opportunities to create racially and economically inclusive communities

PHASE IV

⇒ *Analyze* vehicle and message effectiveness to provide directions for future campaigns

Audiences

Our key audiences are:

- ⇒ Past, committed and prospective funding partners
- ⇒ Past, committed and prospective organizing partners
- ⇒ Past, committed and prospective resource associates
- ⇒ Past, committed and prospective sponsors
- ⇒ Past, committed and prospective participants
- ⇒ Media and government contacts
- ⇒ Other influencers, such as related advocacy groups

Strategy:

Expand partnership base to lend credibility and infrastructure, share workload, and reach a wider scope of constituents to increase overall participation.

Communications will be tailored and targeted to specific audiences for maximum impact. A robust database of these key constituents will serve as the foundation for all of our communication efforts. We will maintain the database in electronic format to facilitate segmentation for targeted communications, as well as analysis and reporting on effectiveness of specific campaigns. We will refresh the database after each campaign to add new contacts, and update after each interaction. The database will support a fully integrated communication program including publicity, promotion and direct marketing in our areas of concern.

Each record will contain the following data:

- ⇒ Contact name
- ⇒ Addresses
- ⇒ Phone numbers
- ⇒ Facsimile numbers
- ⇒ Electronic mail addresses
- ⇒ Affiliations
- ⇒ CCC participation history
- ⇒ Special interests (education, housing, race, etc.)

Themes

We seek to gain mindshare in an information-overloaded and desensitized world. Copy will be terse, imagery will be innovative. Communications will be created not from our point of view, but from that of the recipients, avoiding hyperbole and patronization. We will continue to reinforce the already established key themes in all communications.

Strategy:
Create themes to demonstrate compatibility of mission with issue-oriented constituents; and to overcome objections to participation from non-involved citizens.

- ⇒ “The problems of segregation and concentrated poverty are *extremely severe* in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan area.”
- ⇒ “You *can* make a difference.”
- ⇒ “Citizens *have a responsibility* to their community.”
- ⇒ “The Community Circle Collaborative is *action-oriented*.”

Components

Phase	Process	Owner	Key Dates
I	Funding partner enrollment	DL	
	Organizing partner enrollment	DL	
	Resource associate enrollment		
	Sponsor enrollment		
	Participant enrollment		
	Sponsor guidance		
	Participant guidance		
	II	Discussion information	
III	Action connection		
IV	Evaluation	NC	

Vehicles and Media

Direct Marketing - Mailings

Promotion - We will host and attend events to create interest and gain enrollment. Face-to-face contact builds relationships with key stakeholders and influencers, increases organizational visibility. Our newsletter and website can work synergistically with other media for maximum effectiveness.

Publicity -

Media relations - We will cultivate relationships with individuals at media that reach our target audience to disseminate information.

Advocacy group relations -

There are five primary types of media: face-to-face, audio/video, audio, electronic/multimedia, and print. We will select media based on desired impact, target audience response to specific media, how those media influence perception and affect the message, budget, and how the media combine to build momentum.

Calendar

Create "user-friendly" participation materials for all levels

Collateral Material Production Schedule				
	Component	Owner	Completion Date	Budget
1	Brochure/Mailer			
2	Program Synopsis			
3	Backgrounder			
4	Sponsor Guide			
5	Facilitator Guide			
6	Discussion Workbook			
7				
8				

Evaluation

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Community Circle Collaborative

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Community Circle Collaborative

Fax: 627-2005 **Pages:** 1

Phone: **Date:** 04/17/98

Re: MEETING and RECEPTION **cc:** ✓ EHEP Board Members.
Friday, April 24, 1998 Matt Leighninger, SCRC

Urgent For Review Please Comment Please Reply Please Recycle

You are invited to a meeting and reception with staff of the national Study Circles Resource Center (SCRC) to be held at the Minnesota Church Center, Pillsbury and Franklin Avenues, in Minneapolis next Friday, April 24, 1998, at 3:30 p.m. SCRC representatives from Connecticut and Illinois will be in the Twin Cities to deliver a workshop on study circles at Hamline University on Saturday, which we are co-sponsoring with the local chapter of the Society of Dispute Resolution and Mediation Professionals.

The meeting and reception on Friday presents an opportunity to learn first-hand what is being accomplished through study circles around the country and to discuss upcoming plans for another metro-wide 'community circle' project on the challenges of reversing education and housing segregation here in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The Study Circles Resource Center has agreed to serve as a major national partner with us in this endeavor, which will move us from 'talk' to 'action.'

We want you to be in on the front end of this exciting new initiative and hope you will be able to join us. Kindly RSVP via phone, fax, e-mail or snail mail at one of the above numbers or addresses. We look forward to seeing you or your designated representative.

EDUCATION & HOUSING EQUITY PROJECT

FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TO	FROM:
Matt Little, EHEP President	Dick Little, Staff
COMPANY:	DATE:
	04/20/98
FAX NUMBER:	TOTAL NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER:
773-8141	2
PHONE NUMBER: SEE ATTACHED	SENDER'S REFERENCE NUMBER:
RE:	YOUR REFERENCE NUMBER:
Upcoming Board Meetings	

URGENT FOR REVIEW PLEASE COMMENT PLEASE REPLY PLEASE RECYCLE

NOTES/COMMENTS:

Board Meetings in April and May:

Special Board Meeting: Next Friday, April 24, 1998, 7:30 – 9:00 a.m., Conference Room 1, Minnesota Church Center.

This will be a special meeting of the Board with Matt Leighninger, Associate Director of the Study Circles Resource Center in Pomfret, Connecticut. SCRC has agreed to be a national partner in our community circles project. The meeting will focus on their assistance to us in preparing and publishing our discussion/study guide and on other opportunities for collaboration, including SCRC endorsement of our funding proposals to foundations. We will also discuss the study circles training event that SCRC is co-sponsoring with us on Saturday, April 25th at Hamline University.

Next Regular Board Meeting: Friday, May 15, 1998, 7:30 – 9:00 a.m., Minnesota Church Center, Conference Room 1. This will be our next business meeting. The agenda will be sent out in May.

Community Circle grapples with issues like housing, race

Richfield discussion group winds up weeks of meetings.

By Mike Westholder
Sun Newspapers

Racial diversity, housing and education were some of the issues a Richfield community circle group grappled with during the last several weeks.

Made up of Richfield and Minneapolis residents the community circle was one of several groups that gathered throughout the Twin Cities as part of "Conversations at the Crossroads." In Richfield, the conversations were sponsored by the city's Human Rights Commission and the Education and Housing Equity Project (EHEP), a non-profit organization with headquarters at Augsburg College, said Connie McDonald, a member of the Richfield Human Rights Commission.

"The purpose was to engage people in conversation to find community-based solutions for potential problems," McDonald said. "Did we find solutions — well no. But we did come up with a lot of ideas."

The Richfield group included a diverse group with an average of eight people attending on a given week, McDonald said.

'Diversity is making Richfield a very powerful place.'

Odell Brown, member of the Human Rights Commission

The circle's final meeting was March 23. Participants didn't always agree and some discussions were heated, said Odell Brown, a participant and member of the Human Rights Commission, but everyone had at least one thing in common.

"Everybody left Tuesday night with one thought: 'When can we do this again,'" said Brown.

Brown said the experience was exciting and it gave him hope and encouragement for the future.

"Diversity is making Richfield a very powerful place," he said.

The community circle provided an opportunity to do something that isn't done enough, Brown said, talk with one another.

It was a chance to express one's self on a variety of issues and communicate in a meaningful way, Brown said. It was in-

teresting to hear that other people had many of the same feelings and concerns, he added.

One thing the five weeks of discussions made clear is that all members of the Richfield community need to keep the lines of communication open, Brown said. There was a commitment by all parties to continue the dialogue and move forward, he said.

"Everybody has something to say but no way to say it," Brown said.

The metro-wide community discussion groups were organized by the EHEP, whose mission is to promote public dialogue about school segregation, housing inequity and other community issues, McDonald said.

"One of our main focuses was on affordable housing," McDonald said.

There is a severe shortage of housing in the Twin Cities, McDonald said, not only for couples but also for single parents. It's difficult for many people to find housing that accepts children and is affordable, especially when a parent has to pay for child care, she added.

One of the ideas generated by the circle was to contact legislators to promote more state-subsidized housing for low-income families, McDonald said.

There are programs and assistance for families trying to buy a home as well which many people could benefit from, McDonald said. The problem is that many of the potential beneficiaries don't know about the options available to them, she said.

Finding ways to educate and inform people about these programs is another idea the group discussed, McDonald said.

Another topic the group concentrated on was promoting a sense of community in Richfield for all residents, McDonald said. One way of doing that could be encouraging minority parents to participate more in their children's schools.

"One of the biggest things was the idea of tapping into a lot of different cultures," she said.

For example, parents whose primary language is not English could participate in classes by sharing their first language with students. This would get parents involved in their children's schools and teach children about other languages, McDonald said.

"It would be a good way for parents to get involved and help them feel a little more comfortable and promote a sense of

CIRCLE: To Page 13A

Circle

From Page 3A

belonging," McDonald said.

One barrier to the building of community can be seen in many of the city-sponsored programs for youth, Brown said. Very few minority children participate in those programs, he said.

"If you don't have a dialogue, you don't know that's happening," Brown said. "You need to sit down and have a conversation about what's going on."

Then community members can look at ways to better advertise youth activities to the minority families or find other ways to encourage them to take advantage of those opportunities, he said.

In the end, the circle agreed the focus should be on children, communication and housing, Brown said.

"There are ways to solve these problems but you can't by blaming each other and accusing each other," Brown said.

Community circle members also talked about fear, McDonald said. One participant talked about the fact that he was afraid of diversity and what could happen in his neighborhood, she said.

"We found that fear is not just a white thing," McDonald said. "Other races have fears, maybe not the same fear but they are afraid."

For example, some Hispanic people live in fear that they will be deported if they don't have the right papers, she said.

"I believe fear is a major problem," Brown said. "We're all afraid of darkness and what we don't know. We don't see it but we feel it. But there's no reason to fear... You have to put a light on these issues so you're not so afraid."

Communicating about these issues and sharing information may be the best way to address these type of issues, she added.

Later this spring, the circles will meet in a series of forums to share their ideas and perhaps develop legislation to introduce to state lawmakers, McDonald said. A Citizen Summit will be conducted in November.

That doesn't mean the issues and discussions will wait until this fall.

"We need to continue doing this," Brown said. "We don't want to wait until November."

Community Circle Dialogue

OPTIONAL SESSION

What kinds of economic strategies will help us to bridge racial and ethnic divisions in our region?

The Twin Cities Metropolitan Area is becoming typical of many other regions, with its concentration of poor and minority residents in the central cities and more wealth and whites predominantly in the suburbs. But this is beginning to change, and there is a growing awareness that the health of the core and the health of the suburbs are interdependent

The purpose of this session is to begin a productive conversation on the general direction our economic policies should take. In particular, what kinds of economic policies will help us improve race relations and remedy racial and economic disparities? This session presents a range of possible answers.

The goal is not for participants to become experts in one particular area - say, hiring practices or the regional economy - or to agree on an answer. Instead the goal is to "try on" the various views and learn from each other's ideas. Ultimately, this discussion will lay the groundwork for future actions we take and for our interactions with public officials and business leaders at all levels.

Economic policy often seems intimidating and something best left to the experts. Yet the economic strategies we choose - and how we go about developing them - say a lot about what we value as a society. It is worthwhile, then, to examine the assumptions underlying our economic strategies. They may tell us a great deal about how we view Minneapolis and Saint Paul and surrounding communities as well as the people who live in them. In the end, if our economic policies are to work for the good of people of all races and economic status, it is important that all residents have a voice in determining their direction.

Looking at the viewpoints

1. Does one of the viewpoints or some combination of views, come closest to your Own? Why? What life experiences or values inform your perspective?
2. What view(s) are most distant from your own? What experiences, beliefs and values might lead a reasonable person to support the views that are different from your own?
3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective?
4. Besides the ones presented here, what other kinds of policies would help us to reduce racism and improve race relations? What, if any, perspectives are missing?
5. What proposals would you like to see policymakers concentrate on? Why?

What kinds of economic strategies will help us bridge racial and ethnic divisions in our region?

View 1:

Our education and training systems should better prepare poor and minority students for higher skilled and higher paying jobs.

According to this view, our economic policies should focus on improving our education and training systems. In the near future, one out of every two workers will be a person of color. Unless we improve our urban schools, we won't have the brainpower to support our regional economy in the future. We need to develop well-trained workers with the math and reading skills to compete in the global economy. Those with wealth and those in the suburbs need to understand that our failure to address these issues ultimately will harm their own economic well being. We all have a stake in high-performing schools. We need to have high expectations for urban schools and students and education and training opportunities that ensure that all students in our region are fully prepared for the future.

View 2:

We need economic policies that create more ownership opportunities for minorities.

According to this view, our economic policies should help people of color get the capital And support they need to start their own businesses. Many urban residents believe that Their economic future is tied to business ownership. The problem is that developers have Ignored minorities or consciously kept them from getting the resources they need. Low Income residents of cities have more difficulty obtaining loans than people in wealthier

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View 2:

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According to this view, our economic policies should help people of color get the capital and support they need to start their own businesses. Many urban residents believe that their economic future is tied to business ownership. The problem is that developers have ignored minorities or consciously kept them from getting the resources they need. Low income residents of cities have more difficulty obtaining loans than people in wealthier

areas. This is based on a belief that poor people and people of color can't successfully operate in the economic mainstream. It has led to policies that create social services rather than hard cash for business start-ups and expansion. Our economic policies must provide economic incentives and support for minority owned businesses. People who own their own businesses were given help in the past. Our failure to do this now is due to racial prejudice.

View 3:

Employers can reduce racial divisions by hiring and promoting more people of color and addressing diversity issues in the workplace.

According to that view, employers in our region must play a key role in helping to bridge racial and ethnic divisions. All of us tend to hire people like ourselves, and special policies like affirmative action are still needed to create a more level playing field for everyone. There have always been informal job networks for white people and these inhibit employment and advancement opportunities for people of color. People whose first language is not English face additional barriers to employment and upward mobility. As a first step, we need to recognize and acknowledge the existence of prejudice in the workplace based on race and culture. The tendency is for employers to expect more of people of color. Often when a person of color is hired, many people still question his/her credentials. Employees need to intensify efforts to diversify workplaces at all levels, especially management. They must expand programs that deepen our understanding of racism in the workplace and promote action to eliminate it.

View 4:

Public policies that strengthen the overall economy and create more jobs will naturally benefit people of color.

According to this view, the best way to help poor and minority residents enter the economic mainstream is to create a strong and healthy economy that provides more job opportunities. The free market is the best approach. If we help businesses expand and flourish, people of color will naturally benefit as these healthy companies will be in a position to hire them. We are already seeing this in our region as the economy improves and the unemployment rate goes down. Our economic policies therefore should emphasize strong job creation programs and financial incentives to businesses that wish to locate or expand their operations in the region.

View 5:

We need to develop regional and global economic strategies if we are to bridge racial divisions and successfully compete in the global economy.

According to this view, individual communities must understand that their future is tied to the well being of the region, and the region must see itself as a competitor in the global

economy. Businesses don't operate within political jurisdictions anymore and we are now competing with other regions and other countries. Employers won't locate or stay here unless we can attract and retain the diverse well-educated workforce needed to compete in international markets. Within the region, the fate of the suburbs is tied to the fate of the city. The problem is that people in the suburbs and the city see themselves as separate and in competition for the same limited resources. Another problem is the perception by some in the minority community that the community should take care of itself. We need to develop new economic development strategies based on cooperation between cities and suburbs such as tax-base sharing, metro-wide economic development districts and the development of mixed income neighborhoods.

View 6:

Our economic policies must be developed at the community and the neighborhood level.

According to this view, the problem is that economic development strategies have usually been driven from outside the city and its neighborhoods. People who live in the city have a broader view of economic development. More than just profit, they want a better quality of life, good schools and healthy neighborhoods. Economic development strategies should focus on the strengths of the communities and involve residents of the neighborhoods. City residents should have access to more capital for home and business ownership and to financial services, transportation and good quality and affordable food. We can't bridge the racial and ethnic separation in our region unless all of those affected by our economic policies have a strong hand in creating and implementing them.

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Dick Little
Education and Housing
Equity Project
(612) 330-1505

**Minneapolis Planning Commissioner Receives
National Recognition for Anti-Racism Initiative**

May 26, 1999 (Minneapolis, MN)--President Clinton's Initiative on Race recently selected Minneapolis-based Education & Housing Equity Project (EHEP) and its Community Circle Dialogues on Education, Housing and Race in the Twin Cities as a national model of a "Promising Practice for Racial Reconciliation."

Directed by Dick Little, the Community Circles project began as a partnership of regional and community organizations. In May, Mr. Little was one of four people from throughout the nation invited to Washington, D.C. to discuss innovative approaches to our nation's racial problems at a National Issues Forum entitled "Race in America: New Approaches to Bridging the Divide," sponsored by the Brookings Institution.

Little was appointed by Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton to the Minneapolis Planning Commission and serves as its secretary and he also sits on Minneapolis' Affordable Housing Task Force. Little lives in the Nokomis East neighborhood of Minneapolis.

Matthew Little, long-time civil rights leader in Minnesota, is the President and co-founder of EHEP. Mayor Sayles Belton has been a strong supporter of the Community Circle dialogues and has encouraged their use by cities in other metropolitan areas through her leadership in the National League of Cities and US Conference of Mayors.

--more--

**National Recognition/
Page 2**

Currently, over 50 dialogues are underway in Minneapolis, Saint Paul and suburbs. In Saint Paul, Community Circles are being convened by neighborhood groups, schools and congregations as part of "Cities at Work," a city-wide initiative co-sponsored by the Wilder Foundation. A citizens summit focusing on the results of the conversations will be held toward the end of the year to be co-sponsored by the Minnesota Meeting, Minnesota Public Radio, KMOJ/Insight News and other media partners.

Two outcomes of the Community Circles held in 1997 are the Inclusionary Housing Legislation promoted by the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability and passed by the Minnesota Legislature this spring; and the award-winning fair housing play, *Like Waters Rolling Down*, produced by the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAH) and Illusion Theatre.

For more information about Community Circles, contact Dick Little at (612) 330-1505 or by e-mail at ehp@augsborg.edu

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Beyond Busing

A Metrowide Dialogue on the Challenges of
Education and Housing Segregation

News from the Community Circle Project

Update #1

February, 1997

Community Circle Dialogue, 'Beyond Busing,' kicks-off December 10, now moves to next stage

The Community Circle Collaborative officially "kicked off" December 10, 1996 with an inspiring event that filled the St. Louis Park City Council chambers with more than 100 people. This "Call to Action" to potential Sponsors drew representatives from a wide variety of organizations—including churches, advocacy groups, academia, and public agencies—as well as individual citizens who learned of the event through a supportive editorial in the *Star Tribune*.

After a warm greeting from St. Louis Park Mayor Gail Dorfman, the morning began with speeches by former St. Paul Mayor George Latimer and education expert Dr. Josie Johnson, both of whom exhorted the group to sponsor *Community*



Circles as a way of "moving our community."

"We must learn to *listen* to each other," emphasized Dr. Johnson.

The next two speakers—Curt Johnson, chair of the Metropolitan Council, and Yusef Mgeni, President of the Urban Coalition—went into detail about why

our region needs to confront and link the issues of housing and education.

"Our metro area faces serious challenges in growing to meet its housing and education needs," Mr. Johnson explained. "Its ability to do so equitably is hampered by fear and ignorance."

Mr. Mgeni's presentation, telling the story of urban communities that are increasingly isolated and poor, also spoke to the need for renewed dialogue, understanding, and hope.

Following these presentations, individuals representing the State Legislature, an outer-ring suburban church, an inner-ring suburban school, a nonprofit housing developer, the media, and the Minneapolis mayor's office all described why they plan to participate in a *Community Circle*.

They urged their peers to join them in sponsoring and supporting the dialogues. The event concluded with an explanation of the "nuts and bolts" of sponsoring or convening a *Community Circle*. Participants learned how *Community Circles* work, the "charge" to be given to the circles, and the project's timetable.

As the event concluded, many new Sponsors submitted their "Pledge of Participation" and began the important work of organizing a *Community Circle*.

To new Sponsors and others who attended the kick-off, "thank you!"

Copies of the "Sponsor Packets" handed out at the kick-off are available.

In addition, a summary video of the event, produced by Minneapolis Telecommunications Network, will be available. For additional information, contact coordinator Dick Little at 871-8980 (fax: 871-8984).

A Word from the Project Coordinator...

We are pleased to issue our first newsletter to participating and potential partners of the *Community Circles Collaborative*. This is the first formal update since the Kick-Off Forum in December. Since the Kick-Off, many new participants have volunteered to serve as facilitators, sponsors, resource partners and discussion participants. We welcome your ideas as the project proceeds.

This newsletter is intended to give you the information you need to proceed with your part in this metrowide dialogue project. Articles cover the upcoming facilitator training sessions, highlights of the forthcoming *Discussion Guide*, a timeline of activities, and news from project sponsors. We still need to receive pledges of participation. Sponsors also should identify facilitators who they want invited to the facilitator training.

Please contact us if you still have questions or if you need additional information. We look forward to supporting you in implementing what may prove to be the Twin Cities region's most ambitious citizen dialogue to date.

Dick Little, Coordinator

Community Circle Collaborative/Education and Housing Equity Project

122 West Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404

Phone: (612) 871-8980 Fax: (612) 871-8984

Training

Facilitator Training Dates Set for February 15 and also February 20

Two *Community Circle* Facilitator Training Sessions have been scheduled to prepare facilitators for leading *Community Circles* during the months of March and April.

Trainings will take place on Saturday February 15, 1997 from 8:30 AM-12:30 PM and Thursday February 20, 1997 from 6:00-9:30 PM.

Both sessions will take place in the Marshall Room of the Christenson Center on the campus of Augsburg College. People who will be facilitating community circles are strongly urged to attend one of these sessions.

See insert for additional details, map, and registration form.

For more information contact Bruce Vandal at the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, Inc. Phone: (612) 330-1509. e-mail: vandal@augsborg.edu

This newsletter is published by the *Community Circle Collaborative* to update sponsors, participants, facilitators and other interested parties.

For additional information, or to get on the mailing list, contact:

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Education and Housing Equity Project
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Minneapolis, MN 55404
Phone: (612) 871-8980
Fax: (612) 871-8984
Newsletter Production:
Steve Share/
Community Media Services

Discussion Guide: Sneak Preview

The *Community Circle Discussion Guide*, now in the final stages of preparation, will offer a framework for thinking and deliberating on the issues of segregation.

Modeled after the format that the National Issues Forum uses in their discussion guides, the *Discussion Guide* will begin with a Forward that will explain the purpose of the project and "the charge" that is to be presented to the *Community Circles*.

All Circles or discussion groups will be discussing these two questions:

■ *What are the impacts of existing patterns of job and residential segregation on educational achievements and life opportunities for families and children in the Twin Cities area?*

■ *What can or what should we, as individuals and as a community, do to enhance the educational, economic and life opportunities for all children?*

Next, the *Discussion Guide* will present an introduction to the issues of housing and education and highlight why and how these issues are connected.

In the final sections, the *Discussion Guide* will present three different, but not mutually exclusive perspectives on

The Community Circle Discussion Guide



A Resource Guide for 'Beyond Busing: a Metrowide Dialogue on the Challenges of Education and Housing Segregation'

dealing with the problems of economic and racial segregation. These "policy alternatives" will serve as a beginning point for the public deliberation by each *Community Circle* discussion group.

The three "choices" are tentatively described as: 1) "Enrichment: Helping to Build

Existing Communities;" 2) "Personal Responsibility: a Return to Traditional Community Values;" 3) "Mobility: Creating More Choices."

The booklet will describe each option in terms of its diagnosis of the problem, prescribed programs to pursue, why this course of action merits support, and what its critics say.

The guide will conclude with a bibliography of additional sources and readings.

If you can recommend materials for use in this project and in the study guide, please contact Kristi Greenwalt, principal writer for the *Community Circle Discussion Guide*, via e-mail: kgreenwalt@hjh.umn.edu

Or, write or fax: Kristi Greenwalt
c/o Education and Housing Equity Project, 122 W. Franklin Ave., Suite 320, Minneapolis, MN 55404. Fax number: 871-8984.

Some of the Partners who originally helped to organize the "Beyond Busing" Community Circle Dialogue include:

The Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing, The Minneapolis Initiative Against Racism, The Minneapolis Public Schools, The Minneapolis Telecommunications Network, The Minnesota Council of Churches Anti-Racism Initiative, The Minnesota Fair Housing Center, The Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, The Minnesota Public Radio Civic Journalism Project, Twin Cities Free-Net, The University of Minnesota Law School's Institute on Race and Poverty, The Urban Coalition.

National Partners include:

The Kettering Foundation/National Issues Forum, The Study Circles Resource Center.

News from Sponsors

Look Who's Joining the Growing List of Sponsors for the Community Circle Dialogue!

The growing list of *Community Circle* sponsors now includes churches from Minneapolis to Burnsville, school districts (including school board members and superintendents), housing authorities, human rights commissions, municipalities (including mayors and city council members), local chambers of commerce, neighborhood associations and a variety of community-based organizations.

In Richfield, for example, the School District is collaborating with the Richfield Community Council and the local chapter of the League of Women Voters to convene and co-facilitate at least two study circles.

The City of Golden Valley is jointly sponsoring *Community Circle* discussion groups with its Black History Month Advisory Committee, the Twin West Chamber of Commerce and the Hopkins School District.

Other partners, such as the University of Minnesota's Newman Center are sponsoring a speaker series on housing and segregation.

Following these presentations, the partners will extend an invitation to participants

to form a *Community Circle*.

Members of Ascension Church in north Minneapolis are sponsoring a *Community Circle* that will include citizens of African-American, Latino/Chicano and European/Caucasian heritage from Minneapolis, Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Center and Maple Grove.

Meanwhile, the Interfaith Action Core Team of St. Joan of Arc Church, a metropolitan parish in south Minneapolis, is also forming a study circle.

Also in south Minneapolis, the Sabathani Community Center is sponsoring a circle jointly with the Central Neighborhood Improvement Association.

In cyberspace, the Twin Cities Free-Net is proposing two on-line conferencing projects in support of the *Community Circle* project.

Other groups and organizations who have "signed on" or are about to join include:

Edina Public Schools and Human Rights Commission; Minneapolis Community Education; Southside Neighborhood Housing Services; Presbyterian Church of the Apostles, Burnsville; First Universalist Church of Minneapolis; St. Louis Park Pub-

lic Schools, Housing Authority, Human Rights Commission and Office of the Mayor; Seward Neighborhood Group; Field-Regina-Northrup Neighborhood Association; Grace University Lutheran Church; Panorama Consulting and Training; Saint Paul Public Schools and Human Rights Department; Family and Children's Service, Hennepin County; Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association; St. David's School, Minnetonka; Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Minneapolis; Whittier Alliance (Housing Committee); West Metro Education Program; United Way of the Minneapolis Area; Mediation Services (Anoka County), and City of Eden Prairie, Office of the Mayor (pending).

Individuals representing many more organizations attended the Kick-Off forum and are "part of the network."

To get involved, please sign and return the *Participation Pledge Form* on the reverse side of this page. Or, if you need more information before making a commitment, send in the form below. We look forward to hearing from you!

Join the Community Circle Discussions!

We would be interested in sponsoring or convening a *Community Circle* discussion group!

Please send more information.

Name of Sponsoring Organization: _____

Address: _____

Name of Contact Person: _____ Phone: _____

Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

We will co-sponsor a *Community Circle* with the following organization: _____

We would like our *Community Circle* to be paired with a circle from another organization!

Note: If you plan to provide your own facilitators, please include their names, addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers below. They will be invited to attend one of two training sessions scheduled for February 15 and February 20 (see story, page 2).

Here is a facilitator from our organization! Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Please match a facilitator or co-facilitator with our organization.

Return ASAP to:

Dick Little, Community Circle Collaborative, 122 W. Franklin Ave., Suite 320, Minneapolis, MN 55404. Fax: 871-8984.

The Community Circle Dialogue: What, Who, Why, Where, When

WHAT?

Community Circles, formed around the metropolitan area, will discuss the question "How does racial and economic segregation of housing affect educational achievement and life opportunities of Twin Cities families and children?"

Each community circle will be convened by a local sponsor group, will include 5-15 participants, and will be moderated by a trained facilitator or co-facilitators using a *Discussion Guide* specifically prepared for this topic.

The *Community Circles* are part of a metrowide dialogue that will bring together people from all walks of life. Each circle will be as economically, racially, ethnically, politically and geographically as diverse as possible, or be paired with other circles to assure a diversity of perspectives.

The *Community Circle* groups will begin a conversation about race and class in America, and the Twin Cities area in particular, and hopefully will discover some shared ground across these boundaries on issues of housing, jobs, and education.

Each *Community Circle* will:

- 1) Explore and discuss the extent of housing, job and school segregation in the Twin Cities area, with particular attention to socioeconomic as well as racial segregation.
- 2) Discuss the factors that drive the trend toward increasing segregation and begin to investigate our own individual and collective responsibility.
- 3) Explore the interrelationship between housing and school segregation, and the implications for academic achievement for elementary and secondary school students, as well as for life opportunities (jobs, etc.).
- 4) Explore the consequences, especially for children and families, of a society increasingly characterized by segregation and socioeconomic disparities.
- 5) Examine and deliberate on possible policy alternatives and differing ideologi-

cal perspectives for addressing these concerns.

- 6) Strive to develop a shared vision of what citizens want their community to be like for their children's generation.

WHO?

The *Community Circles Collaborative* is a partnership of some 15 to 20 organizations, coordinated by the Education and Housing Equity Project, with funding from the Otto Bremer and Bush Foundations and in-kind support from the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. The Collaborative includes organizing, resource, funding and media partners. Facilitator training and preparation of the *Discussion Guide* are among the services being provided by the Collaborative.

Discussion groups are being formed by sponsors including churches and synagogues, school districts, housing agencies, human rights commissions, cities, neighborhood groups, block clubs, and other community-based groups and civic groups such as the League of Women Voters. An estimated 100 sponsor groups have committed to participating in this project and more groups are expected to participate. Based on the high level of community interest shown since the Sponsor Kick-Off event at the St Louis Park City Council Chambers in December, as many as 1,000 citizens may be participating in the *Community Circle* discussion groups.

WHY?

The partners in this project have come together with a shared belief in the need for civil, informed dialogue and analysis—across political, geographic, economic and racial lines—about trends and changes taking place in the communities and schools of the Twin Cities metro area today. We hope that bringing together diverse groups will build understanding and produce practical recommendations for actions that individuals, organizations and policy makers can take with respect to difficult issues facing our communities.

The *Community Circles* project is an opportunity to bring together people from different backgrounds and with diverse perspectives to talk about a common theme: the impact of segregation—particularly in housing, employment and transportation—on education. Participants will have the opportunity to explore issues affecting educational achievement, housing choices and job opportunities for Twin Cities citizens, and the relationships between these issues. Participants also will deliberate on alternative ways that the community and the public can address these issues.

Some of the purposes and hoped-for outcomes of this dialogue include:

- 1) To begin an open, honest, and civil conversation about some of the most difficult but important issues facing our communities, and to develop some new ways of talking about and through those issues.
- 2) To provide citizens an opportunity to get to know a cross-section of fellow community members and become more aware of differing ideas and perspectives on important issues that affect all of us.
- 3) To provide an opportunity for people to learn more about their own biases and prejudices and to honestly examine their own experiences in relation to the theme.
- 4) To explore more deeply what we truly believe about equality of opportunity.
- 5) To use public deliberation as a way to arrive at and develop valuable ideas for future action on a local and regional basis, and to more clearly define our responsibility, both individually and collectively, for the future well-being of our community.
- 6) To find "common ground" among metropolitan citizens and develop an informed "public judgement" or "public voice" that can help guide public policy and decision makers in finding solutions to complex and difficult issues.
- 7) For those so inclined, to begin to identify and agree on specific steps that they can take—at the personal, neighborhood, municipal, metropolitan and state policy levels—and to outline plans of action including, but not limited to, a legislative agenda, community organizing, and formation of coalitions around key issues.

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WHERE?

Locations of the *Community Circles* will be as diverse as the locations of the sponsoring organizations and the *Community Circle* participants. The sponsor will be responsible for convening the first meeting. Times and places for subsequent meetings will be determined by each *Community Circle* group and its facilitator and recorder.

WHEN?

The timeline of scheduled activities follows:

December 10: "Beyond Busing" Kick-Off Forum for sponsors. This event has occurred and was attended by more than 100 people representing different organizations (see page 1).

February 15 (Saturday), 8:30 A.M.-12:30 P.M. and February 20 (Thursday), 6:00 P.M.-9:30 P.M.: Training and informational sessions for individuals who will serve as discussion group facilitators. Location: Augsburg College, in the Marshall Room of the Christensen Center (see map). Choose one of two dates to attend—all facilitators are expected to participate.

Before March 1: The *Discussion Guide* will be made available to all sponsors and *Community Circle* participants. Sponsors are asked to identify the number of partici-

pants in their *Community Circle(s)*—this information may be faxed to us at 871-8984. All sponsors also should sign and return their *Participation Pledge Forms* (see insert). Sponsors should identify a heterogeneous mix of participants, including both homeowners and renters, and individuals from various age groups, occupations, and socio-economic, racial, ethnic and cultural and political perspectives. To achieve diversity goals, we encourage groups to combine with other groups if necessary. Please notify us if you need assistance in pairing with another group.

First week of March: Sponsors are encouraged to conduct a "kick off" meeting of discussion groups or participants. This meeting can be a "get to know you" and introductory event before the *Community Circle* group or groups convene their first session(s). By this time, facilitators and recorders should be assigned to their *Community Circles*.

First week of March to first week of May: Each *Community Circle* discussion group will hold meetings at times and location desired by the group. Groups of 5 to 15 people will schedule from 3 to 5 meetings (approximately 2 hours each, meeting for a total of up to 10 hours) over this nine week period. All groups will be moderated by trained facilitators and use the common *Discussion Guide*. The *Discussion Guide* will include an introduction to the topic, presentations of a range of viewpoints, questions for discussion, and a bibliography of suggested readings (see page 2).

Late April: Each *Community Circle*

discussion group recorder will prepare and submit a summary report of the group's discussions to Circle participants for their review. Each *Community Circle* group and the sponsor organization may want to schedule an opportunity to share the findings and conclusions of the group with the local community.

May 8 (Thursday), 6:30-9:00 P.M. (location yet to be determined): a *Community-wide Forum* is being planned. This event will be a metrowide meeting to share the results of the *Community Circle* project. This event will be modeled after the smaller *Community Circles*. We are pleased to announce that George Latimer, former Mayor of Saint Paul and Assistant Secretary of HUD, and Vivian Jenkins Nelsen, President and CEO of INTER-RACE at Augsburg College, have agreed to serve as the co-facilitators. Each *Community Circle* will select representatives from their group to participate in this event and share the results of their circle's deliberations. Results of this forum will be shared with all project participants.

May 20, 21 or 22: the Minnesota Meeting, Minnesota Public Radio, the Minneapolis Foundation and, hopefully, a sister foundation in Saint Paul (all partners in this project) plan to co-sponsor a concluding event with public, community and business leaders to enable us to share the results of this project with the larger metropolitan community and, possibly, a national audience. *Community Circle* participants will be invited to this event, which would include a luncheon and noteworthy guest speaker.



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Address Correction Requested