

Northside Community Forum October 1, 2014 Session 3 – The Loftquist Model

The Journey thus far.....

Based on her involvement with the Education Committee of the Northside Community Council, Sue Wilke began having conversations with a variety of community stakeholders and the principals of Northside's neighborhood schools—Chase Elementary, Parker Woods Montessori and St. Boniface—while asking for more clarity regarding Cincinnati Public Schools' Community Learning Center model. These conversations resulted in a series of meetings with CPS representatives: Julie Doppler and Rolonda Smith; Principals, Whitney Simmons (Parker Woods Montessori) and Lynsa Davie (Chase Elementary) Chase staff: Rodger Horton and Ashanti Dawson; and Consultants: David Weaver and Eileen Cooper Reed. This group discussed what broader community engagement might look like in determining what this community might want and feel they need for their children's educational growth and development.

Knowing Our Story as a community was determined to be the first step in healing old wounds and identifying new opportunities and possibilities for the schools and community to establish more mutually beneficial relationships. The purpose of this initial session was to have participants share their unique story of the relationship between the community and its youth and the schools. The goal was to honor the differing and valid perspectives of success and challenge while creating a path forward in creating a safe and supportive learning environment for the children and families of Northside. It was determined that there would be three (3) community forums designed to achieve this goal.

Process for Session 1- June Forum

Participants were asked to share stories in small groups that “Tell About a Time when being part of Northside's schools or community challenged you to reveal your gifts. How did they reveal themselves and what did you learn?” *(See attached notes from this session as Northside Forum Story Boards & Themes)*

Process for Session 2- September 10

Open Space Technology was used to address this complicated issue using an organizing or catalyst question to spark questions that stakeholders will pose and begin to answer for themselves. Participants generated questions that would be the basis for small group discussions based on the following prompt:

What is the crucial question you feel needs to be answered for the children and youth of Northside to obtain an excellent education?

This catalyst question sparked six (6) questions from participants who organized themselves in responding to those things that they found to be the most compelling. (See attached notes from this session as (*Northside Forum Session 9/10/2014*).

Process for October 1.

Each of the questions that resulted in discussions during the September 10 meeting served as the catalyst for more specific conversation during our final session. Using the Loftquist Model, participants sought out the question they most wanted to discuss. They found the above mentioned notes from the September 10 forum as it pertained to the specific question they sought to address. Participants spent 15 minutes working through each of the 3 phases of the model:

Phase 1- What are the current conditions that exist....(regarding the question you have chosen to discuss)

Phase 2 – What conditions would you like to exist in two (2) years?

Phase 3 – What actions steps (commitments/resources) are you going to take to bridge what the difference between what exists now and what you envision two (2) years from now.

Participants self selected their small group questions/discussions and the results are captured on the pages that follow.

Next Steps Identified:

- **Creation of a Northside LSDMC that combines and has clear collaboration between and among school and community sub-committees. This group would review the data generated from these forums to identify commonalities across the questions that surfaced and use this information to create action steps for the new entity.**
- **Engage CPS regarding the Community Learning Center structure to learn more about the model and how Northside's model may mirror or differ from existing sites.**
- **Dream Conference (idea) – helping parents, students and the broader community learn how to dream together.**

October 1 Forum Notes -Questions and Small Group Responses:

Question 1 - What are the current conditions regarding parental involvement and engagement in Northside Schools?

Phase 1- What are the current conditions that exist....	Phase 3 – What are the action steps that must be taken to get from what currently exists to what we envision in 2 years?	Phase 2 – What conditions would you like to exist 2 years from now?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most parents are not engage with their children’s education. (Chase estimates 15% of parents engaged at their school) • Do not have a parent association that allows parents to speak with each other (absent educators) • Parents have bad past experiences with the schools; unsure of their knowledge (capacity) to support their children. • Some parents want to be involved, but don’t know how. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Research programs, services available to parents and children; talk with involved parents to have them spread the word.</i> • <i>Gather information about assets, interests and places where assistance is needed,</i> • <i>Recruit parent leaders for PTL</i> • <i>Encourage more business and community people to tutor (Whiz Kids) during and after school</i> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs for parents to serve as volunteers • Mandatory participation for parents • Establish a PTA PTO PTL • 50% participation by parents • Programs for parents to help/maintain their involvement—GED and reading programs—Giving students a reason to dream; strive for more • Partnering with community entity to offer information on nutrition, travel, occupations to parents outside the school building to be less threatening. • Encourage employers to incentivize parental involvement in schools (paid time and hours per month)

Question 2 – What is currently being taught in our schools? What is the emphasis?

Phase 1- What are the current conditions that exist....	Phase 3 – What are the action steps that must be taken to get from what currently exists to what we envision in 2years?	Phase 2 – What conditions would you like to exist 2years from now?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative Learning • Common Core State standards produce independent critical thinkers • Tutoring/intervention • Afterschool clubs teaching life skills • (lack of parental support) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Establish relationships between (the) 3 schools and create a committee with ppl from each school to form a coalition to get this going. LSDMC/principals- Jean will reach out.</i> • <i>In-community, convenient adult literacy support programs.</i> • <i>Investigate/Market Public library's homework help resources; Wordplay-distribute information to students and teachers.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/Volunteer led afterschool/weekend life skills workshops for kids • All community schools together • Increased parental involvement • Students and parents have free, accessible homework support for times out of school.

Question 3 – What currently exists in terms of after school care/activities? – Added Summers and Saturdays

Phase 1- What are the current conditions that exist....	Phase 3 – What are the action steps that must be taken to get from what currently exists to what we envision in 2 years?	Phase 2 – What conditions would you like to exist 2 years from now?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girl Scouts • Boy Scouts • Tutoring – Whiz kids • No after school at Chase • Wordplay k-12 tutoring/book club • No summer program • Positive Girls culture • No pre-school programs • Happen, Inc. • City Gospel Mission • Dramakinetics • McKie Rec Center (lacks structure) • Good Small program (900 elementary age kids) • Less than 10% of kids in Northside participating in after school program –transportation cost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>WordPlay – Libby; investigate partner programs with and for the schools;</i> • <i>Parent education</i> • <i>Interact for Health Grant</i> • <i>Get the word out about WordPlay and grow the program</i> • <i>Grow social emotional programs/Sara</i> • <i>Positive Girl Culture- Roberta; engage girls in self respect after school program starting soon</i> • <i>Pre-School- Caroline; apply for grant for a school garden, connect with Tommy at Happen, Inc.</i> • <i>Community Development Committee; explore funding; help staff and structure @ McKie Center improve existing programs.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YMCA After School (starts in Jan 2015) • Funding (grants, city resources, corporate sponsorships volunteers • Increase in social emotional learning programs; new and existing • More parent involvement- learn what the children are learning/strengthen the family. • Parent GED program • Summer & Pre School programs • Chase as a Community Learning Center for parent and child co-education • Start Positive Girl Culture

Question 4 – What are the demographics of Northside? Its schools?

Phase 1- What are the current conditions that exist....	Phase 3 – What are the action steps that must be taken to get from what currently exists to what we envision in 2 years?	Phase 2 – What conditions would you like to exist 2 years from now?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic and racial make-up of the neighborhood is not currently reflected at Chase. • PWM increasingly reflects the socio-economic make-up of the neighborhood. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Engagement- community, businesses, artistic</i> • <i>Enrichment- artistic, activities</i> • <i>Partnerships (i.e. CAIN)</i> • <i>Chase as a true Community Learning Center</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northside Schools, student body and staff will reflect the make-up of the community.

Question 5 – How are our schools currently engaging children most in danger of slipping through the cracks?

Phase 1- What are the current conditions that exist....	Phase 3 – What are the action steps that must be taken to get from what currently exists to what we envision in 2 years?	Phase 2 – What conditions would you like to exist 2 years from now?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of poverty (?) • offering free breakfast, uniform, • power pack program • In school counseling • Children’s Home • District wide attendance meetings • Partnerships with some community organizations • Utilizing Title 1 and community volunteers <p>Tutoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Salle Tutors • Neighbor Relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Creating a parent/student/community event sponsored by the community council to bring the schools (and community) together at one time</i> • <i>Athletics and extracurriculars</i> • <i>Opening up Super Saturdays to all schools held at 1 school.</i> • <i>Jobs/mentor shadowing with Northside businesses</i> • <i>Job Fair with local companies</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood goal of ALL students being proficient • Parent/Neighborhood/Magnet School relationships • Joint school activities (3 Northside schools?) • Stronger neighbor relations

Question 6 – How do the schools and the community identify and communicate about their mutual needs and concerns?

Phase 1- What are the current conditions that exist....	Phase 3 – What are the action steps that must be taken to get from what currently exists to what we envision in 2 years?	Phase 2 – What conditions would you like to exist 2 years from now?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formal process for communication between schools and community • Broader community and some parents don't know the work of the LSDMC • No list of resources for schools to tap into community. • Residents don't know of opportunities in schools • PTO at PWM • Wall exists between the schools and the community • Schools do have community members serving as tutors (which schools?) • Few or no Northside business partners • Schools are beginning to report events in the Northsider. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CPS to define Community Learning Center</i> • <i>Survey of needs of school and community (newsletter/email)</i> • <i>Dedicated pages in the Northsider for school events</i> • <i>Community fundraiser for schools</i> • <i>Small group experiences at the schools (opportunity for residents to see first hand what students are doing)</i> • <i>Website (maybe too detached)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective, vibrant relationship between the schools and the community • Community is using the schools • 5-10 business partners within or external to the Northside community • Pooling of resources- community, schools, businesses • Liaison- volunteer, group or employee.

