



Imagining Community Education Workshop

June 7, 2014

Southwestern Academy

Preliminary Report

Nearly 300 residents and community members spent Saturday afternoon at Flint Southwestern Classical Academy crafting a vision for a new, sustainable model of community education for Flint Community Schools. The *Community Conversation about Community Education* workshop focused on four essential topics:

1. A New Model of Community Education
2. Core Services of Community Education
3. Implementation of a 21st Century Community Education Model
4. Exploring Schools as Community Hubs

Small group discussion occurred throughout the day. This input was summarized in real time and then presented back to participants as a list of common themes. Individuals then used wireless keypad polling devices to prioritize the ideas from their discussions in efforts to generate widespread consensus.

Themes: Importance of Attending Today

In the opening discussion of the afternoon, participants introduced themselves and discussed why it was important to attend the workshop. Listed below are the themes identified.

1. Want to know what's going on with Flint Schools
2. Help with positive change through creative ideas
3. Embrace historic ties to community education
4. Future of Flint youth depends on successful schools
5. Schools are key to strong community
6. Strong schools = new students
7. Parents need to be involved
8. Create opportunities for youth

Themes: Greatest Value in the New Community Education Model

1. Community education requires connection beyond schools and involves community organizations
2. Community involvement/ parent participation
3. Diverse funding for sustainability
4. Holistic approach (food, art, music, academics)
5. Engage students outside school hours
6. Transportation
7. Instill learning as a value and raise expectations



Who was in the room?

Participants used their voting keypads to help us identify the demographics of the participants and compare them to the census figures for Flint.

Gender	June 7	Flint
Female	60%	52%
Male	40%	48%

Age	June 7	Flint
24 & Under	6%	11%
25 - 34	12%	19%
35 - 54	37%	39%
55 - 64	23%	16%
65 +	21%	16%

Race/Ethnicity	June 7	Flint
Asian America	1%	0.4%
Black/African-American	54%	56%
Latino	3%	3.9%
Native American/Indian	0%	0.4%
White/Caucasian	34%	38%
More than one race	5%	3.3%
Other	3%	0.1%

Household Income	June 7	Flint
Under \$25,000	26%	52%
\$25,000 - \$50,000	21%	26%
\$50,000 - \$75,000	23%	12%
Over \$75,000	27%	10%
Not Sure	3%	N/A

Ward	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	5%	5%	10%	9	6%				
	5%	6	11%	N.R.	22%				
	5%	7	24%						
	6%	8	6%						

THEMES: ANYTHING MISSING FROM THE MODEL?

Participants articulated several ideas about what might be missing from the proposed Community Education model. They were:

1. Funding
2. Services like art, music, physical education
3. Governance, accountability & public transparency
4. Life skills & family education
5. Connections between teachers & Community
6. Cultural Competency
7. New buildings – equitably distributed
8. Customer service & access
9. Community, business & parent involvement

CORE SERVICES

The second discussion centered on identifying the potential services needed to initiate a successful model of community education in Flint. Documenting this input is critical to ensure the needs of the community are met.

Expanded Learning

Participants identified 5 additional themes to the existing list of 5 potential services. They then voted on the full list of options by identifying their top three. The vote was as follows:

1. Anger management & conflict resolution skills (55%)
2. Life skills (budgeting, hygiene, etc.) (39%)
3. Afterschool programs (37%)
4. Job training & internships (34%)
5. Technology & computer literacy (25%)
6. Art & music classes (22%)
7. Fun enrichment activities (eg. Camps) (21%)
8. After school tutoring (19%)
9. Basketball/baseball leagues for youth and adults (15%)
10. Summer science day camp (9%)

Parent Engagement

Participants identified 6 additional themes to the existing list of 4 potential services. They then voted on the full list of options for by identifying their top three. The vote was as follows:

1. Parent resource centers (44%)
2. Parenting classes (39%)
3. Health & Social services (36%)
4. Job training (33%)
5. Literacy classes (30%)
6. Parent counseling (24%)
7. Transportation (27%)
8. Drug abuse prevention/treatment facilities (22%)
9. Opportunities for parents to volunteer in schools (18%)

10. Volunteer training (6%)

Adult Education

4 additional themes including the existing list of 6 potential services were identified. They then voted on the full list of options by identifying their top three. The vote was as follows:

1. Literacy classes (43%)
2. Job training (37%)
3. Life skills (32%)
4. Computer/technology classes (31%)
5. Awareness of available community services (25%)
6. GED classes (24%)
7. Opportunities for furthering education (18%)
8. Budgeting classes (17%)
9. Enrichment opportunities such as art and dance (15%)
10. Fitness classes (14%)

Health and Social Services

Participants identified 6 additional themes to the existing list of 4 potential services. They then voted on the full list of options for by identifying their top three. The vote was as follows:

1. Mental health services, substance abuse prevention & counseling (50%)
2. Behavior intervention, disability service (40%)
3. In-school health clinics for treatment (38%)
4. Family support (34%)
5. Homeless prevention & support (30%)
6. Domestic violence education (27%)
7. Diet & nutrition classes (20%)
8. Mobile pediatric dental & vision clinics (20%)
9. Community garden (15%)
10. Help with enrollment in healthcare plans (6%)

Early Childhood Education

Participants identified 5 additional themes to the existing list of 4 potential services. They then voted on the full list of options by identifying their top three. The vote was as follows:

1. Network of parents of young children to build relationships & offer support (36%)
2. Maintain the connection with families once they access early childhood services (35%)
3. Infant/parent classes (35%)
4. Early childhood centers as one-stop shops for human services (34%)
5. Ensure safe places for young kids to play

- (29%)
- 6. Workforce services for young parents (27%)
- 7. Infant reading programs (24%)
- 8. Tot Lot summer programs (20%)
- 9. Offer home visits (16%)
- 10. Pre-natal classes (16%)

Community and Economic Development

Participants identified 7 additional themes to the existing list of 3 potential services. They then voted on the full list of options for by identifying their top three. The vote was as follows:

- 1. Life skills classes (e.g., financial literacy) (46%)
- 2. Promoting job opportunities, training programs & entrepreneurship (43%)
- 3. Safe routes to school (40%)
- 4. Teach skills such as trades, landscaping, etc. that can lead to careers (37%)
- 5. Neighborhood & community building activities (24%)
- 6. Blight elimination resources (22%)
- 7. Community gardens providing fresh food (18%)
- 8. Community service opportunities (13%)
- 9. Entrepreneurship classes (13%)
- 10. Share Flint success stories (7%)

The discussions about the implementation plan and exploring schools as community hubs occurred after this report had to be printed. A complete version will be mailed, emailed and on-line within the next week.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The third discussion was focused on the implementation plan laid out for the pilot year for community education. Here is what people liked, and what they were concerned about.

What participants liked about the implementation plan (this list was not prioritized):

- 1. Crim is lead agency
- 2. Pilot first, then scaling up
- 3. Taking Action
- 4. Decision to start with largest school population
- 5. Sharing of new, creative ideas
- 6. Going outside the system to hire a community education director
- 7. Input from community is sought
- 8. Focus on younger students

What concerns participants had about the implementation plan (this list was not prioritized):

- 1. Why wasn't community engaged earlier?
- 2. Residents from pilot area underrepresented

today

- 3. Capacity to act quickly and at a large site/scale
- 4. Impact on older students (if pilot ends at grade 6)
- 5. How will current teachers feel?
- 6. Need measurable goals and mechanism for accountability
- 7. Find the "right person" who understands and can relate to the community
- 8. Sustainable funding and equitable distribution
- 9. Transportation
- 10. Criteria for selection of lead agencies

SCHOOLS AS COMMUNITY HUBS

The fourth and final discussion focused in two parts: (1) ways to make school facilities better integrated into the community (i.e., place-making); and, (2) what contributions individuals and community groups can make (i.e., community-building).

Here were participants' ideas about place-making, prioritized:

- 1. **Engage community & students in beautification projects (51%)**
- 2. **Design inviting buildings that support learning (31%)**
- 3. **Eliminate blight including decreasing liquor stores (31%)**
- 4. Repurpose closed schools (28%)
- 5. Incorporate strategies and design features to ensure safety & security (24%)
- 6. Beautification & maintenance (20%)
- 7. Update & improve playgrounds (10%)
- 8. More welcoming entranceways (signage) (7%)

Here were participants' ideas about community-building:

- 1. **Prepare staff to serve and be accountable to community (28%)**
- 2. **Involve community in neighborhood safety (26%)**
- 3. **Host social events w/ community (25%)**
- 4. Involve community & businesses in community cleanups (24%)
- 5. Leverage other community resources to sponsor projects (22%)
- 6. Utilize expertise of local institutions & retired teachers (21%)
- 7. Invite neighborhood groups to use buildings & grounds for gardening (18%)
- 8. Formal volunteer program (involving youth) (18%)
- 9. Athletic Activities (11%)
- 10. Publicity and marketing (10%)