Benchmark: Race Relations

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Grand Canyon University: EAD 505

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Rose Place is a segregated community. Smith Jackson is an elementary school in Rose Place. The new principal of Smith Jackson is a minority, the first minority hired in the school district. The staff of Smith Jackson is 100% Caucasian. Smith Jackson participates in a busing program that brings students with disabilities into the school, a program for which the community is proud. Smith Jackson also participates in a voluntary busing program that brings minorities into the school; a program for which the community is not proud at all. The problem is that Smith Jackson is not integrated and in violation of the state mandate to have all schools integrated within the next decade.

There is racism in Rose Place. A vocal group of white supremacists who DO NOT want Smith Jackson or Rose Place integrated. According to one man, “if they aren’t white, they aren’t right” (Hanson, 2009). I interpret this statement to mean that a large part of the community does not want minorities in their community. As the principal, I need to be aware of this fact always in order to adequately address it at school.

To make an informed decision, I need to know what options exist to integrate the school fully and how can the school be a center for peace in the community with the future low-income housing development. Answering these questions will lead me to a complete understanding of the situation. With a complete understanding, I will be able to make a comprehensive decision that is in the best interest of the school.

The principal of Smith Jackson Elementary, the parent concerned about enrollment, the parent who is a white supremacist, and the superintendent are the major players in this case. The major players are members of the community. Some are looking to keep the community segregated. Others are looking to integrate slowly. The state wants to ensure that all students have appropriate access to comprehensive education. As the principal, I would also reference our Board Policy Documents to ensure that I am in line with the district’s interpretation of state laws.

There are a few possible solutions to the central problem in this case. They include canceling the voluntary busing program altogether, attracting academically qualified students with little to no behavioral problems to attend Smith Jackson, providing a busing option to one of the inner-city schools for the members of Rose place. While these options exist, they do not address the core concern of the state surrounding integration. It is a great idea to integrate the school. The students need exposure to other cultures and ethnicities in order to form a comprehensive outlook on the world. The most appropriate solution to the problem, in this case, would be to attract different students, without behavior and academic issues, to attend Smith Jackson.

References

Hanson, K. L. (2009). A casebook for school leaders: Linking the ISLLC standards to effective practice. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Merrill/Prentice Hall.

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1). (n.d.). Oyez. Retrieved February 20, 2019, from <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1940-1955/347us483>

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (2). (n.d.). *Oyez*. Retrieved February 20, 2019, from <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1940-1955/349us294>



**BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS**

**Public Board Meeting**

**February 12, 2019 5:00pm**

1.0 Meeting Opening

1.01 Purpose Statement:

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss brewing racial tensions within the Rose Place community and the Smith Jackson Elementary School. The goal of this meeting is to allow members of the community to voice their opinion on the impending integration of Smith Jackson and the voluntary bus program.

1.02 Meeting Norms:

Participation in this meeting means adhering to the following community agreements:

* We will respect everyone’s time by starting and ending on time.
* We agree to have only one conversation at a time.
* We agree to monitor our air time, to step up and step back (Listen more than speak).
* We agree to challenge any past assumptions and sacred ideas.
* We agree everyone is responsible for upholding the norms.

1.03 Meeting Goals:

The goal of this meeting is to hear from members of the community regarding the impending integration of Smith Jackson Elementary and the Rose Place community.

1.04 Meeting Objectives:

Members of the community will explore their feelings about the impending integration of Smith Jackson Elementary School through comprehensive discussion; and, explore their feelings about the impending integration of Rose Place through comprehensive discussion.

2.0 Public Comments (each commenter has 5 minutes in TOTAL to speak with the Board)

2.01 School Psychologist (Dr. Sarah Q. Public)

Dr. Sarah Q. Public is a psychologist with Dorothy I. Height Elementary School in West Baltimore. She has a history of working with members of the community to understanding the reasoning behind educational decisions and the effect of introducing students to different cultures and ethnicities. She has authored several peer-reviewed position papers on Cultural Accommodations and Interracial Gentrification. She will also remind members of the community that in the Brown v. Board of Education decision, it is up to the local jurisdictions to fully implement the laws and precedents set forth in the case that invalidated the “separate but equal” doctrine (Brown 2, n.d.).

2.02 Community Member Joe Sample (Descendant of White Supremacist)

Joe Sample is the son of Jack Sample, one of the founders of Rose Place. His family has lived in this community for more than 50 years. His father was instrumental in the construction of the Rose Place Monument in the town square and the construction of Smith Jackson Elementary school. Joe is proud of his heritage and his opinions on the bus program, as well as his activities as a white supremacist. He will speak to the community about keeping Rose Place Caucasian, in line with the community traditions. He will also speak about the heritage associated with the community and his belief that there is no need to change anything about Rose Place, including Smith Jackson.

2.03 Community Member Sakina Miller (Mother of student in Volunteer Bus Program)

Sakina Miller is the parent Sabrina Miller, a student in the volunteer busing program. She works at a small daycare center in the City and a taxpayer. She has visited Rose Place on many occasions for work and thought the integration of Smith Jackson was long overdue. Ultimately, she wants her daughter to learn in the best environment possible. She is black and has plans to move into the low-income residential building once it is complete. Sakina was encouraged to, and brought, many parents from the busing program to the meeting and spoke as their representative to the community. Sakina will also address the heritage of "separate but equal" and the Supreme Court decision which fully integrated public schools in the United States (Brown 1, n.d.) in 1954, stating that by not fully integrating Smith Jackson, the community, and the district are not following the law.

2.04 Special Recognition

The Board recognizes the students who volunteered to participate in the busing program with a Medal of Freedom- a symbol of the goals of the program: to provide a free and public education in the best environment to every student in the State of Maryland.

3.0 Meeting Closing: Next meeting scheduled for February 26, 2019