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ABSTRACT

This report describes a student leadership program, Putting the Environment Above the Common Ego (PEACE), designed to reduce incidences of eighth grade students forming self-segregating groups based on ethnic or racial heritage. The targeted groups form the diverse student body attending a middle school with 1,400 students in Rockford, Illinois. Formation of the student-devised segregated groups was revealed by staff and administration. Analysis of staff and student surveys, personal logs, and the study of the student composition of after school groups confirm the initial observations of this middle school's professional staff. Causes of the problem include: (1) a city historically and geographically divided with societal tendencies to categorize people by race, economic circumstances, or ethnic background; and (2) a school culture that failed to address adequately the issue of diversity. The PEACE leadership program, based on survey interpretation and personal logs, did not appear to have had an impact on the incidences of students forming self-segregating groups. The school has a template of this organization, its purposes, practices, and ideals, but the challenge remains to bring the diverse student group together. Charts and graphs are included along with eight appendices. (EH)

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ED 391 726

PROMOTING MULTIETHNIC RELATIONSHIPS BY UTILIZING THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY BUILDING

by

Donald Lackey

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master's of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

Saint Xavier University - IRI
Field-Based Masters Program

Action Research Project
Site: Rockford, IL
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Teacher, West Middle School
Rockford, IL

SO 025 809

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Abstract

Author: Donald Lackey Site: Rockford
Date: 07/01/94

Title: The Establishment of a Student Leadership Program

Abstract: This report describes a program for the establishment of a student leadership program to reduce incidences of eighth grade students forming self-segregating groups based on ethnic or racial heritage. The targeted groups form the diverse student body attending a middle school of 1400 students located in northern Illinois.

Formation of the student-devised segregated groups was revealed by staff and administration observations. Analysis of staff and student surveys, personal logs, and the study of the student composition of after school groups confirm the initial observations of this middle school's professional staff.

Causes for the problem include: a city historically and geographically divided with societal tendencies to categorize people by race, economic circumstances, ethnic background, and a school culture that has failed to adequately address diversity.

The P.E.A.C.E. Leadership Program, based on survey interpretation and personal logs, does not appear to have had a practical significance upon the incidences of students forming self-segregating groups whom attend the target school. There is, in place, a template of a student organization, of its purposes, practices, and ideals. The challenge remains.

Chapter 1

Statement of Problem and Description of Context

General Statement of Problem

The eighth grade students of the targeted middle school have formed self-segregating racial and ethnic groups that prohibit a sense of community among the student body. The existence of these groups has been verified by personnel and staff observations, a survey of the staff and student body, and by the district mandated census of intramural sports and extra-curricular activities.

Immediate Problem Context

The seven acre campus of the middle school is on the near northwest side of the city. The homes comprising the neighborhoods are smaller frame dwellings owned or rented by retail or blue collar workers. There are some areas of housing blight within these neighborhoods.

A diverse population of 1,410 students attend the school; 60.7 percent of the children are members of the White majority, 31.7 percent are Black, 5.0 percent are Hispanic, 2.3 percent are Asian or Pacific Islanders, while only 0.3 percent are Native American. Only 3.6 percent of the school's certified staff are of minority heritage or race.

The middle school was, for forty-eight years, a high school; the only school of the district's five high schools that was truly a neighborhood school. Currently, 23 buses arrive each

morning. Students are enrolled in: the Creative And Performing Arts (C.A.P.A.) program, a state mandated gifted program; the self-contained learning disabilities classes; the behavioral disorder classes (both self-contained and those classes where mainstreaming is appropriate); the G.I.T. (Get It Together) program; and the general program for those students who are not part of specialized programs.

The diverse student body possesses a distinctive, yet varied set of academic skills. As determined by the Illinois Goal Assessment Program (I.G.A.P.), 22 percent of the seventh graders did not meet the goals set for them within the area of science. Likewise, 23 percent of the eighth graders could not attain the levels set before them as they completed the reading portion of the I.G.A.P. exams. Only 77 percent of the eighth graders met, or exceeded, the goals of the math portion of the test; 23 percent of eighth graders did not attain the minimum mathematical norms set forth by the state of Illinois.

The Surrounding Community

The school district is comprised of 37 elementary schools, four middle schools, and four high schools. Twenty-seven thousand three hundred and fourteen (27,314) students attend the district schools. The White majority comprises 67.4 percent of the district's students, while 23.7 percent are of Afro-American lineage. Six percent of the district's students are Hispanic, 2.3 percent of the district's students are of Asian ancestry, and Native Americans, the least numerous of the district's minorities, comprise only .3 percent of the student population. Of this diverse student body, 30.5 percent are from families receiving public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in foster homes with public funds, or eligible to

receive free or reduced price lunches.

On May 5, 1989, a grass roots organization known as People Who Care filed a law suit in U.S. District Court charging that the district's re-organization plan discriminated against minorities, the poor, and the West side of Rockford (Rockford Register Star, May 6, 1990).

With this complaint, the district and the people of Rockford embarked upon a serpentine path costing tens of millions of dollars. The Second Interim Order alone, arising from the original law suit, will cost 60 million dollars (Rockford Register Star, August 12, 1992).

The district wide reaction to the spending of an additional 60 million dollars has been one of frustration and anger. So vehement has been this discord that Ed Wells, who initiated the People Who Care organization, wrote an at large response to the community's reaction to his initiatives:

> The people of Rockford should applaud the law suit because better students will mean a better work force. The law suit and the resulting court order can only help the education of all the children of Rockford's public schools. For three years we've been trying to tell people what this all means, but they only see the hate. (Rockford Register Star, May 6, 1990, p.9a).

The January 24, 1991 edition of the Rockford Register Star did a background piece on a University of Missouri Professor, installed by a US. District Judge, as Master; the term being, at once a formal title and a pragmatic job description. The Master's appointment came about as the talks between the school board and People Who Care collapsed. In this post, the master will determine how forthright and effective the school district's leaders are as they follow the dictates of the Second Interim Order. The people of Rockford must, by law, seek direction and

endorsement from the master as the struggle for excellence with equality continues on behalf of Rockford's children.

The city of Rockford, Illinois has a population of 140,003 representing a growth of .2 percent from 1980 to 1990. Rockford's suburban growth has far out-paced the city itself, with a growth rate of 1.6 percent. The metro area centered around Rockford has a population of 284,000, with the major area of growth extending beyond the eastern boundaries of Rockford along the East State Street corridor.

Rockford is a city of 24 industrial parks with ten firms employing one thousand or more people. There are 848 Rockford companies with a work force of one hundred or less employees. The 1990 median income for the Rockford metro area residents is $28,282; this compares with the state of Illinois' median household income of $32,252 (Census Data for the City of Rockford, 1990).

A city of 65 parks , 7 institutions of higher learning, 13 shopping malls, and a record spending of $2,258 million in annual retail sales, Rockford is also a city divided; the east from the west. The Rock River forms the east-west axis of the city and geographically splits the city. There are six bridges spanning the Rock River, yet there exists today a very real schism between the residents of the east and west sides.

Rockford's face is changing. In 1970, 91.4 percent of the people of Rockford were white. The 1990 census reveals that 79.1 percent of those living in Rockford are White. During the same time span the Afro-American population increased 31 percent, while Hispanic and Asian populations rose 85 percent. With the housing market on the west side of Rockford much less expensive than that of the booming east side, minority groups predominately became residents of

the west side.

So implacable are the ethnic and racial barriers found within Rockford, that people of compassion and reflection foresee racial, ethnic, and economic groups isolating themselves. A Co-director of the Rockford Institute warns his readers, in a Rockford Register Star article that, "If Rockford cannot restore its confidence in its schools, establish a competent labor pool, and counter the omnipresent threat of violence with valid reasons for optimism in each and every neighborhood, the city's neighborhoods will become "semi-autonomous zones"; the zones will be where people live only with those "who think, act, and look alike." (Rockford Register Star, June 27, 1993).

Regional and National Context of the Problem

Illinois is a part of the great Midwestern corn belt. With the 1980 census documenting a population of 11,427,414, ranking Illinois fifth among the fifty states, it is one of the sixteen states with a population of at least one million African Americans. Only seventeen percent of Illinois' residents live in rural areas, and a disproportionate number of minorities live in urban centers whose infrastructure is undergoing blight. The 1985 World Book documents the appearance of "White Flight". The term White Flight implies intolerance, and class awareness. When the white majority left, taking their tax dollars with them, there remained a minority population without the means to support the social mandates of the city (Angle, Hillman, & Patterson, 1984).

The dynamics of race relations, of human aspirations, of family demographics, and of economic status gave rise to the formation of social grouping within the populace of the state of Illinois. This process occurred throughout the neighboring mid-west states, as well as each

geographic region of the contiguous lower forty-eight states (Fersh, 1993).

O'Neil (1991) points out that forty-four percent of America's Black children live in poverty, while a "shocking" eighty-seven percent of Black children aged three or younger live with a single, never married mother. O'Neil (1991) further states that among the nation's Hispanic population, forty-percent of Mexican-Americans are members of a family that is poor. It may be reasonably assumed that the plight of Illinois minority children is mirrored by national statistics.

That this nation's, as well as Illinois' at risk children, are over represented by minority students is well documented, as Strong (1989) revealed when he found that of the entire childhood population of the United States, twenty-percent of those children must deal with the all-pervasive powers of poverty.

Children learn as they live. It can then be reasonably postulated that attachment and identity of the young, indeed the very young, is formed within neighborhoods that are socially and economically isolated. This formative learning coined as the "societal curriculum" by Cortez teaches children ideas and attitudes toward ethnic and racial groups (Cortez, Metcalf, Hawks, 1976).

It is widely believed that a culture of poverty is a dysfunctional culture, because impoverished parents instilled their children with anti-learning attitudes. (Garcia 1978 p. 12) stated that " Minority students cannot be culturally deprived. Instead minority children assimilate survival skills, attending values and traditions, and the existence of ethnic hostility and conflict. Accordingly, what minority parents often feel should be taught in their children's schools differs from the expectation of the teaching staffs within those schools".

An inherent human trait is to form groups centered upon common experiences, language,

physical traits, and commonly held values. This socialization begins at birth and extends into puberty. A societal norm found throughout the diverse populations of contemporary America is to assign to America's schools the responsibility of educating the young of the brown barrios and black ghettoes in the fundamental and enduring standards of human rights and self government. There is now another lasting standard taken up by the schools of this land; that standard is to enlighten the ethnically encapsulated, the children and parents of tree lined suburbs, and inner city enclave alike, about the principle that "ethnic diversity enriches nations and increases the ways in which its citizens can perceive and solve personal and public problems" (Banks, 1977).

Multi-ethnic education within all schools will, hopefully, undertake these goals: a) to provide each child with insights into the unique capabilities and contributions of their culture, b) to educate children so that they would have the skills, attitudes, and knowledge to work within and across diverse workways and lifeways, c) to aid in the eradication of the pain always eternally arising from racial hate, d) and finally, to develop the students' will to nurture the bonds of humanity that define, describe, and direct the human race.

The school, as it formulates curriculum and directs its faculty, will also begin to look within to be a place of enthusiasm and competence.

The country still struggles with the problems of race leading J.A. Banks (1977) to cite the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education paper containing the phrase, "There is NO ONE MODEL AMERICAN". Black history and White history are not separated one from the other. Reflection reveals an integral history (Banks, 1977). The twentieth century has been a century of crisis born of racial unrest and of puzzlement, and of demands and denial, and of sorrow and empathy. Legions of people need to be heard because struggles assault their existence

due to who they are. No one American can ignore the plight of another; no one American is immune from the tragedies emanating from racial strife; no one American can bring about racial harmony, but every American must be "helped to develop the vision and the commitment to make your world more humane" (Banks 1977, p. 32).

Chapter Two

Problem Evidence and Probable Cause

The population of the United States is approximately 250 million. Of this total, 64 million are children. The diversity of these children is a direct reflection of the emigration history of the United States. Sixty-nine percent of this country's children are of European ancestry. Fifteen percent of America's youngsters have a dual history; a history finding itself chronicling the peoples of Africa and the slave trades practiced by the countries of western Europe and their colonies. Fifteen percent of today's youth are of Hispanic origins. The children of the Eastern Pacific rim and Native Americans combine to comprise four percent of the children living in the United States. The "Browning of America" is a reality (Marcus 1994). America's children are as diverse and magnificent as the lands they inhabit.

The children of the United States, from birth, are raised in cultures whose dimensions are defined by the perceptions, perspectives, feelings and behaviors of the dominate culture. Indeed, Fersh (1993, p. 11) states that, " It is neither necessary nor possible for a person not to be ethnocentric to some extent". Children are oriented to the culture that has brought to them caring, sharing, love, learning and growth or its lack, as their birthright.

Ethnocentric conditioning serves more as a censor, rather than a sensor. A Chinese proverb enlightens humanity as a philosopher cautions, "We see what is behind our eyes." Children who are reared with a narrow focus of humanity and diversity, may ignore or defy that which they don't understand. These children may, tragically, confront life with a self-righteous arrogance (Curwin, 1992, p.12).

The following tables offer insights as we consider the visions and life functions of the student body and certified staff of the targeted middle school:

Table One
Teachers' Survey Responses

Statements:		% SA or A	% N	% SD or D
1.	School is integrated	50	29	21
2.	Student groups based on age/sex	32	33	35
3.	Group with definite membership	61	36	3
4.	Groups form because of activities	71	18	11
5.	Groups form because of race	47	25	28
6.	Groups form to obtain physical/emotional security	94	6	0
7.	Grade point average influences group membership	26	37	37
8.	Groups are racially integrated	21	39	40
9.	Student racial prejudice present	54	24	22
10a.	Racism is countered by friendship	65	29	6
10b.	Racism is countered by team teaching	44	35	21
10c.	Racism countered by club sports	62	29	9
11.	Teachers value diverse student body	45	29	26
12.	Student body supports diversity	25	44	31
13.	At times your thoughts are biased	15	29	56
14.	Misunderstanding a racial or ethnic group causes unrest	70	21	9
15.	Diverse lifestyles contribute to discipline concerns	76	18	6
16.	School's staff promotes student interaction	56	38	6

The data in Table One permit a number of observations. Immediately notable is the percentage of teachers who have no opinion, or who have chosen not to share that opinion. While the range of "no opinion" responses if from 6 to 44 percent, on average approximately one

third of the teachers chose not to agree or disagree with any given statement. This reticence may reflect the unrest in the community related to racial issues.

In terms of documenting the problem of student formation of self-defining peer groups, 80 percent of the faculty believe such groups exist, and 48 percent believe that group membership of defined by race. However, 78 percent of the faculty believe that students also form groups based on their interest in activities, regardless of race. Age and/or gender seen as the third most likely impetus for peer group membership. The largest area of agreement, within the staff, is the belief that students form groups because of their needs for physical and emotional security.

While a sense of belonging is a basic human need, the degree to which that need is fulfilled by selecting peers based on race may be problematic. Do self-segregating groups create a climate that foster prejudice? Fifty-nine percent of the faculty believe that students harbor some prejudicial feelings, while only 23 percent believe that students value diversity. Teachers also believe that the diverse composition of the student body contributes to discipline problems.

The degree that teachers value diversity is also addressed by the survey. Forty-four percent of the teachers agree that their colleagues value the diversity of the student body. Teachers also feel that a lack of information about how to deal with diverse ethnic and cultural norms leads to unrest in the classroom. Slightly more than half of the faculty believe that their colleagues actively promote interactions between racially defined student groups. The majority of teachers agree that student friendships, as well as sports and after-school activities, counter prejudicial attitudes.

Figures 1a. and 1b. and the visual and spatial representations of Table One (Appendix A). Two peaks are immediately noticeable; teachers believe students form groups because of activities

and in order to obtain emotional and physical security. Another graphic representation that is singularly interesting is the finding that the targeted school's staff has declared itself to be committed to the diverse student body the staff serves. Table Three (Appendix A) contains the numerical data from which the percentages were gained.

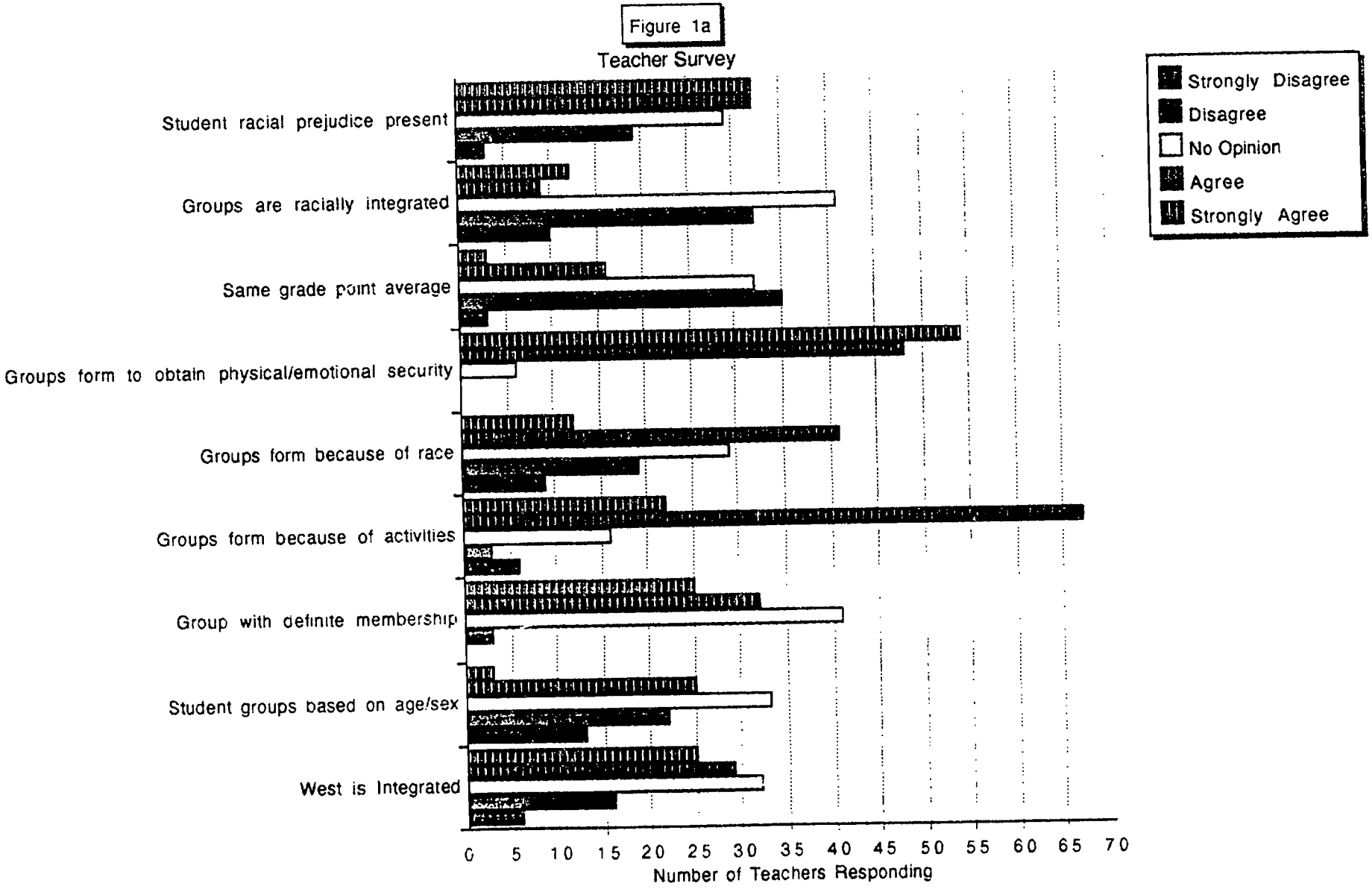
Figure 1a
Teacher Survey
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
No Opinion
Agree
Strongly Agree
Student racial prejudice present
Groups are racially integrated
Same grade point average
Groups form to obtain physical/emotional security
Groups form because of race
Groups form because of activities
Group with definite membership
Student groups based on age/sex
West is Integrated
0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70
Number of Teachers Responding

Figure 1b

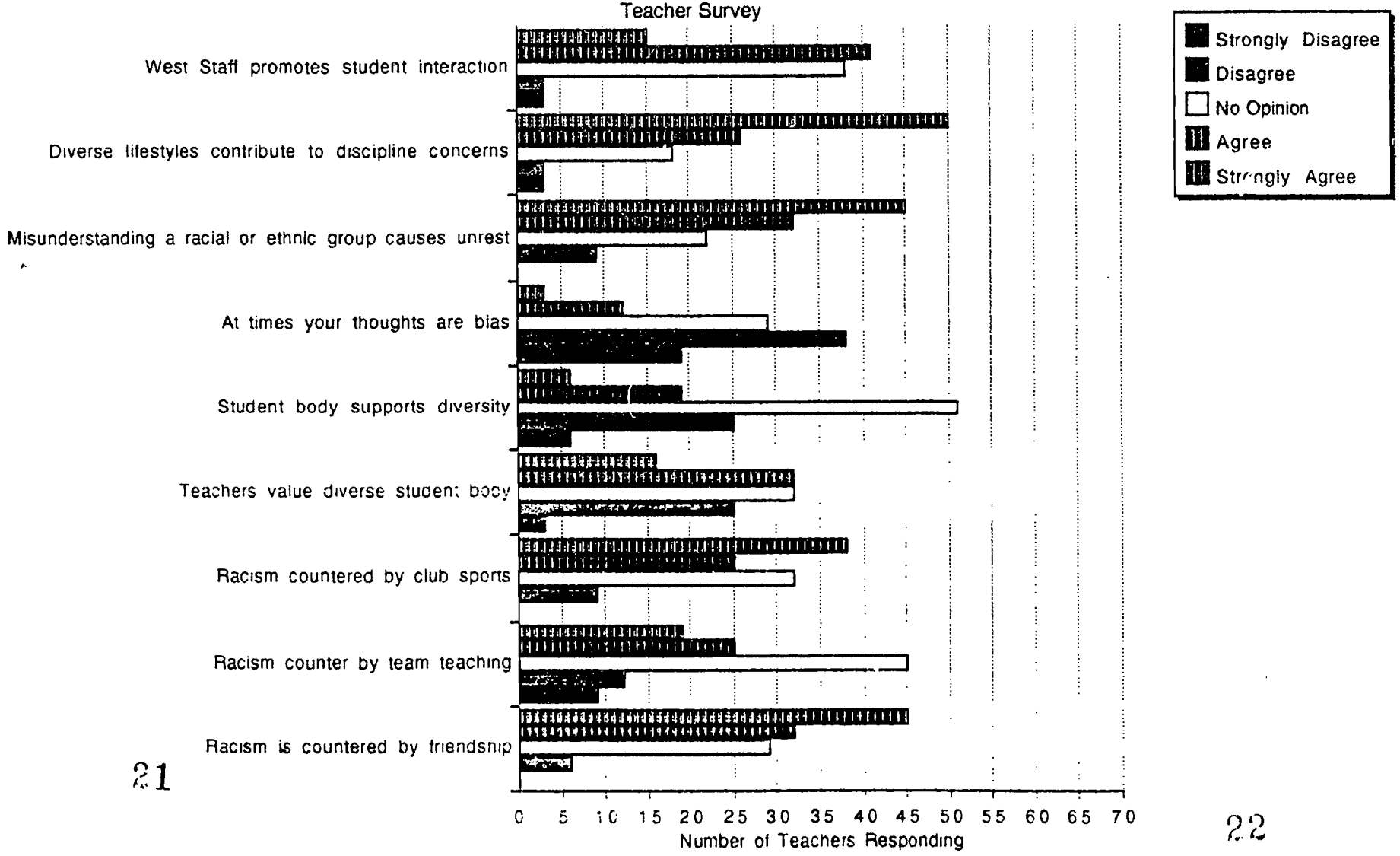

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Table Two
Students' Survey Responses

Statements:		% SA or A	% N	% SD or D
1.	School is integrated	47	33	20
2.	Your group is well recognized	46	31	23
3.	Group of same age/sex	60	18	22
4.	Your group racially integrated	44	22	34
5.	Group helps acceptance	55	29	16
6.	Group protects you	45	27	28
7.	Same grade point average	44	32	24
8.	Feel positive about life	71	16	13
9.	Group has a lot in common	65	15	20
10.	Group family incomes are equal	34	30	36
11.	Your best friends are girls/boys	71	16	13
12.	Personal beliefs are important	69	16	15
13.	Your an individual	66	20	14
14.	Friends like you as you are	69	19	12
15.	Your group is open to any honest "kid"	49	29	22
16.	Bias thinking in your group	42	28	30
17.	Diverse group joins same activities	32	40	28
18.	Rejected because of beliefs and goals	21	20	59
19.	Rejected because of skin color	23	28	49

When considering the student responses of Table Two, the percentage of students having "no opinion", as they considered the survey, varied from a low of 15 percent to a high of 40 percent. The number of students either not having an opinion, or wishing to keep their opinions to themselves, averaged 24 percent throughout the survey. The teacher's survey's average o: "no

opinion" responses as the teachers considered their survey was 33 percent. It may be that the students reflect upon their collective world with less ambiguity than the staff of their school does.

When students, and teachers alike, consider the student body's diversity, 50 percent of the teachers think the student and teacher alike consider the role of the peer group affording students physical and emotional well being. Ninety-four percent of the teachers believe that their students rely on their peer groups for protection, but only 45 percent of the students believe peer groups have, as a primary function, to safeguard their respective members. This disparity may be explained by student responses to questions 18 and 19. Fifty-nine percent of the students surveyed have not experienced rejection because of their belief and value systems; 64 percent of the students have not been rejected because of the color of their skin.

Only (if such a work can be used when considering racism) 16 percent of the students affirm that they have encountered racial prejudice or bigotry; this student response is in glaring opposition to the 54 percent of the staff who believe that racism is present within the student body.

What can be readily noted is that teachers and students walking the same halls, working together in the same classrooms, adapting to the same events, are often in profound disagreement. There are no truths to be objectively discovered while studying these two surveys; rather these surveys are opportunities to gain insights into the most complex process on this earth; the process of human interaction as humanity develops, expands, and creates. Appendix B contains the numerical data from which the percentages of Table Two were ascertained. Figure 2a. and 2b. are visual representations of the raw numerical data of Appendix B.

Figure 2a

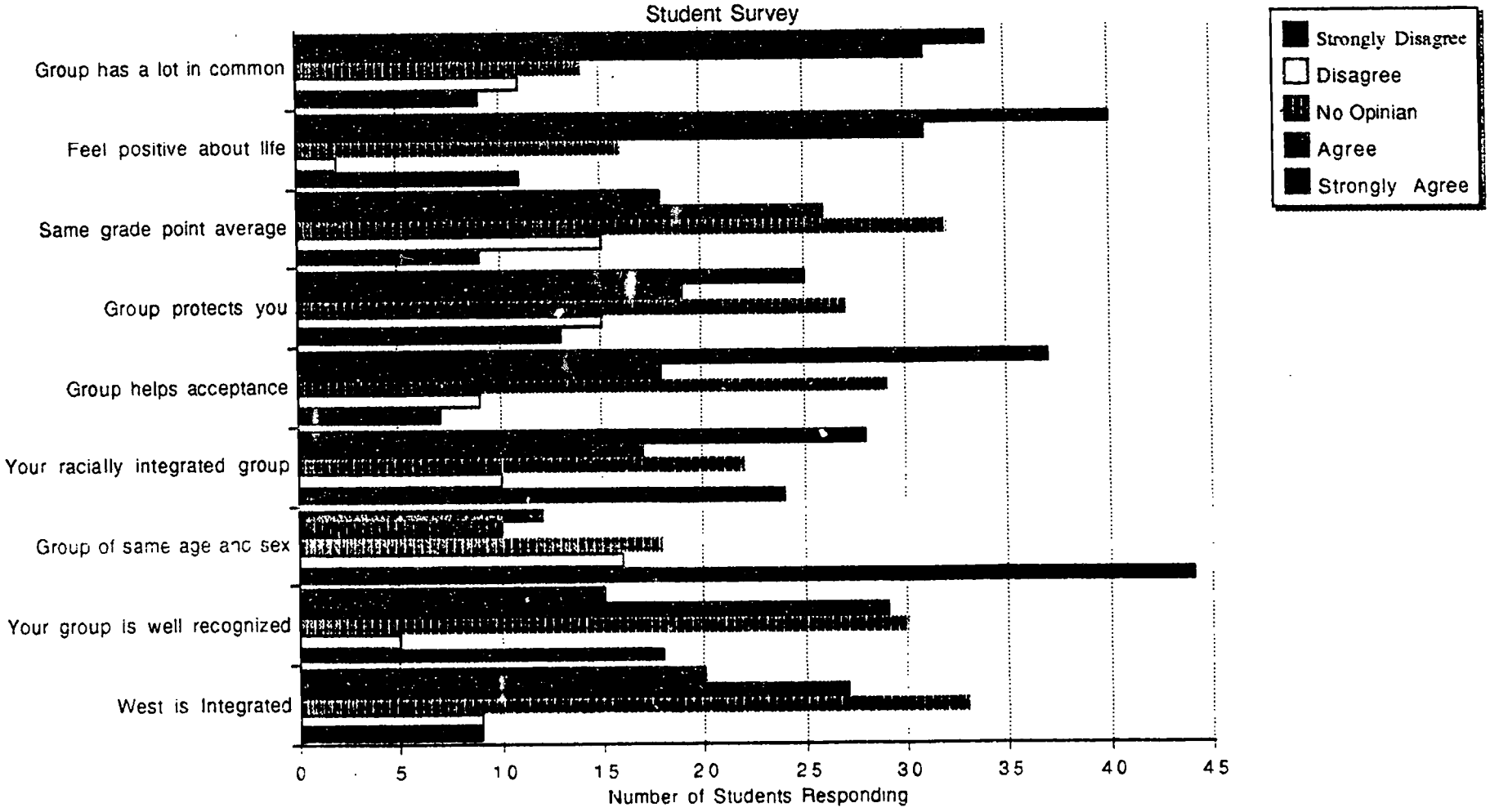
Student Survey
Group has a lot in common
Feel positive about life
Same grade point average
Group protects you
Group helps acceptance
Your racially integrated group
Group of same age and sex
Your group is well recognized
West is Integrated
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
No Opinian
Agree
Strongly Agree
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
Number of Students Responding

Figure 2b

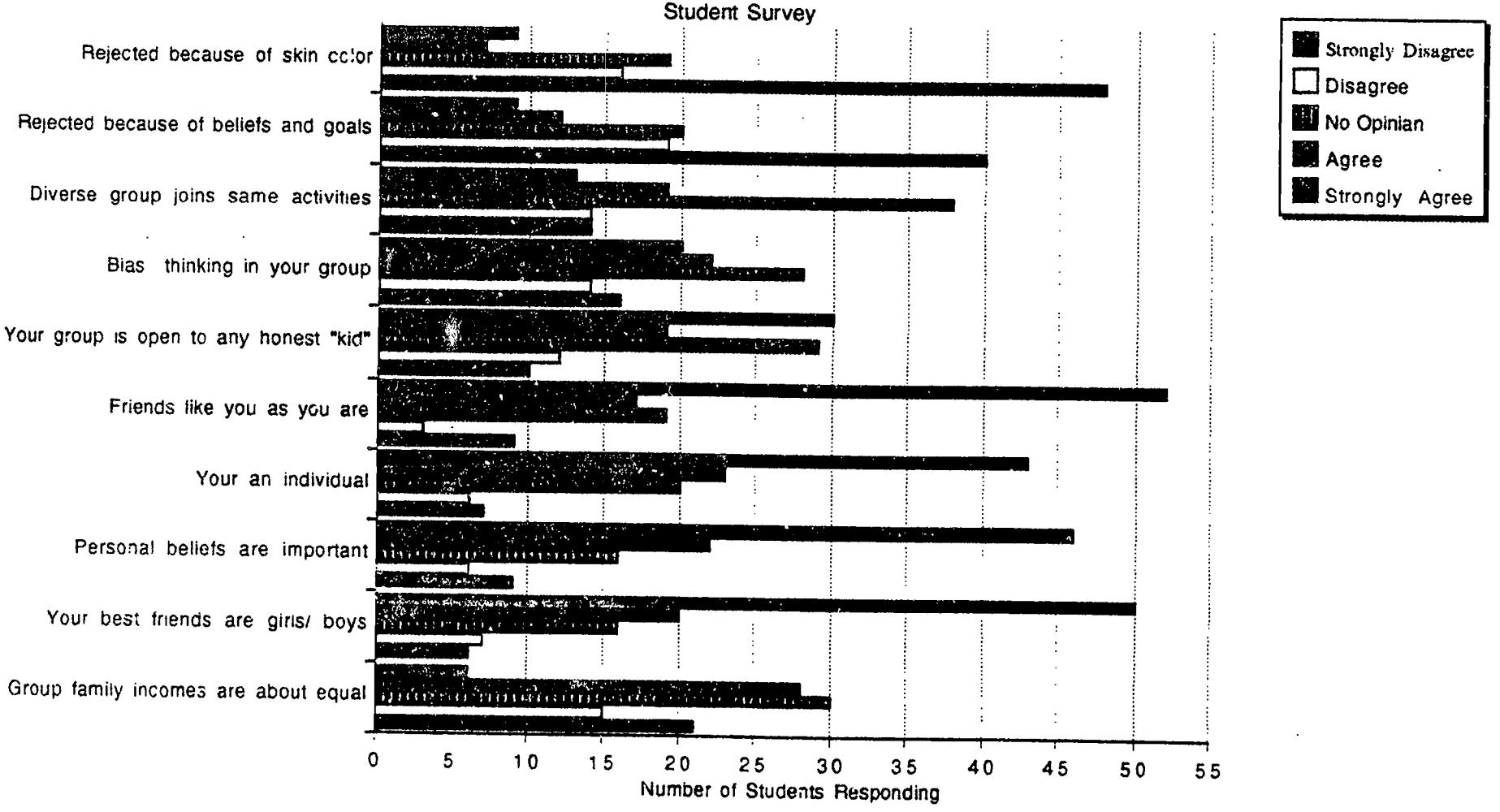

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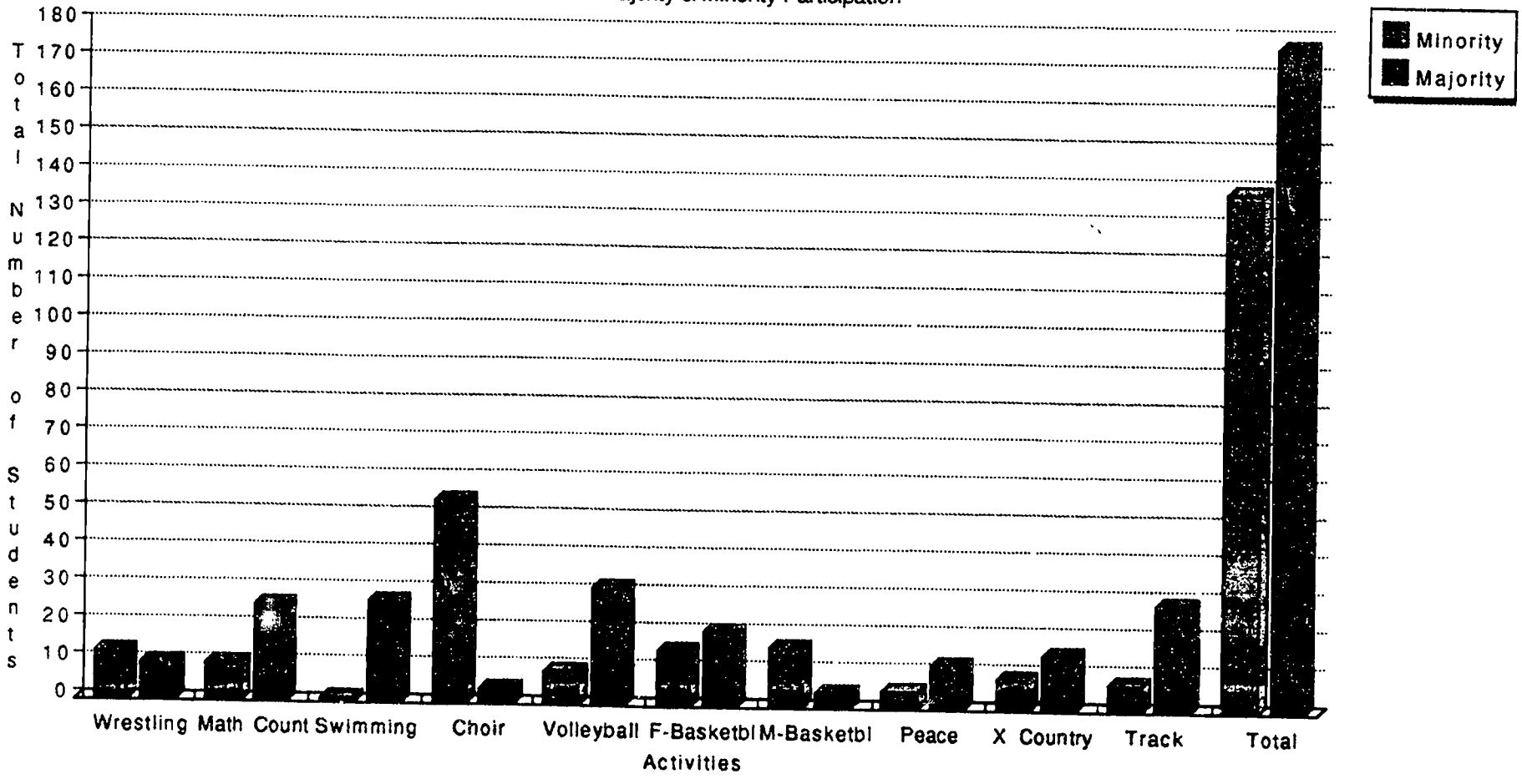
Figure Three charts the minority and majority membership of after school teams, clubs, and the Inspirational Choir (Golden, 1994). An examination of table three verifies that there is a racial congealing within such activities as swimming, the choir, and the P.E.A.C.E. group (P.E.A.C.E. had no black or Hispanic members, the minority children were of the Eastern Pacific Rim in their origins). The ratio of minority and majority children attending after school groups are roughly equal. Thus, it seems that more minority students, as compared to majority students, desire to seek staff, peer relationships, and fulfillment outside of organized school activities (their classroom, halls, and cafeteria). The presence of multiple intelligences are also profoundly in evidence as these children, and all children, seek their place in the sun, waking, playing, and progressing, before and after the final bell (Bellanca, Costa, Fogarty, 1993, p.13).

Figure 3

Majority & Minority Participation



Probable Causes

The eighth graders are coalescing into distinct racial or ethnic groups. These capsules are to be found in the halls, in the cafeteria, and within the membership of after school athletics or student organizations. All of the world's young are socialized within a community capsule (Banks, 1992). However, the formation of the mind and body within a culture, with static boundaries formed from within, will become a quagmire of the "status quo". This quagmire will not allow any movement toward cohesion of common goals---the goals of true equality within the economic, sociological, and psychological needs and practices of the human condition. To appreciate diversity is to "reduce race, class, and gender divisions in the United States and the world" (Banks, 1977, p. 11).

Students so enamored with their culture's racial and ethnic ties, so as not to examine their culture's beliefs, values, and perspectives, devalue their culture and the cultures unknown to them (Banks, 1992). Indeed, O'Neil (1991) writes that to raise a child to be so encapsulated as to be segregated from the, "recognition of the contributions of all people results in educational apartheid".

Within our country are still to be found the virulent viruses of hatred and racism and because of this presence, conflicts are inevitable. These conflicts have further infected many with the "Ideas of intrinsic inferiority and superiority" (O'Neil, 1992, p.26).

Malcom X (1964) wrote, " I have always kept an open mind a kick goes hand in hand with very intelligent search for the truth" (p.17). This nation has passed through the history of institutionalized slavery, the Jim Crow Laws, and the civil rights movement. The battle is now for the hearts and minds of this country.

The burgeoning population of people of color in American society has fashioned a series of issues that reach into their heritage, experiences, and identities that have formed the American culture (Banks, 1992). The 1990 census indicated that one of every four Americans is a minority of color. If the United States is to remain a nation dominated by Western traditional thought, as the ethnic complexion of the country becomes a complexion of hues, ethnic polarization and controversy will dominate the national scene (Banks, 1992). The divergent views that are fashioning a national debate are centered upon what constitutes the American identity. How was the countenance of the American identity formed? Consequently, this nation must have its civic leaders and educators step forward and address what is now known as the American Dilemma (Banks, 1992).

The dilemma facing the American people can only be answered by acknowledging the goals of the American creed; the universal belief and practice that human dignity and respect are the birthrights of all humanity. As America exists at this moment, Americans are not described by their birthrights; instead Americans are pigeonholed by their economic status, racial traits, and dehumanizing stereotypes. Facing reality, acknowledging that American's culture is a pluralistic culture, is the right of passage of a free citizen, not only of the United States, but of the world (Greene, 1988).

The American Dream is to bestow upon each citizen the capability and resources to be full participants in the American way of life; to work towards the goals articulated by the family, by cultural enclave, and by their country. The American creed bequeaths equality and justice as the foundation of the every day lives of every American. Still the American Dilemma remains to convulse and to confuse the people of this country. Millions of Americans, a disproportionate

number of the minorities of color, are losing hope; they have not been able to find work that enables a person to transform a dream into a goal (Price, 1992).

One reason the American Dilemma continues is that the myth of the "melting pot" remains as an American ideal as races and ethnic groups are constantly dissolved and reformed. This melting pot, as an ideal and as a reality, doesn't work. Indeed, Krug (1976) quotes, Jesse Jackson's (1976) observation, "When people of color were placed into America's melting pot, they stuck to the bottom" (p. 6). The unceasing rattle of statistics has revealed that if a demographic pie, allocating poverty, were placed into America's melting pot, the resulting pastry would emerge divided into ten pieces. Five of the ten pieces would be passed to Afro-Americans, a full half. Of the five remaining pieces, four would be given to the Hispanic minorities. The other ten percent, would, as they say, cross all racial and ethnic boundaries. Poverty in America is so often a matter of the color of one's skin (Reed, 1990).

Historically, the American majority has dealt with native born minorities, as well as the newest emigrants, by placing this nation's minority citizens into the eurocentric cauldron known as the melting pot. However, there was no melting to form a new populace of national and community pride. Instead, Anglo-American culture reserved privileges and preeminence and remained dominant (Banks, 1989). Banks further asserts, "that the United States' institution of public education fully embraced "Anglo-conformity" (p. 215-216). The American school, Banks insists, had as one of its major goals "to rid ethnic groups of their ethnic traits and to force them to acquire Anglo-American values and behavior" (p. 215-216). Therefore, the American public school became a drop forge, hammering the ductile student into a form of thinking that imposed upon the minds of the diverse minorities the idea of Western European superiority. Moreover, the

American school failed to reflect, validate, and celebrate the cultures of ethnic minorities.

Even as this country's most visible, divisive, and representative institution, the public school has remained a watershed of conformity (Commanger, 1976). The need for reform confronting educators now is a matter of establishing a harmony with the demographic changes currently being encountered by the American family. These demographic changes are real, persistent, and growing (Huelscamp, 1993). They will guide and push the changes coming to the American school as long as this country ascribes to the ideal of universal education. American society is demanding, and maybe even bestowing, upon the American school the task of being the engineer of social changes born of inequities and inequalities.

Poverty, as a noun, as a description, as an existence, defines the "status" of twelve million young Americans (Reed, 1993). Twenty five years after the War on Poverty, the ranks of poor children have exceeded event the most dire predication, assuming the status of a profound social change. So profound is this change, that child advocacy committees abound while the plight of the poor continues unabated (Price, 1992, Stevens, 1992).

Within the professional realm of educators, the term poverty has become synonymous with the term "Children at Risk". A child at risk is in danger of failing to complete his or her education with an adequate level of skills (Slavin and Madden, 1989). The risk factors include low achievement, behavior problems, low socioeconomic status, and school attendance with large numbers of poor students (Slavin and Madden, 1990).

Twenty years after the War on Poverty was officially decreed by President Johnson, the poverty rate for all citizens has fallen to 13.1 percent, a decline of only 2.1 percent from the Johnson era. Yet, in raw numbers, more Americans are poor in the last decade of the twentieth

century than in the previous decades of the 60s, 70s, and 80s. Since 1975, children have been poorer than any other group (Reed, 1990).

Actually, the crisis of so many of America's young, far transcends the accumulation of social data; the "median poor family's" income in 1988 was $4,851 below the poverty line. If a family has a single mother as its provider, the gap between the poverty line and family income was $5,206 (Reed, 1990). A child's status as a poor child, when considering the plunge taken by a poor family's income, can endanger that child's life. Inoculations and pediatric care, food and clothing, housing and head start programs may well be beyond the capabilities of the child's parents or parent. Ten thousand children a year, in this country die as a result of poverty (Reed, Sauter, 1993).

Children of poverty, with physical and mental damage , so easily prevented by prenatal care and nutritional programs, attend the schools. Eleven percent of all children entering school, are assigned to special education classes because of cognitive and physical development difficulties caused by the multiple onslaughts of poverty. In a country that seeks to embrace each citizen with equal opportunities, social justice, and a commitment to human dignity as a birthright, the willful neglect of the poor and young is immoral. The word willful is a powerful word, but when the American Academy of Pediatricians determined that of the twenty health goals for infants and children initiated by surgeon general Dr. Juleps Richmond, only one goal has been accomplished (Reed, 1990), then the use of the word willful is justified.

There are mountain ranges of statistics and documentation chronicling the lives of the poor. The heritage of damaged lives is now a part of this country's history. The impact upon the teachers of the nation's schools is as daunting as what they face when encountering the young and

the poor so well defined by their country's research, fact finding committees, and the chronicles of those professionals working to eradicate the effects of poverty. Teachers face: student population turnover, students with health concerns, students with family members trivializing the need for a sound education, low self-esteem, and ultimately, a child so bewildered by expectations and reality that the child seeks isolation (Stevens 1992; Price, 1992). The isolation may include family, the culture, and the very community so well-known by that child. Such self-imposed isolation will give rise to administrators guaranteeing safe buildings, of teachers controlling and stuffing their students rather than leading and drawing the student out with the higher levels of thinking.

Economic and educational disparities are an affliction facing so many of today's youth. That such injustices have no known social boundaries is a fact; it is also a fact that such injustices are borne principally by this country's people of color --- the minorities. When racism underpins much of the onslaughts of poverty, the resulting human tragedy of tribalism on either side of the poverty line will be the result (Price, 1992).

Banks (1977) has written that White people welcomed each other unto a united fold, enjoying the unique treasures of ethnic diversity; cuisines, philosophies, language, and wo kplace skills nurtured and bequeathed to generations yet to be born. Banks also asserts that people of color were shunned, as racism's decree of inherent White superiority was expressed nationwide, either overtly, or covertly.

Bank's (1990), citing the studies of McDaugall and Littel, states that encapsulated African American neighborhoods were established as a means of practicality and preservation, for Black citizens. With very few exceptions, these citizens were denied any opportunity to melt.

Fordham and Ogher (1986) have brought to light a grotesque attitude adopted by many

youths of color. These youths believe that academic success in their schools is a process of selling out to the White world. What is so grotesque, assert Forham and Ogher, is that youth of color have accepted the racist's view that people of color are not as capable as those who are White.

The student and teacher surveys that were conducted in the target schools are tragic substantiations of the work of Banks (1977, 1992), and of Fordham and Ogher (1986).

The student survey does reveal that students see their peer groups as a means of affording protection and acceptance. The teacher survey solidifies the belief that the existence of racial and ethnic segregation causes heightened stress in their classroom.

The Sunday Register Star of February 26, 1995, reports in the study done by Alves, Dentler, and Willie on the desegregation effort of Rockford's school.

Dentler, Alves, and Willie discovered:

1. Black children must be bussed to east side schools if they're to attend integrated classes.
2. Too few Blacks attend honors and gifted classes.
3. Households on the west side are still isolated racially and ethnically.
4. Gifted, creative, and performing arts classes function as a school within a school.

The students of the target group have segregated groups. There are many reasons why they have. Some peer group members live as neighbors in a racially isolated region of the city. Some students, on either side of the color line trust only those of the same color. There are students at the target school who band together because life is not so confusing, while sharing their music, their dress, and their rebellions and unquestioning acceptance of a lifestyle actually created by the group's interaction. If we are to acknowledge Fordham and Ogher (1986) some

children come together because material wealth equals superiority; and some children see solace in a peer group because poverty equals an inferior place within the human race.

Chapter 3

The Solution Strategies

The Review of the Literature

A literature search, has revealed that the goal of community building will require three separate, yet intrinsically related, areas of action:

1.) The intermingling of the mosaic of cultures so readily present within the school community.

2.) The abilities and capabilities of multiethnic groups empowered by inclusion and influence to be an integral ingredient of the formulate of school restructuring. The empowering of multi-ethnic groups through their inclusion in the formula for school re-structuring.

3.) Facilitating, students to become leaders by modeling of the new three R's; Respect, Responsibility, and Relatedness (a term coined by Vanston Shaw, 1993).

So intensive has been the focus on the realities of changing demographics, that this very element of public scrutiny has become a co-equal with the merging forces reshaping American family life. (Huelscamp, 1993). Currently, the public is concerned about: the country's immigration policies, who the newly arriving immigrants are, and the reasons for leaving the countries of their birth. The "browning of America" is no longer a phenomenon known only to anthropologists. This "phenomenon" is now firmly within the public domain, and the citizens, while not possessing a common resolve regarding the recent immigrants, are deeply troubled (Huelscamp, 1993).

Immigrants entered the United States during the 1980s at a higher rate than any other decade of the twentieth century, except the first. This phenomenon will create a most profound change in the dynamics of the nation's classrooms. During the closing years of the nineties, as many as 5 million children of immigrant families will enter the nation's K-12 school districts (Huelscamp, 1993). Education within a pluralistic society is the fundamental tool of creating reflective and unbiased thinking skills. Such skills form civil communities maintained by the devotion to the common good (Andrus, Joiner, 1989).

The American school must become an institution not only of tolerance, but a place of conversation among the different voices issuing from diverse cultures. This concept of public education will aid in the reaffirmation that the United States remain a society whose citizens have a binding obligation one to the other. The American school, if this society is to exist, must facilitate the implementation of all ethnic groups into "an inclusiveness that infuses every facet of our society" (Price, 1992). Intolerance, insularity, the pangs of hunger, can no longer be allowed to squander the possibilities, and the achievements of a common nationality infused by diverse affirmations on human dignity.

A remarkable and resilient collection of the world's peoples form the American culture. The melting pot concept resulted in what is known as the American dilemma: people of color face racism and poverty. The American school is thought to be the social institution best suited to combat these social blights. The most promising solution for American schools is to make education the endeavor of the entire American society (Commanger, 1976). The American student is then to work too, to have a say, to have a deciding and participating role as the American school reacts to the needs of the American student.

The diverse American student body must participate in the development of a stimulating and responsive environment, although the degree of involvement must necessarily depend upon age and prior experience. Such an environment would be designed for all students - all races, all ethnic groups, and all economic and social classes. A multiethnic environment is truly concerned with the total climate of the American school (Fersh, 1993).

It makes a difference whether teachers and students alike feel as if their schools are the boundaries of education, doing good work, as well as, participating in the very real transformations of American culture, or merely surviving (Dale, 1972). Young people do need content-centered studies; such studies illuminate, as well as, convey all of the horizons sought after by humankind. Yet, the cognitive set of studies often do not require the student to reflect upon feelings to the level that excites and causes commitment in the student (Fersh, 1993). Students now have the opportunity, and the necessity to become their own internal teachers. The human qualities of humor, humanity, humility, and empathy can only become part of the human character by the willful act of self-development; and self-development can only arise from purposeful involvement (Fresh, 1993).

If each student and each teacher has been empowered by inclusion and shared power, then a rich educational environment will be the result. Such an environment is described by Matthew Arnold (cited in Shaw, 1993, p. 84) as "Acquainting ourselves with the best that has been known and said in the world".

Ellis and Brandon-Mueller (1994) propose this vision of a school transformed by teacher and student alike. Within this same list is implied the skills needed to carry out the task of restructuring a school:

1. Children will possess self-worth.
2. Children will feel capable as they interact with others and take on new roles and challenges.
3. Children will behave ethically and acts responsibly toward others.
4. Children will develop sound work habits.
5. Children will have a prospective on the future that provides a source of positive direction and energy.
6. Children will appreciate the benefits of a multiracial society and the values of others.
7. Children will be skilled in interpersonal encounters and communication.
8. Children will adopt health enhancing and health protective behaviors.
9. Children will be motivated to become a productive citizen as the child serves as a positive contributing member of his peer group, family, school, and community, and
10. Children will avoid engaging in behavior that may lead to negative consequences such as drug abuse, teen pregnancy, AIDS, social isolation, serious physical injury, school dropout, depression, suicide, unemployment, or criminal prosecution.

The American school so restructured contributes to the transformation of each child and becomes a "school family" (Schaps and Solomon, 1990). The American school then becomes more adept at teaching and molding all aspects of a child's development; the inter-related intellectual, social, and moral aspects of a child's growth towards becoming a caring, contributing young adult. The child, now capable of so much, has experienced the warmth of belonging and

the pride of contributing. These feelings of belonging and caring motivate a student (Ellis, Brandon- Mueller, 1994) to become a capable member of the "school family", aiding in the development and helping to oversee the transformation of their school.

Capable students welcoming change within themselves and working for change within their schools, as co-workers with their teachers and administrators, are a product of cooperation and hands-on learning strategies. Curwin (1992) wrote that schools can transform their students by systematically offering formal and informal programs to give students the opportunity to help others.

> Because giving and caring are positive values for most people, students who help are viewed as worthwhile and positive by teachers and other students. Even the most cynical, alienated students feel good when others think well of them (p. 29).

Schools, Shaw (1993) writes, undergo restructuring as their educators and student bodies are transformed into a community. There are three steps in community development: teachers and students feel as if they are a team and part of the class; teachers and students, alike, have influence, neither feel dominated; and each person has participated in discussions and decision making.

Project Outcomes

The terminal objective of this problem intervention is related to the student and teacher survey and the middle school census, which delineated the rate of minority and majority participation in after-school activities. Survey results indicated that autonomous, self segregating, peer groups exist within the integrated student body. The probable cause data, presented in the

latter stages of Chapter 2, and the solution strategies presented in the first part of this chapter suggested the need for formation of a student core group to address the presence of student-derived, segregated, peer groups. Therefore:

> As a result of the academic sponsor's role as a facilitator and educator, the P.E.A.C.E. (Putting the Environment Above the Common Ego) activist, student core groups, after attending diversity awareness and recognition sessions, will promote friendships and interactions without bias. A post- survey, administered to staff and teachers combined with the anecdotal records of the core groups will measure the effects of the intervention.

Probable causes gathered from the literature suggested that when students are provided with the opportunity to contribute directly to the needs of their school and community, their self-esteem, decision making, skills, self concepts, and awareness will erase self-centeredness, apathy; these are all enhancements of student empowerment and ownership.

In order to accomplish the terminal objectives, the following process objectives define the major strategic procedures proposed for problem resolution.

1.) P.E.A.C.E. has developed a set of goals that is varied and involves multiple intelligences, capabilities, and interests.

2.) The academic advisor assumes the role of facilitator, enabling the students to achieve goals articulated by PEACE members.

3.) The PEACE student environmental group will process its achievements and frustrations.

4.) As a result of community building, PEACE members will, as it has for the last three years, continue to interact with other student organizations; goals of interacting student groups will be brain stormed and acted upon.

Proposal Solution Components

The major elements of the approach to decrease the incidents of students forming peer groups that are racially or ethnically defined can be broken down into five major factors; to fully involve students via inclusion; to empower children so that they have a clear view of their contribution; to surround the child with trust and affirmations, to facilitate multiethnic interaction; and to propose goals that enhance the school and the city of Rockford. Probable cause data reveal that school transformation requires the students to change; and one of the best avenues to instill expressed feelings of joy, celebration, and caring within the young is to aid children in connecting with the world around them.

Action Plan For Implementing The Solution Strategy

The action plan is designed to address four major solution components: initiate student core groups; facilitate community building within PEACE, even as PEACE begins its work promoting ethnic pride and the richness of a diverse society; to insure that each PEACE member is empowered with inclusion and the opportunity to influence the work PEACE undertakes; and to process the achievements and frustrations.

1. Core groups are in place; there are six active committees. Twenty students are now consistent in their commitment to P.E.A.C.E. These activist students have undertaken six student defined projects.
2. P.E.A.C.E. members are forming friendships. Team building is fostering positive results.
3. The children will forego work on their projects, spontaneously, to aid other

members with greater needs.

4. PEACE has initiated an on going cooperative effort with the school's Inspirational Choir.

5. Student members welcome input from their peers. Brainstorming sessions have become a time of sharing and realizing workable solutions can be formed.

6. Seeking time to relax and reflect occurs as the students help and offer feedback as they gather together at the murals, a time to shared and close out the day at a place where the children feel to be their special place. Genuinely involved, the students needed only to be made aware of the four solutions; a natural rhythm has since evolved; the four solutions are now accepted philosophies.

The implementation plan is offered below in outline form and in sequential order, allowing for the overlapping of strategies.

Plan

A.) Establish goal setting.

1.) Student goal setting.

2.) Student planning for projects.

3.) Student evaluation of organization goals.

4.) Student revision of organization goals.

5.) Moderator facilitates group process.

a.) Reflective listening.

b.) Modeling of problem-solving techniques.

c.) Providing logistical support.

d.) Providing counseling services.

6.) Trust-building strategies.

a.) Student given ownership in projects.

b.) Facilitation of student goals.

c.) Facilitator uses cooperative strategies within sub-groups.

d.) Celebrate successes.

e.) Build on success.

B.) Integrate Peace With Other School Groups

1.) Student council liaison.

2.) Work with CAPA - sets/murals

3.) Work with choir.

C.) Grant proposal

1.) Community service projects.

2.) Group sweaters (validation).

3.) Peace pens (validation).

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the affects of the intervention six methods will be used:

1.) Maintaining group membership and as their work is noticed attracting new members.

2.) "The Colors Should Only be Separated in the Wash" beginning their work with

well defined and understood goals.

3.) The continuing interaction between PEACE and other school organizations.

4.) The keeping of a journal of teacher observations.

5.) A late winter, early spring survey of staff and students.

6.) Upon completion of tasks, PEACE members assess their collective and personal contributions.

7.) Interview the P.E.A.C.E. members.

Chapter 4

Project Results

Historical Description of Intervention

The action plan had three components: the re-establishment of the P.E.A.C.E. group, the integration of P.E.A.C.E. with other student groups, and the authoring of a grant proposal as a means of supporting the goals and strategies of P.E.A.C.E.

The first phase of the plan, involved re-establishing P.E.A.C.E. as a group of young people committed, not only to the environment, but to the added mandate of helping students form racially and ethnically diverse friendships and peer groups.

Prior to the 1994-1995 school year, P.E.A.C.E. was an environmental organization whose membership was predominantly from the white majority. The primary goal of P.E.A.C.E. was to become a multi-cultural group. This goal was a moral imperative. Moreover, this goal when accomplished, would add credibility to P.E.A.C.E.'s multi-cultural initiatives. To that end, and to the students' credit, a black young woman (from a multi-cultural group of four candidates) was elected to be the groups' president. While this young lady is a fine officer, and so, very visible, P.E.A.C.E.'s president remains the only black student member of the group. Currently, there are student members of P.E.A.C.E. who are Japanese, Thais, and Vietnamese. There are, as of this writing, no Hispanic members of P.E.A.C.E. To make note of the lack of African-Americans and Hispanic members of P.E.A.C.E. is appropriate at this time, for it is a matter of record (Appendix C) that the Rulings of the Federal Court, overseeing the desegregation lawsuit filed against District 205, stipulate that, within District 205, " student minority membership for the

purpose of reporting and analysis are defined as African-Americans and Hispanic".

As part of the ongoing process of project proposals, the students participated in a series of eventful meetings to determine long and short term goals. Aided by the facilitation of the academic advisor, the challenge of team building was undertaken. The students, led by a staff member who had been formally adopted by the Sioux Nation, participated in a celebration signifying that all life is of inestimable worth. This celebration took place on campus, around a bonfire built behind the their school's tennis courts. This gathering served as a unique and memorable way to demonstrate P.E.A.C.E.'s emphasis on individual validation, of feeling connected, of fostering a community. To reinforce the significance of team building ,a member of the Ojibwa Nation, from Northern Wisconsin, visited the group and spoke of village life, of co-operative efforts, of communal achievement as natural states of existence.

During the 1994-1995 school year, this student organization continued to recycle paper and aluminum cans every Thursday, fulfilling a promise to themselves to aid the Earth. This activity required students to be at work on all three floors of their school. Three teams formed without direction or guidance. Their commitment to each other and to the group resulted in the absolute trust amongst team members as well as in the absolute trust of their school. Each team has been issued the coveted elevator key. Team building has become a weekly occurrence, as student teams have become self-regulating and independent.

During the latter weeks of April , and the first weeks of May, the groups will concentrate upon the P.E.A.C.E. garden and their school's Memorial Day ceremony. A portion of the grant monies (Appendix D) will be used to maintain and improve this garden. As the students embark upon these related projects, student ownership was not only a continuing goal, student ownership

has become a necessity. Working in partnership with their academic advisor, teams engaged in in problem solving, determined what needed to be done , and when, and then evaluated and revised short and long term goals, and provided the staff advisor with a sequential time table of required logistical support. The end result of group trust, team solidarity, and mutual support will be the third annual Memorial Day celebration honoring five Gold Star mothers (these mothers who have lost sons in combat) and the one hundred and ninety-three war dead of the target school when it was a high school. And while some club members have planted prairie grasses and flowers, others have secured the participation of Veterans of Foreign War posts, American Legion posts, as well as the participation of Color Guard volunteers now currently serving in the armed services. Other members have secured food donations, worked as liaisons to organize the combined performances of the C.A.PA. Chorus and the Inspirational Choir.

During the month of February (Black History Month) P.E.A.C.E. members , for the first time, attended the Inspirational Choir rehearsals as the choir prepared for a concert that with songs and poems, recitals and portrayals, depicted the glories and injustices that define the Black experiences within this country, a country that is still striving to fulfill the promises and goals of the Constitution. It was at this concert, that P.E.A.C.E.. members escorted honored guests and parents, escorted school guests to the teachers' lounges, ran errands, aided back stage directors, and even warmed baby formula in the main office's microwave oven.

The second major element of the action plan compels P.E.A.C.E. to interact not only with Inspirational Choir, but with other school groups as well. To facilitate school wide group interaction, P.E.A.C.E. elected one of its members to the Student Council (Appendix F). This liaison effort has had its constraints, and so P.E.A.C.E. revised its goals and began its "Colors

Should Only be Separated in the Wash" initiative. P.E.A.C.E. members designed and painted a thirty foot by ten foot mural depicting multiethnic friendships on the wall facing the only two entrances to the school's cafeteria.

While this mural was in the process of being completed, the Public Television stations broadcast a series of programs investigating the phenomenon of adolescent violence. P.E.A.C.E. is in the process of duplicating the logo of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's "Act Against Violence" campaign (Appendix G). This mural was completed upon the East wall of the school's cafeteria.

The third strategy involved raising funds to support the year long activities of P.E.A.C.E. T-shirts depicting environmental issues were sold. A grant proposal was written and tendered to the First Bank of America. A "First Grant" of five hundred and twenty-five dollars was awarded to P.E.A.C.E. (Appendix H).

Student validation is an inherent element of supporting the members of P.E.A.C.E. School athletic letters were awarded to those volunteers who volunteered for the Black History assembly. Pins, designed by P.E.A.C.E.,were awarded for steadfast support. A pizza party was held as P.E.A.C.E. began its work in the garden. On April 28th., P.E.A.C.E. will spend the entire school day cleaning their campus, gardening, and lunching at a nearby restaurant.

Presentation of Analysis and Results

The terminal objectives of the intervention addressed the formation and presence of autonomous, self-segregating peer groups within an integrated student body. Certified staff surveys and observations, bolstered by student surveys, substantiate the existence of student-

derived, self-segregating peer groups.

Therefore, the terminal objective stated:

As a result of the academic sponsor's role as a facilitator and educator, the P.E.A.C.E. (Putting the Environment Above the Common Ego) activist, student core group, after attending diversity awareness and recognition training sessions, will promote friendships and interactions without bias. A post survey administered to staff and students, combined with anecdotal records of the core group, will measure the effects of the intervention.

The data to be presented in tables five and six revealed three interrelated ideas:

1.) Schools, and the peer groups within the schools, are pivotal areas in the socialization of the young.

2.) Self-segregating student peer groups are an accepted norm among students.

3.) Student views of their respective social status have, and will, affect the social standards of their schools.

Data that supports the hypothesis that the student body, of the target school, has informally clustered into segregated cliques , and that these somewhat isolated groups are having a crucial impact upon the target school are summarized in tables five and six.

Table Five contains the combined data of the teachers' surveys taken during September, 1994, and the survey taken during March 1995. The combined data readily facilitates comparing the information contained within the two surveys, taken six months apart.

Table Five, in part, presents data gathered from a survey given during the week of March 20th. The "No Opinion" columns are centrally located in Table Five; logic would have an analysis begin in the center of the table. Twenty-nine percent of the teachers replied with "No Opinion" in

the September survey; but only 22 percent of the replies of the March survey resulted in "No Opinion". It is apparent that the certified staff, during the intervening six months, has reflected upon the realities emanating from the student body and that those realities are very real and vivid in the minds of the staff.

The teachers are of one mind when they considered the functions of the peer groups. Ninety-two percent of the teachers believe their students look to their peer groups to insure the safety of the individual members. Teachers are also of one mind, the 70 percent of September vs. the 69 percent of the March survey, when considering the presence of discord caused by the ignorance of the staff of the diverse lifestyles prevalent in the school . So omnipresent has been this culture shock, that in the September survey, 15 percent of the teachers reported having biased thoughts; by March, 53 percent of the teachers had had experienced the distress of bias thinking.

Seventy-seven percent of the teachers, in the March survey, observed peer groups to be racially segregated. Forty-seven percent of the teachers, early in the year, were aware of segregated groups. The races have congealed at the target school. It is heartening to note that by the time that the March survey was given, 77 percent of the teachers believed team teaching to be an effective practice with which to counteract racism; only 47 percent of the teachers believed team teaching to be an effective against the inroads of racism during the early weeks of the school year.

There is still another observation that deserves notation; it is the fact that while the teachers report that bias thinking is on the rise amongst the staff, only 38 percent of the teachers report that they have their reasons to believe that the student body has racism as a component of

its makeup. Forty-eight percent of the teachers, in September, reported that they believed racism to be a characteristic of the students attending the target school.

Table 5
Combined Teachers' Survey

SD=strongly disagree D=disagree	Sept. 94	Mar. 95	Sept. 94	Mar. 95	Sept. 94	Mar. 95
SA = strongly agree A=agree	% SD or D	% SD or D	% No Opinion	% No Opinion	% SA or A	% SA or A
School is integrated	21	17	29	14	50	67
Student groups based on age/sex	35	24	33	19	32	55
Group with definite membership	3	2	36	19	61	77
Groups forms because of activities	11	2	18	21	71	74
Groups form because of race	28	19	25	2	47	77
Groups form to obtain physical/emotional security	0	0	6	9	94	90
Same grade point average	37	46	37	21	26	31
Groups are racially integrated	40	43	39	24	21	31
Student racial prejudice present	22	26	24	34	54	38
Racism is countered by friendship	6	4	29	14	65	79
Racism countered by team teaching	21	2	35	29	44	67
Racism countered by clubs, sports	9	6	29	34	62	57
Teachers value diverse student body	26	2	29	39	45	58
Student body supports diversity	31	9	44	43	25	45
At times your thoughts are biased	56	36	29	19	15	53
Misunderstanding a racial ethnic group causes unrest	9	16	21	12	70	69
Diverse lifestyles contribute to discipline concerns	6	4	18	12	76	82
School staff promotes student interaction	6	6	38	31	56	60

Table Six contains the combined data from two student surveys simultaneously handed out along with the teachers' survey. As with the teachers' survey, the analysis will at first center upon the "No Opinion Columns", and then consider notable student agreements, and finally, focus upon the disagree columns. An added component will be the comparison between tables five and six.

The "No Opinion" columns of the two student surveys is remarkably constant; 22 percent of the expressed "No Opinion" in September, 22.1 percent of the student replies indicated no opinion in March.

The student survey is less apocalyptic than the teachers' survey. While 92 percent of the teachers believe the peer group is relied on by its members as a haven, only 37 percent of the students have revealed a reliance on their peer group as a sanctuary. One is encouraged to find that only 37 percent of the students agree that they look to their peer group for safety. It is indeed heartening to re-discover that the age old yearning for independence amongst the young is in evidence; 79 percent of the students believe themselves to be individuals, the second highest percentage in the survey, second only to the student response of 82 percent affirming that friends of the opposite sex are now as important as their best friend or buddy of the same sex. And so it has always been. It is painful to note that 20 percent of the student body has known racial prejudice or bigotry. This is a significant amount of students experiencing unreasoning hatred because the target school's black population is 23.7 percent. The student survey, as well as the teachers survey, was completely anonymous. There can be no way of ascertaining the participants' gender, race or age. The 20 percent figure stands alone, disturbing because of the similarity to the percentage of African-Americans attending the school, and for the fact that the human race seems

destined to be an eternal genesis for hatred upon the only known planet to support life.

When comparing the student survey of September, 1994, and of March, 1995, the similarities between the responses are striking. Forty-six percent believed their peer group to be well organized in each survey. Personal beliefs were important to 69 percent of the respondents in September, 66 percent of the March respondents replied that their beliefs were of the utmost importance. An incongruity does exist, however, between Tables 5 and 6. Seventy-one percent of the respondents felt positive about their hopes and aspirations in the September survey, but only 57 percent felt positive about life in the March survey.

The dynamics of day-in-day-out living can be measured objectively. The experiences of life are realized objectively. Life is experienced and translated, in part, by the five senses. Objective information is relayed to our cortex and we experience awareness of sweet and bitter, cold and hot, the objective Yin and Yang of life. Yet, the responses of Tables 5 and 6 are subjective. What was experienced is now filtered through the self, affecting attitudes, values, and perceptions. The subjective data within these tables does not contain truths that can be tested, rather the data serves as a compass that seeks out cultural discontinuity, and social code diversities. A sensitivity to discerning the differences between home codes and the expected social and cognitive codes of the target school, may result in improved teacher-student communications, where all are empowered to form a living culture within the school.

Table 6
Combined Students' Survey

SD=strongly disagree D= disagree	Sept. 94	Mar. 95	Sept. 94	Mar. 95	Sept. 94	Mar. 95
SA-strongly agree A=agree	% SD or D	% SD or D	% No Opinion	% No Opinion	% SA or A	% SA or A
School is integrated	20	12	33	31	47	54
Your group is well recognized	23	39	31	13	46	46
Group of same age/sex	22	17	18	28	60	53
Your group racially integrated	34	33	22	28	44	37
Group helps acceptance	16	15	29	17	55	66
Group protects you	28	23	27	37	45	37
Same grade point average	24	28	32	32	44	32
Feel positive about life	13	17	16	7	71	75
Group has a lot in common	20	14	15	13	65	73
Group family incomes are about equal	36	26	30	46	34	46
Your best friends are girls/boys	13	2	16	16	71	82
Personal beliefs are important to you	15	10	16	23	69	66
You are an individual	14	15	20	4	66	79
Friends like you as you are	12	12	19	9	69	79
Your group open to any honest "kid"	22	31	29	48	49	48
Biased thinking in your group	30	24	28	55	42	55
Diverse group joins same activities	28	25	40	28	32	28
Rejected because of beliefs and goals	59	53	20	26	21	26
Rejected because of skin color	49	62	28	20	23	20

The final component of assessing the work of P.E.A.C.E. is the interviewing of P.E.A.C.E. volunteers. The 10 questions asked of the students were written with two objectives: 1.) to be open ended, and 2.) to be non-leading. The responses of those interviewed would not, then, derive direction or expectations from the questions asked of them.

The first question asked the students to list three words to describe P.E.A.C.E., the three most common responses were active, challenging, and dependence (on each other).

The second question asked the students what had P.E.A.C.E. done that best aided their school; their responses were recycling, gardening, and the painting of murals. Tangible results formed a single mindedness, as the students did not mention their participation with the Inspirational Choir, team building at the campfire or attending and facilitating rehearsals (for which they earned the school athletic letter). It may be that during the previous two years, PEACE was focused primarily upon the environment and this influenced the responses to this question.

Another question asked if PEACE maintained a stable membership. The overwhelming reply was that P.E.A.C.E. volunteers did join other after school activities, including sports, plays, tutoring, or even such activities as after school chess lessons. Some volunteers left when the early adolescent flame of infatuation dimmed or went out, even as some students joined because of the presence of the self same flame. The students did report that they now count on seeing the same volunteers Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons.

Asked if tolerance (a passive thought pattern of acceptance) and respect were a set of constants among P.E.A.C.E. members, the answer from the sole African-American was, "No, not

at first, but slowly progressing". Other minority members (no Hispanics were present to reply) felt accepted and made it very clear that the values of the recycling teams were the mainstay of P.E.A.C.E.'s stature of valuing all its members. The majority members replied that since membership was completely open, then tolerance and respect must be present. This majority opinion was not unique nor original, for the white majority population appears to think of opportunity and respect as synonymous. Indeed, this outlook has reached cliche proportions amongst white Americans of the mid nineteen-nineties. Three clear appraisals of contemporary America articulated by three student volunteers, of differing ethnic backgrounds, described three differing perceptions of America. These students, of differing ethnic backgrounds, live in a stratified America; a house divided.

Conclusions and recommendations

The student body of the target school remains a self-segregating student body. As recently as April 14th, the date of the Creative and Performing Arts (C.A.P.A.) Dance Recital, the sitting rows of students would have conformed to the segregationist laws of the Deep South of the early, and mid, nineteen -fifties. The members of the eighth grade class booed the recital before the first performers were on stage. The Problem Statement observes that: "The eighth grade students of the target school have formed self-segregating racial and ethnic groups that prohibit a sense of community among the student body." The data emitting from the tables, graphs, interviews, and very recent observations substantiate that the eighth graders of the target school do, almost unanimously, form segregated groups. The very presence of the booing, and its timing, preclude the sense of community within the student body. The booing was spontaneous

and widespread. There was no widespread indignation, no sense of recognizing the contributions of others, and no loyalty to the well being of the larger whole.

The impact P.E.A.C.E. has had on the integration of student peer groups has been minimal, at best. Still, within P.E.A.C.E., the four major components of the Problem Resolution Activities have been accomplished:

1.) Core Groups formed. Among these core groups are: the gardening committee, the mural committees, the "Colors Should Only be Separated in The Wash" committee, the recycling teams, and the Memorial Day committee. All of these organizations, within an organization, are working.

2.) PEACE has worked co-operatively with the Inspirational Choir. It must be noted that P.E.A.C.E. had, as one of its goals, to work alongside C.A.P.A. No working relationship evolved, primarily because each segment of each of the four major productions was a component of a curriculum, or traditionally, was the "property" of the parents of C.A.P.A. students. There simply was no place, no activity, no job, to facilitate any dual collaboration between the organizations.

3.) Student empowerment is a reality as volunteers brainstorm to arrive at a consensus of agreement as problems need resolution or goals need revision.

4.) Team building has been a result of P.E.A.C.E.'s initial team building activities, and as the students, willingly, took ownership of weekly duties, of short, and long term goals, and of the quality of the work done.

The results of the P.E.A.C.E. initiative are ambiguous. It follows that the recommendations put forward must have a logical flow and be as concise as possible, otherwise

ambiguity would confound ambiguity. The forthcoming recommendations are therefore listed in outline form.

1. Team building
    A. First six meetings
        1. Research activities
        2. Fun and thought provoking
    B. Brainstorm volunteer validations
        1. Pins and school letters
    C. Off campus community project
        1. Volunteers meet and brainstorm with representatives of an organization
    D. Student core groups adopt a look (dress code) unique to P.E.A.C.E.
2. Elections
    A. A president
    B. A student council representative
    C. A uniform code of conduct
        1. Trust within the organization
        2. Sense of purpose
        3. Quality of work
        4. All of the above to be arrived at by consensus.
3. Goal setting
    A. Short term goals
        1. To be accomplished quickly and immediately processed

2. Ownership and team building are natural outcomes of doing well.

3. Advisor's role as facilitator

B. Long term goals

1. Natural extensions of short term goals

2. Work with, and brainstorm with, administration

3. Advisor's role as facilitator

4. Membership

A. Advisor produces charts scheduling after school activities

1. Students sign up so the organization knows who will be absent and why.

B. Students sign a pledge promising to sign the pledge again if they no longer wish to be a volunteer.

1. Nonbinding, but elicits responsibility.

C. Student minority members meet with organization's student officers, advisor, to ensure best possible conditions for a diverse student membership.

5. Fund raising activities

A. T shirt sales

B. Writing of grants

When students decided to act upon their convictions, it is an act of faith. This act of faith is as deserving of a teacher's hard work as any event occurring in the classroom. My students' P.E.A.C.E. group is my sixth class and is in my lesson plan book; the last recommendation is to

relate to such student activists groups as a class. The administration of the target school has supported P.E.A.C.E.'s endeavors for three years; so have the students. A well written lesson plan, guiding a group of student volunteers, is a technique to be unconditionally recommended. Such an outlook might be a leap of faith, but "if not me, who, if not now, when"?

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Appendix

Appendix A

Table Three
Number of Teachers' Responses to Survey by Category

Statements:		SD 1	D 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5
1.	School is integrated	5	13	29	25	25
2.	Student groups based on age/sex	13	22	33	28	4
3.	Group with definite membership	0	3	36	32	29
4.	Groups form because of activities	7	4	18	49	22
5.	Groups form because of race	9	19	25	35	12
6.	Groups form to obtain physical/emotional security	0	0	6	41	47
7.	Grade point average influences group membership	3	34	37	16	3
8.	Groups are racially integrated	10	30	39	9	12
9.	Student racial prejudice present	3	19	24	27	27
10a.	Racism is countered by friendship	0	6	29	30	45
10b.	Racism is countered by team teaching	9	12	35	25	19
10c.	Racism countered by club sports	0	9	29	25	37
11.	Teachers value diverse student body	3	23	29	29	16
12.	Student body supports diversity	6	25	44	19	6
13.	At times your thoughts are biased	19	36	29	12	3
14.	Misunderstanding a racial or ethnic group causes unrest	0	9	21	30	40
15.	Diverse lifestyles contribute to discipline concerns	3	3	18	26	50
16.	School's staff promotes student interaction	3	3	38	41	15

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=no opinion 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Appendix B

Table Four
Number of Students' Responses to Survey by Category

Statements:		SD 1	D 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5
1.	School is integrated	10	10	33	27	20
2.	Your group is well recognized	18	5	31	30	16
3.	Group of same age/sex	44	16	18	10	12
4.	Your group racially integrated	24	10	22	17	27
5.	Group helps acceptance	7	9	29	18	37
6.	Group protects you	13	15	27	19	26
7.	Same grade point average	9	15	32	26	18
8.	Feel positive about life	11	2	16	31	40
9.	Group has a lot in common	9	11	14	31	34
10.	Group family incomes are equal	21	15	30	28	6
11.	Your best friends are girls/boys	6	7	16	20	50
12.	Personal beliefs are important	9	6	16	22	46
13.	Your an individual	7	6	20	23	43
14.	Friends like you as you are	9	3	19	17	52
15.	Your group is open to any honest "kid"	10	12	29	19	30
16.	Bias thinking in your group	16	14	28	22	20
17.	Diverse group joins same activities	14	14	38	19	13
18.	Rejected because of beliefs and goals	40	19	20	12	9
19.	Rejected because of skin color	48	16	19	7	9

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=no opinion 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Appendix C

TEAM CONFERENCE SCHEDULE
MUST BE TURNED IN BEFORE YOU LEAVE ON FRIDAY. (FINAL COUNT)

Teacher Name _____ Grade _____ Team _____

DATE	TIME	STUDENT NAME	MAJ	MIN **	PARENT NAME	OTHER TEACHERS
March 23	5:00 P.M.					
	5:15					
	5:30					
	5:45					
	6:00					
	6:15					
	6:30					
	6:45					
	7:00					
	7:15					
	7:30					
	7:45					
March 24	7:30 A.M.					
	7:43					
	8:00					
	8:15					
	8:30					
	8:45					
	9:00					
	9:15					
	9:30					
	9:45					
	10:00					
	10:15					

**Minority students: Minority students for the purpose of reporting an anaylses are defined as African American and Spanish. This is in response to how the Court interprets minorities in Rockford..
Please identify all others in the majority column. African Americans and Spanish in the minority column. Thank you. M. Goode.

Appendix D

8TH

Application # 152

Please write your responses in the space provided. Attach additional pages if necessary.

A. Project Goal: The major elemenys of the approach to decrease the incidents of students forming peer groups that are racially or ethnically defined can be broken down into five major factorsito fully involve the child via inclusion, to empower the child with the opportunity to influence the work PEACE undertakes to promote interaction between the school's after school groups and teams, to brainstorm activities that will enhance ethnic pride and the richness of a diverse,pluralistic society, and a group within PEACE, 'Colors Should Only Be Seperated in the Wash' will become a permanent and prominent committee

B. Brief description of proposed project: The action plan of the project will involve six committies that will employ the multiple intelligences of the children. These committies are the foundation of the PEACE group. Activist students will employ strategies that enable multi-ethnic friendships and interactions without bias.

The community building of the six committies will not be mutually exclusive. The children will process frustrations and accomplishments alike. At times, a singular undertaking will be the Focus for the entire group. PEACE will always be open to any new members,even into the late spring.

C. Relationship of the proposed project to your current teaching assignment: I am the originator of the PEACE group.Up until this year, PEACE focused upon the environment of the out-of-doors. Peace now will help its school to bring the warmth of belonging and contributing to each child of the student body. As a science teacher, as a teacher, I'm following the advice of Dicken's Marley and making mankind my business. The teachers I admire have been about the business of mankind as they first faced a class,as they sought out each child. I'm attempting to be a better teacher.

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D. Clearly describe your project procedures, including 1) specific ways in which the program will be administered, 2) needed materials and how these will be used, 3) activities and methods involved, 4) tentative schedule, 5) completion date, 6) personnel involved and 7) any other information particular to your project.

The implementation plan is offered in outline form and in sequential order allowing for the overlapping of strategies.

A. The teacher introduces student inclusion and student empowerment as means to insure team building.

B. Committies form as students volunteer their time and talents.

1. Memorial Garden committee in honor of the school's one-hundred and ninety three war dead.

2. Recycling committee.

3. Mural committee.

4. Memorial day committee.

5. Colors Should Only be Seperated in the Wash Committee.

6. Public service work involving all of PEACE as will each committee/activity will.

7. PEACE's committment to interact with each student organization during the school year.

8. All of the above activities are in place; the grant monies would facillitate PEACE's goals and weekly activities.

C. PEACE Will meet twice a week until the Memorial Day celebration; bringing to an end PEACE's work for the 1994-1995 school year.

D. Materials wish list.

1. hand held gardening tools

2. seeds/starter pots and soils (we have space set aside at Park Dist. green house).

3. landscaping materials

4. PEACE SWEATERS-in white, brown, black, and red; representing our school's diversity

5. aprons for our muralists

6. work gloves

7. mulch

E. Plans for project evaluation, including anticipated outcomes and means of evaluation:

1. Evaluation:

A. Administration, teacher and student survey

B. Committees maintaining either static or growing populations.

C. Realizing and processing the attainment of goals.

D. The vitalization levels, statement of goals, and the securing of those goals by the 'Colors Should Only Be Seperated in the Wash' Committee.

E. The keeping of a teacher's journal.

F. ThesContinuing success of the Memorial Day Celebration.

F. Estimated budget:

Item of Expenditure	Estimated Cost
Material	$ 350.00
Equipment	$ 175.00
Transportation	$ ---------
Fees	$ --------
Personnel ....SWEATERS ..PEACE!s statement of diversity welcomed and cherished	$ 700.00
Miscellaneous	$ ------
TOTAL ESTIMATED BUDGET	$ 1,225.00

G. Could this program still be implemented or modified for implementation with partial funding?

Yes x No ____

Total Points Awarded .....

Additional Comments

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Appendix E

JOURNEY FROM THE MOTHERLAND
A CELEBRATION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE

WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL INSPIRATIONAL CHOIR

"TROUBLE DON'T LAST ALWAYS"
"I AM SOMEBODY"

JOURNEY TO THE MOTHERLAND

AFRICAN KINGS AND QUEENS- KHYLA BARBARY, COREY NORFLEET, KRYSTAL PEYTON, ANTWON LENDERMAN, SHENETHA SIMMONS, PARIS TWYMAN, KEELAN WHITMORE, KERRY EVANS
KWANZAA PRINCIPLES- KEN DOWTHARD, FINE ARTS & FIFTH GRADE CAPA STUDENTS
AFRICAN DANCE- SEVENTH GRADE CAPA DANCE STUDENTS

JOURNEY FROM THE MOTHERLAND- BILAL OMAR

SCENES ALONG THE JOURNEY FROM THE SLAVE SHIP THROUGH TODAY'S AFRICAN AMERICAN ROLE MODELS.

JOURNEY ON THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

STRING DUET-SHELBY & COLIE LATIN
LITURGICAL DANCE- JAIMIE DRAYTON, BROOKE JOHNSON, BRANDY JORDAN, KEELAN WHITMORE
MONOLOGUE- ANQUNETTE PARHAM
RAP GROUP- GABE CANNON, JERMAINE COLEMAN, MICHAEL PARKER, TERRELL OWENS, MIKE BROWN
WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL INSPIRATIONAL CHOIR
"THERE IS HOPE" & "WE SHALL OVERCOME"

****

DIRECTORS: MRS. KAREN PORTIS & MR. LEONARD WHITE
MUSICAL DIRECTOR: MR. CARL COLE
DANCE INSTRUCTORS: MRS. BARBARA JOHNSON & MRS. MELISSA TESKE
TECHNICAL ADVISORS: MRS. PAM SHORT, MR. JIM KRIEN, & MR. JOHN VAN NEST
ART DRAWINGS: COREY NORFLEET
EXCERPTS FROM DR. KING'S SPEECHES: CHRISTIAN CAIN
POETRY: KHANIKA RICHMOND & KEIRA PICKERING
SPECIAL THANKS TO: MR. ALFONSO HEATH, MS. REGINA WILCOX, MR. DON LACKEY & P.E.A.C.E. GROUP, JENNY COURT, ANDY HILGE, PAUL JULIANO, ALISON WAGONER
PRINCIPAL: MR. MICHAEL GOLDEN

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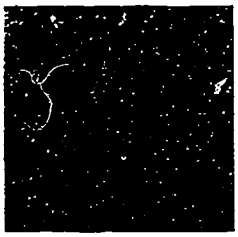
Appendix F

ROCKFORD
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

West Middle School
1900 North Rockton Avenue
Rockford, Illinois 61103-4396
815/966-3200

P.E.A.C.E has an official representative on Student Council during the 1994-95 School Year.

Mrs. Karen Portis
Advisor



ACT AGAINST VIOLENCE
JOIN THE NEW PEACE MOVEMENT

CORPORATION FOR
PUBLIC BROADCASTING

901 E Street N.W.
Washington DC 20004-2037
Phone 202.879.9839
Fax 202.783.1019

March 6, 1995

P.E.A.C.E members
C/O Donald Lackey
West Middle School
Rockford, Illinois
61103

Dear Shauna, Sirivanh, Larinda

I enjoyed reading your letter and I must tell you I'm very proud of your efforts at West Middle School. It makes me feel so good when I hear of young people taking charge of their own futures.

Your idea to create a mural in your school cafeteria is excellent and will allow all the students, teachers, administrators and parents in your school to be reminded of your commitment to peace.
I do have one suggestion for you. You might call your local television station and let them know what you're doing. Too often young people get a bad rap for some of the problems in our communities. The truth is---most young people want to do something positive to feel safer in their communities and to stop the violence in our society.

Please send me a photograph of your mural when it is finished. I'd love to be able to put it on my office wall.

Thanks for "Acting Against Violence"

Cheryl A. Head

P.S. Thanks also to your adult Sponsor for helping you with this project. & hope you can find good use for the enclosed Stamps.

Certificate of Recognition

The Advisory Board of the
First of America Bank - North Central Illinois, N.A.
FirstGrant Education Grant Program hereby awards $525 to

Donald H. Lackey

for an outstanding grant application whose project will be
implemented during the 1994-95 academic year at
West Middle School.

Congratulations and best of luck with your project.

FIRST GRANT

FIRST of AMERICA
EDUCATION
GRANT PROGRAM

Albin G. Becker, President & CEO
First of America Bank - North Central Illinois, N.A.

Awarded this 10th day of January, 1995