Zeidler Center
Frank Zeidler Center for Public Discussion
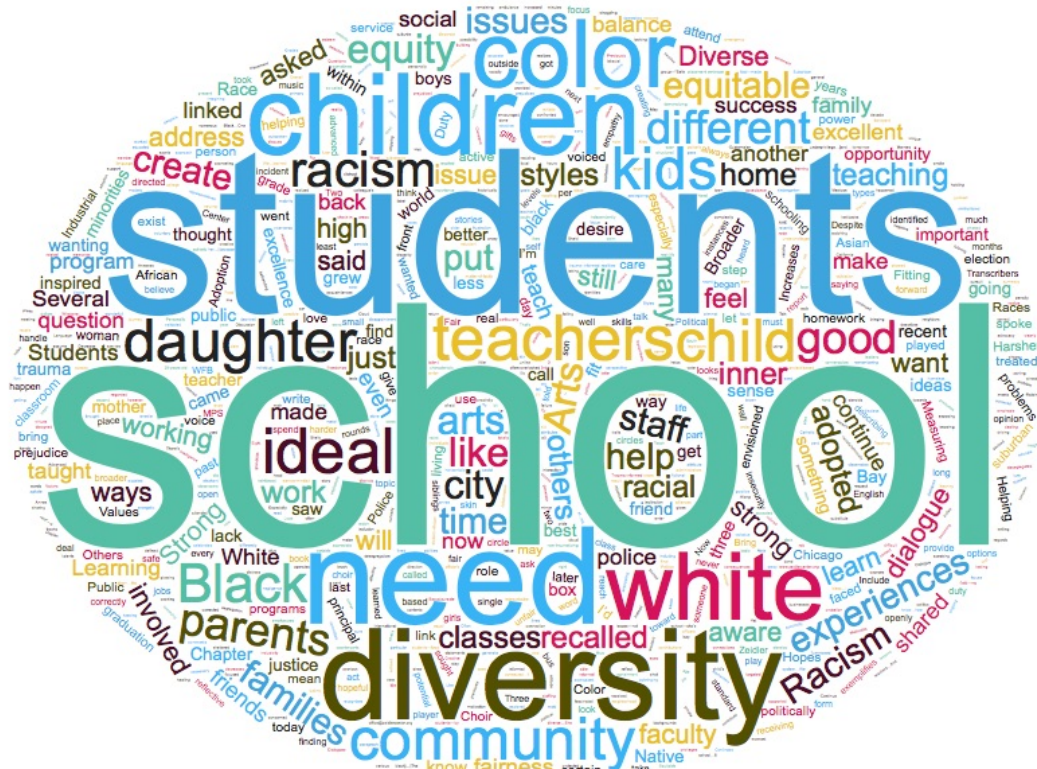
Deep Listening. Fostering Trust. Bridging Communities.

Fair Schools Dialogue

A Community Conversation about Equity, Diversity, and Excellence in Suburban Education

May 2017

Word Cloud of the Report

" For the good of the community, we need to get honest. We need to talk about racial underprivilege…[and] speak about the elephant in the room."

"It is not utopian to believe educators understand how to help students have a sense of self and value."

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Executive Summary

Fair Schools Community Conversation took place on April 27, 2017 at the United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay and was facilitated by the Zeidler Center for Public Discussion (www.zeidlercenter.org).

Ex Fabula Fellows gave true personal stories related to the theme (www.exfabula.org). The dialogue introduction also featured keynote speaker Reggie Jackson.

During the dialogue, Zeidler Center facilitators asked participants to respond to three questions:

> Round One: Share about a time that taught you something about fairness and diversity in education. What was the experience and what did you learn?

> Round Two: What would it mean to you to have a school that is excellent, diverse AND equitable? Paint a picture of what you see.

> Round Three: Where do you see yourself being involved in realizing the picture you painted in the last question?

In addition, as time allowed, participants were invited to engage in Connected Conversation, where they were asked to reflect on the three rounds of questions and share their hopes for equity and diversity with one another in the circle.

During Round One, participants openly shared their past experiences with equity and diversity in education. Few participants had directly experienced racism and inequality, and instead reflected on the negative experiences of friends and adopted family members of color: "The school] did not know…how to help us deal with diversity and to make us always feel comfortable with the other students." Other notable experiences that shaped participants' concerns for equity and diversity included extraordinary punishments and reprimands for people of color in school. Participants recalled fondly the alliances they had developed with minority students, and how these friendships contributed to their empathy and growing awareness of everyday racism in the school system. Other participants had little interaction with minorities while in school, and expressed curiosity in befriending minorities for this reason. In general, most participants felt that in today's schools, diversity had decreased and inequality had increased.

During Round Two, participants envisioned their ideal school and the qualities contributing to its excellence, diversity, and equity. Participants generally agreed that an excellent education was directly connected to broader community values and needs: "A perfect school would mirror our world." These ideals were powerfully linked to the idea that "strong teachers" were linked to a "strong community." Regarding ideal ways of learning, participants valued service

learning tied to civic needs, diverse styles of teaching that spoke to students' diverse learning abilities, and learning through the creative and industrial arts. Participants discussed the need to envision an ideal education system beyond the boundaries of the school to include support systems to help students fit in, and onsite care and training to address family trauma at home. Participants weighed in the different ways to measure the success of schools, and were skeptical of standardized testing and the over emphasis on going to college.

In Round Three, participants expressed feeling motivated from the dialogue to go out into their communities and advocate for school diversity and equity. As one participant put it, "The lines are blurred between teaching and advocacy." Participants described the dialogue as positive, and expressed a growing awareness of school inequality and felt a sense of duty to fight it. Several participants spoke to the need to "preach to their choir"—namely their own families and communities—about white privilege and its negative impact on school diversity and equity. Finally, several participants expressed inspiration from the dialogue and felt empowered to take political action, especially in light of the recent 2016 elections, in order to improve schools.

With the remaining time, those circles that participated in Connected Conversation used this opportunity to re-confront the current challenges of their schools, and share realistic hopes and objectives to move forward.

Overall, the questions asked in these listening circles contributed to participants' motivation to personally create awareness and change the lack of diversity and equity in education. Participants reflected on their friends' and families' past experiences of racism and inequality, revealed through personal and honest opinions about school diversity, such as "white privilege." Together, this mutual sharing of past experiences and the envisioning of what an excellent school should look like, contributed to a greater awareness of the lack of diversity and equity in schools.

Questions about this report may be directed to:
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Analysis

1   **Question/Round 1:** "Share about a time that taught you something about fairness and diversity in education. What was the experience and what did you learn?"

"My insight is that all are treated equally – equally badly."

"We…learned to put up a wall to protect ourselves."

"The school] did not know…how to help us deal with diversity and to make us always feel comfortable with the other students. We were all in the same building, but did not feel at one..."

Participants reflected back to their own experiences of dealing with diversity and equity in school. Most participants shared stories about racism and inequalities that they had experienced as educators or parents, or even as students themselves. Often, they would draw upon this question to compare and contrast their past experiences with racism and inequality with the current failure of achieving diversity and equity in their present education systems. Participants also explored themes of racial prejudice, punishment, and police presence.

1.1   Racism and Inequality in Education

1.1.1 Friendships: Empathy and Growing Awareness of Racism
While most participants did not personally experience racism and inequality during their education, several participants recalled instances when their friends of color directly experienced racism. Through these experiences, participants felt empathy for minority students and expressed feeling more aware of everyday racism in their current school systems.

For example, some participants expressed empathy for minority students, most often a Black student, whom they felt faced challenges to fairness in their school. One participant described sharing a bond as a child with a minority student because she also did not feel like she fit in at their school:

> "He was the only Black student in the school. We were both a bit different so we connected…I learned he rode 45 minutes on the bus to get to school. We both learned to put up a wall to protect ourselves."

Other participants also described developing a greater awareness of the racism occurring in their schools when their children formed friendships with students of color. For example, one participant recalled a time when his children made friends with kids in the Chapter 220 Program, a voluntary integration program designed to racially integrate schools in

Milwaukee Public Schools by giving minority students the opportunity to attend schools in suburban areas that are predominantly non-minority (i.e., White), and vice-versa:

> "My daughter had befriended several Chapter 220 kids when she was in elementary school—she's 29-years-old now. My wife recently told me that they got looks from neighbors, other people, for associating with African-American kids and families."

1.1.2 Family: Adoption and Exposure to Racism

Several participants reflected on experiences of fairness and diversity in education through the adoption of children of color. While the parents weren't necessarily a person of color, they described instances of when they felt that their child was being discriminated against because of the color of their skin:

> "My 16-year-old-daughter, who we adopted as an infant, is Black…One particular incident on the soccer field—my daughter received a penalty when the other player had clearly committed the foul—made me realize that the referee found it much easier to assume that the Black player was the one being violent."

> Other participants with family members of color also recalled the inequalities their children or siblings faced in school. Some participants used these experiences of inequality within their families as an opportunity to have, as one participant put it, "a meaningful discussion about the issue" of racism.

1.1.3 "Fascinated" by Other Races

While several participants recalled difficult memories of watching a friend or family member experience racism in school, others framed this brush with racism or minorities with curiosity. For example, one participant described wanting more "exposure" to minorities while they were in school:

> "I was fascinated by meeting African-American students. Previously, my only exposure to Black people was as domestics. My friends and I treated a maid like a celebrity but then saw her receiving bad treatment and didn't understand it."

The participant described growing up with a narrow, prejudiced view of African Americans, and as a result, actively sought out the acquaintances of African-American students.

1.1.4 Ascribing Race

Some participants recalled experiences of inequality where personal attributes were ascribed to race. In one example in which the participant displayed prejudice, a participant ascribed the way a student spoke as being "African American." The participant shared an experience of taking the initiative to correct a student for speaking what they described as "African-American English:"

"Whatever I thought it was to speak correctly, someone taught me. I corrected a child when they spoke AAE [African-American English], but I'd never experienced it before."

The participant felt that students' race was linked to their language, and expressed a need to teach students what he perceived as "speak[ing] correctly."

Another participant described an experience of inequality in education while teaching Native American students at a reservation school:

"One teacher advised me to watch out because those students [Native Americans] will steal. This racial rant was never confronted and [was] openly expressed in the classroom [in front of the students]. I realized these children were not being protected from such an expressed racial attitude so I took the kids in my car, went to their parents and related the incident and apologized to the parents for what their children had heard."

In this example, the participant sought to address the "racial rant." The participant addressed the teacher's prejudiced remark—the attributing of people who rob as a Native American characteristic—by apologizing to the parents of the students.

1.1.5 Harsher Punishments and Police Presence for Students of Color
While recalling shared experiences of inequality and racism in education, several participants brought up the issue of harsher punishments for students of color than for white students:

"There was one very energetic student–African American. He was put in a corner, holding out his hands horizontally with a book in each hand. This felt very unfair."

In addition to seeing inequalities in education played out in segregated punishments for students of color, participants also recalled increased police presence in schools that were predominantly made up of students of color. One participant, however, recalled the lack of police involvement when a student of color was killed in the education system he/she was working in:

"From my white sheltered upbringing, I was flummoxed when one student [at a school I was teaching at in Cincinnati where the student population was 99% Black] was shot and the police said not to call the ambulance, to let him die, this was not the officer's problem."

The participant felt that the police's negligence to call emergency services and further attend to the student was because of the student's skin color. The participant felt that Black students were further discriminated against in this school system by the police.

1.2   Decreases in Diversity, Increases in Inequalities
1.2.1 Decreases in Diversity

Participants felt that the education system was getting less and less diverse. One participant, who like others in the group had an adopted child of color, described seeing this rapid change to diversity over the span of less than a decade, including in the public school integration program, the Chapter 220 Program:

> "My son (adopted Mexican) was part of it [Chapter 220] and went to the Middle School of the Arts. Along his bus route there was a mixture of races. Eight years later, for my daughter, that was no longer true."

Another participant felt that decreases in diversity in the education system, reflected in both the students and the staff, began when she was still in school:

> "Transcriber's notes: "A woman grew up in Chicago and went to a magnet school. The students and teachers were very diverse…She said she realizes that the way she grew up is a possibility, but not always a reality today."

The participant noted that the magnet school she attended was diverse, but that creating diversity in the education system today has not been achieved.

1.2.2 Inequality Persists

In general, participants expressed a disappointment in the lack of diversity and equity in the education system. For many, the system was still segregated. As one participant, who was biracial and grew up with all White classmates, put it:

> "In high school, there were AP [Advanced Placement classes] and IB [International Baccalaureate] classrooms [for advanced students] - few or no Blacks there. So while schools can be desegregated the classes may still be segregated."

Despite desegregation and bussing programs to integrate minority students with non-minority students, this participant pointed out that segregation still occurred within schools.

2   Question/Round 2: "What would it mean to you to have a school that is excellent, diverse, and equitable? Paint a picture of what you see."

"Students need to walk away with a sense of personal validation, a sense of self that is accurate."

"A perfect school would mirror our world."

"I had to decide between good education and good self-esteem."

When asked to describe their ideal school, several participants envisioned a diverse and equitable school that was connected to the larger community. Participants saw the success of achieving school excellence as being linked to a strong community with a strong and diverse faculty. In regards to the ideal learning environment, many participants voiced wanting schools to be open to diverse learning styles by including connections to service learning, the arts, and the return of an industrial arts program. In imagining their ideal school, participants were also concerned about how schools would help students fit in, and address family trauma and problems at home. Finally, participants had varying ideas about how to measure success in schools

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2.1   Connecting Education to the Broader Community

2.1.1 "Strong Teachers, Strong Community"
Participants painted a picture of an ideal school as being connected to the community:

> "I'd like to see more community and involvement in our schools. We need to get the whole community involved early on in a child's education- 4th grade may even be too late."

Like this participant, several others described the perfect school as being reflective of the real world and broader community. For many participants, they envisioned their ideal school as having, as one participant put it, "excellent, strong teachers; a strong community." Another participant voiced this same sentiment by saying that, "There needs to be a strong feeling of community and care in picking the teachers" in the education system.

2.1.2 Diversity in Teachers
Several participants described their ideal schools as having not just a diverse student population, but also a diverse faculty and staff population. Participants felt it was important for students to have teachers who were diverse and reflective of a diverse student population:

> "In every 1 - 12th grade there needs to be a balance of students, faculty and administrators. Now at this school there are no faculty of color and I ask why?"

While there was a lot of discussion among participants about student diversity, this participant expressed the need to also have a diverse faculty. Another participant echoed this need for a balance of diversity at all levels of the education system by highlighting that teachers of color, who were once students of color, also face inequalities:

> "We should create a program that exemplifies the tragedies that people of color endure, especially for teachers."

2.2 Diverse ways of learning

2.2.1 Service learning

In addition to a diverse faculty and student population, several participants defined a diverse school as being connected to social issues and community values. Participants envisioned their ideal school as providing students with opportunities to do volunteer work:

> "My grandkids attend a very diverse school in California. Every student must do 36 hours of volunteer work per school year."

Another participant described their ideal school as focused on project-based learning:
> "What I look for is project based learning, one that is linked to a social issue. The children spend months studying a topic and link in all the subjects as they do so. The schools sites are diverse. They link to local businesses."

2.2.2 Diverse styles of learning

Participants also desired a school that was open to different styles of learning. Participants felt that because students learn in different ways, schools needed to provide diverse ways of teaching:

> "I worked in a wonderful school…It was unstructured. It was a place where a child did not have to be in a desk all day. We [need] different types of schools for different types of children. There are different learning styles. In a diverse school, there are resources for all students."

2.2.3 Learning through the Arts and Industrial Arts

In line with different styles of learning, participants wished for a school that placed more emphasis on the arts: "A school that recognizes different learning styles. That celebrates the creative arts, music."

Several participants expressed the need to bring back industrial art classes that could potentially provide students with real-life skills for after graduation from high school:

> "Some students need industrial arts and direction towards jobs as there are now no industrial arts, its has been cut out. What will happen to someone like me?"

While historically some industrial arts programs were phased out because they targeted minorities and placed them in industrial arts classes rather than in academic classes, participants felt that bringing these courses back would benefit all graduates in the long run.

2.3   Fitting In
In describing their ideal school, several participants expressed the need to find a balance between a good education and a school that supported students' unique identities:

> "She's in 3rd grade now and is already having issues with acceptance and inclusivity of people's differences I had to decide between good education and good self-esteem."

This parent expressed concern about keeping his/her child in a school where she was receiving a good education, but was having trouble fitting in because she felt different than the other kids.

2.4   Addressing Trauma at Home
Participants felt that even the ideal school would overlook several important aspects to students' levels, such as the trauma and family issues they faced at home. To address this issue, several participants suggested the need to create a safe learning environment. Some participants suggested for trauma services onsite at school, with training for teachers: "Trauma-informed care is important to a learning environment. Teachers, the whole community need to be trained in this."

One participant identified another often-overlooked form of distress for students—food insecurity: "The school should be non–traumatizing and trauma–informed. Food insecurity is one form of trauma." Other participants expressed the need to create alliances beyond the classroom and connect with students' families to address issues at home impacting students' learning: "How can a kid go home to chaos and be educated at school during the day? You have to work with parents, too."

2.5   Measuring Success
In describing the ideal school, participants felt there were different ways to measure success in the education system. As one participant put it succinctly, "Diversity plus Equitable equals Excellence." Yet some participants were skeptical of using "excellence" as a meter of success, saying that "[a]t Whitefish Bay, the label of 'excellence' can be over blown. It is academic 'excellence on steroids.'"

Other participants felt that the success of a diverse, equitable, and excellent school equated to helping students after graduation secure jobs:

> "There would be more counseling and job opportunities would be role played by the students so they could understand what they are better. College and Career options would be equal to show students that there are various options after high school graduation."

3 Question/Round 3: "Where do you see yourself being involved in realizing the picture you painted in the last question?"

"I also will continue to voice my opinion and call out other white people."

"Teaching is my profession and the lines are blurred between teaching and advocacy."

"Personally, I need to preach to my kids about diversity."

In the final round of questions, participants shared their next steps and potential contributions to working toward an equitable and diverse education system. Most participants felt inspired by the dialogues, and expressed a growing awareness and sense of duty going forward. Some participants described wanting to reach out to their own families and communities to teach them about white privilege and how it impacted diversity and equity in schools. Other participants drew motivation from the recent election, and expressed wanting to become more involved in politics in order to contribute to better education for all.

3.1 Helping Others
3.1.1 Growing Awareness and Sense of Duty
Several participants expressed that the dialogue inspired them be more aware of the diversity issues impacting their communities and schools:

> "Raising my own awareness. Continue doing what I'm doing in my school. Bring inclusion, awareness to my kids, the staff, and the parents. In the future, [I'd like to be] more active in other communities [besides my own]."

Other participants framed their potential involvement in creating a diverse and equitable school as a duty they owed their school communities:

> "Children are born to struggle, and I need to serve the least of them. Many have single parents, or are homeless. If we can have a system that loves the least, that will help."

3.1.2 Preaching to the Choir
Participants also expressed the desire to go back to their own communities, such as their children, and teach them about how to be aware of diversity and differences: "Bring more people to choir. Teach children to appreciate differences and to continue to talk and provide resources."

While most participants were inspired to challenge their children and families to address difference issues, one participant felt unsure as how to balance her desire for social justice and her daughter's views of her own diversity:

"I struggle with this. Is it fair to my daughter for me to take on this journey? Especially because I am a single mother of an adopted daughter and I don't know where she stands on all of this. That's where I'm pulled."

Several participants felt it was also important to create more awareness of diversity among racial groups that they identified with, namely White people. As on participant expressed on going forward to create dialogue on diversity and equity in schools: "I also will continue to voice my opinion and call out other White people." Other participants voiced the need to create awareness of white privilege and power in their communities, and its broader consequences on minorities:

"We need to bring out an awareness of white privilege. We need to see the connection to the criminal justice system. We need to find the balance so we see the positive in all kids."

3.2   Politics

Several participants linked their desire for social justice in their school systems to becoming involved in political awareness and action. As one participant put it, they wanted to "[b]e more active politically and promoting fair education. I also want to be more outspoken." Given the recent election, some participants felt particularly motivated to act politically and speak up about their aspirations for equitable education. For one participant, while their main goal was to focus on the education of their daughter, the recent elections inspired them to want to help other students in the "inner city," a possible proxy to refer to low-income children and families living in the city:

"My primary focus is my daughter. The recent election [of 2016 that resulted in the Trump administration] has motivated me to act. I'm looking for volunteer opportunities in the inner city."

4   Connected Conversation

"These conversations give me hope."

"It is not utopian to believe educators understand how to help students have a sense of self and value."

For those circles with time left remaining, The Connected Conversation portion of the dialogue continued to address the ongoing issues impacting the diversity and equity of education system. Participants described being aware of the complexity of these issues, but they also expressed pride and hope in working toward a better school system.

4.1   Realistic Hopes and Values

Despite the numerous challenges affecting schools, participants were still hopeful:

> "I want he children of private schools and MPS to be ready to be the leaders of tomorrow. I want these children to be sent out with good hope for the future. This is not to be denied to them. We work for the one in all that will make a difference."

Participants described being aware of these challenges, and were not afraid to approach the problems head on, as this one participant explained: "I love working in MPS [Milwaukee Public Schools]. I am aware of the negative comments. But we deal with issues—not avoid them."

Another participant spoke openly about the everyday racial injustices impacting their children, who are a minority living in Whitefish Bay, a predominantly white suburb. While the participant shared many of the same privileges as their White counterparts, they explained that they had to teach their children about the realities of their differences:

> "When you are in the minority, you just have to handle certain things. We had to let our children know what's going to happen when they go into a store with their White friends. My son–we had to tell him about "driving while Black" and what that means."

One participant spoke up about the importance of valuing teachers and families in the pursuit of promoting diversity and equity in schools. He felt that the teaching profession and the public education system today were regarded with little esteem, and this in turn negatively impacted school morale:

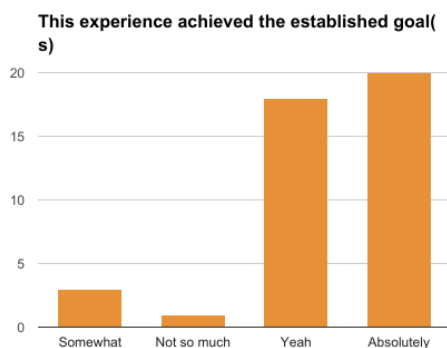> "This can be demoralizing. When there [working in the Chicago public school system], I believe I met the best teachers and the best families. But it is the low respect for school that persists. So many do not want to be teachers, unlike [in] the past, because the whole profession is perceived negatively."

Feedback Forms

Participant demographic information

Zip Code

Participants came from 25 different zip codes, including: 53024, 53092, 53110, 53151, 53157, 53202, 53204, 53207, 53209, 53211, 53217, 52221, 53222, 53223, 53224.

Age Range

Gender

Race & Ethnicity

This experience achieved the established goal(s)

This experience strengthens community bonds
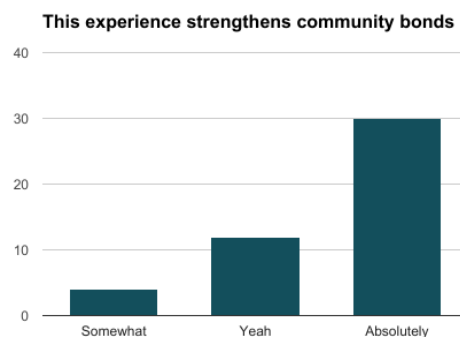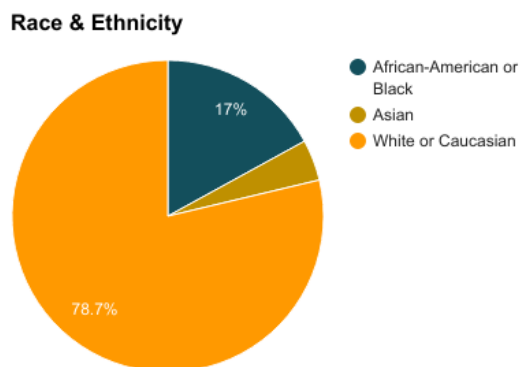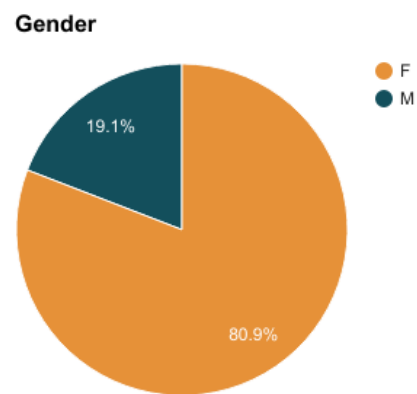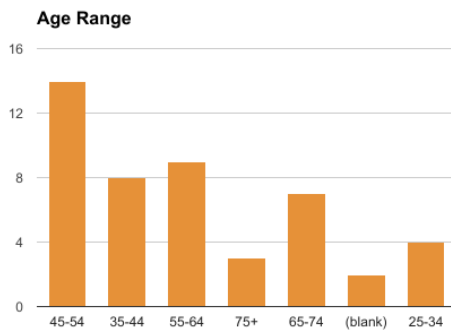
Feedback Form Questions

1. **Did this experience achieve the established goals? - Why or Why Not?**

- Because :)

- Everyone experienced strong views

- Everyone spoke and everyone listened carefully

- Fantastic Reggie Jackson, Ex Fabula stories, exceptional small group, extremely inspiring

- Good sharing & discussion

- Great job!

- Great sharing - great connections. I'd love to see a time devoted to sharing of concrete steps to take.

- Having community members perspective was interesting

- I appreciate the personal dialogue; I wish there was more diversity in the space for this kind of conversation

- I feel invigorated and inspired, but I do not know what the "established" goals of the gathering were.

- I learned a lot by listening

- I like the discussion and feel it was very effective in opening communication

- I thought it was a good experience

- It was a conversation! I got to talk with and hear from a group that all had different and interesting experiences

- It was wonderful to hear community perspectives by having more educators here would be helpful

- Never enough time, but wonderful dialogue

- New awareness - choir was expanded

- No background was given on participants

- Not sure what goals were

- Structured exchange /discussion gave all the chance to share

- The focus, I thought, was suburban schools - but not enough focus there. Should have focused more on schools like WFB, Mequon, Thiensville

- Yes we formed community

2. Do you believe this experience strengthens community bonds? - Why or Why Not?

- Because we get to hear other people. We become more adept at where people are coming from. We were all on the same page, but I guess that helps to energize us/me to do more.
- Discussing personal experiences and sharing with others is invaluable
- Diverse group talk to open
- Even though it is the choir, it's important to reinforce & grow the choir
- How do we gain more stakeholders as a part of this conversation?
- I would have liked to take more time to get to know our listening circle friends.
- It brings people together to talk about important issues
- It will if I take what I learned and share it with the community.
- It's a matter of baby steps
- Locally, for the group - yes. I got to hear about different people's worlds and the efforts made there that I never knew about.
- Once again, I'm glad we work in a predominately white community to start this conversation, but I wish multiple geographic communities were represented
- People never get together
- People who care about these issues gain strength from each other.
- Realize others bring wisdom to their quarter
- You know you have a community

3. Are you likely to recommend this experience to others? - Why or Why Not?

- It was great
- Diverse group coming together
- I hope more people start attending Zeidler Center conversations ("grow the choir")
- I think it is valuable work as one point.
- I would be very interested in seeing how my nonprofit could utilize/share facilitators for discussions on race.
- It was a great experience
- It was very helpful for me, but the focus on conversation I know would not be for everyone I know.

- Listening without comment/criticism makes it safe to share & easy to learn
- Personal & real!
- So important to listen to others and their experiences
- Structure was clear & ensured equal airtime.
- Thank you for creating space for all to share
- These dialogues need to happen more.
- We have so much to learn from listening to others

4. What is the most important suggestion you have for upcoming dialogues? And what specific issue or themes would you like to discuss?

- Continued discussion on race & equity
- Fairness in housing
- Great experiences - good job!
- Guns in schools
- How do we handle diversity in groups and committees when persons with mental health issues seem unable to take time to monitor themselves.
- How to plan and implement change
- I didn't get the chance to hear much about what isn't going so well in Milwaukee schools, but Reggie Jackson and also someone in my small discussion group mentioned that learning is not happening. That kids are being mis-educated, or that the teaching is going in the wrong direction. I want to know more about that but don't want to blame the teachers. What is wrong structurally or with the system of funding or whatever.
- I would love to see discussions like these happening with the students themselves.
- I'm wondering about how we can extend & deepen this conversation ;how can we "safely" challenge white folks to reflect on their personal investments in status quo and in changing it?
- It was great! Very welcoming environment. This was the first time I came to this type of gathering so I had no expectations - it was great. I would def. come back.
- Mass incarceration - restorative justice/criminal justice
- Meaningful and efficacious political and social activism
- More on equity and helping Milwaukee poor
- More time at the end for circles to freely interact.
- More time to complete tasks, evening time went over (great experience though)
- More time to get to know our listening circle friends
- Place, immigration, education, gender

- Shorter stories of speakers/ then fewer stories
- Talking to children about race, understanding privilege & power & asking for good
- The prompts should've added "suburban". We talked too much about helping MPS (which is needed and appreciated) but our students of color in suburban schools do too.
- Time for quick and brief ideas that go up on a board so people can see possible actions to take - organizations to join.
- To continue
- We can always work on equality and equity
- What brings you to this work? What sustains you? Where have you seen moments of success?
- What's behind our fearfulness- maybe? What are you afraid of?

Annex

1   Question/Round 1

1.1   Racism and Inequality in Education

1.1.1 Friendships: Empathy and Growing Awareness of Racism

- "My older two boys were in high school for 220. We were all so hopeful that it would work. We were all so white privileged that we wanted this to make a difference. We were all so white privileged that we wanted this to make a difference.
- When my child was in 4 years old, [in] kindergarten, his friend of color came to play at our house. A neighbor called to ask that they play in the backyard because her mother was coming to visit from Atlanta [and did not feel comfortable seeing people of color in the neighborhood]. I made sure they [my kids and their friends of color] played in the front yard [despite this racist comment from the neighbor].
- "As a child in school, I had an African-American classmate who had moved here from the South. There were Latino and Asian families where I grew up, but only this one Black family. By high school in my advanced placement classes, there were no people of color... When I returned to the US, I made a point of befriending African-American people"

1.1.2 Family: Adoption and Exposure to Racism

- "I have two Black, adopted siblings. My parents had to work harder to get them into certain classes, certain opportunities, etc. I try to advocate for my nephew now."
- From transcribers' notes: "Another woman said her daughter (who is Asian) came home and told her mother that her teacher likes Asian and white girls best; next, white boys; then white girls; then Black boys. She said it very matter-of-factly. The mother later heard the same comment from another friend of her daughter's independently. Her first inclination was to confront the school principal. Instead she asked her daughter what she thought about that and encouraged her to write a letter to the principal. She recalled she and her daughter had a meaningful discussion about the issue."
- A participant with an adopted Guatemalan child, and an African American child: "I saw how disparate WFB schooling is to inner city schooling. Kids in the inner city don't have access to the same opportunity. Now he's [one of my adopted children is] at St. Roberts and doing well. He was at another Catholic school previously, but I saw racism against him there."
- "My Black daughter wasn't being called on in class when a substitute came in and she expressed her frustration to me. I ended up finding out that the teacher had left notes that some of the students were lazy and those just happened to be all the Black students and all the students the sub treated differently."

1.1.3 "Fascinated" by Other Races

- At 20 years of age I began tutoring in Cleveland where there 10% were colored, then later in Cincinnati with 99% black my eyes were opened.

1.1.4 Race and Language
- "My Black friend had a daughter who was real good at sports when we lived out in [a small suburban town] and all of the White kids made fun of her…[because of] her race. Then they moved to an inner city school and she still got picked on for 'sounding too white.'"

1.1.5 Harsher Punishments and Police Presence for Students of Color
- I was working with students in the worst high school and it was all new to me [in Chicago where the majority of the students were Black]…[The] school that was falling apart and had probation officers all around. We had to pass through metal detectors to enter the school to help these children with their homework."

1.2   Decreases in Diversity, Increases in Inequalities
1.2.1 Decreases in Diversity
- While there is ethnic diversity there is no diversity of thought: thought are subversive in this system. This system inhibits learning.

1.2.2 Inequality Persists
- There were some students who were not doing homework. I asked them why. They said their school had no textbooks they could use for homework. That is not equity!
- There was no less talent and intelligence in the deprived group. They just had no step up: no books at home, no music lessons. They were not given what was needed.
- I taught in Milwaukee and then in the suburbs. Seeing the disparity is indescribable.

2   Question/Round 2
2.1   Connecting Education to the Broader Community
2.1.1 "Strong Teachers, Strong Community"
- "Students need to understand there is another world out there (other than the people they see around them every day)."
- "There needs to be a strong feeling of community and care in picking the teachers."
- "I have to teach my child about the world outside of WFB, especially when my child is sometimes the only Black child in class."
- Transcriber's notes: "Value teachers…And kids can have role models in teachers."

2.1.2 Diversity in Teachers
- The staff needs to be diverse as well as the students. You must embrace and love the kids.
- "Diverse student population and staff."
- "Diversity in staffing so that staff looks like student population."
- "Most of these schools have the same traits. They have a lack of resources and the staff are beaten down…the beaten down staff create active distrust between administration."

2.2   Diverse ways of learning

2.2.1 Service learning
- Creative is a word I use to describe my ideal. And the love of learning and justice. The school need to take note of the wider community.
- What I look for is project based learning, one that is linked to a social issue. The children spend months studying a topic and link in all the subjects as they do so.
- All virtues would be reinforced through service. Through service for others, helping others the children came to an awareness of variable abilities.

2.2.2 Diverse styles of learning
- "The classroom needs to be the interaction that is learning – not the teacher directed learning system…We can learn more from stopping in the moment to discuss something that has just occurred than plowing thru a curriculum step by step."

2.2.3 Learning through the Arts and Industrial Arts
- "My ideal school emphasizes the Arts more."
- "Arts and industrial arts as vocation
- "Need creativity in the curriculum, even in teaching cooking and other skills needed to know what they can be good at...not only calculus… Success is not just 98% going to college."

2.3   Fitting In
- "They do not need to assimilate to be accepted. What do you bring to life: gifts, talents. These need to be validated."
- "Our education system operates within a small box and is reluctant to reach outside of that box. Not all kids fit into that box!"
- Transcriber's notes: "This woman said she would see many ethnic backgrounds at the ideal school. There's not as much diversity now as she would like. She'd like to see children recognizing their OWN gifts."
- Transcriber's notes: "That meets children where they're at and helps them find their own voice."
- Transcriber's notes: "They wouldn't feel the need to assimilate to fit in."

2.4   Addressing Trauma at Home
- "We should create a program that exemplifies the tragedies that people of color endure especially for teachers. It shouldn't be all on Black people to share the stories. We need to better our education programs."
- "Look at the real factors in learning and thus to make each feel safe."
- "I'll say three statements, individual needs, resources, check-in. We need to handle personal needs. Children could write to fictional character about problems."

2.5　Measuring Success

- "There needs to be no standardized testing because there are no standardized people! We need to give help to the teachers to find ways to assist those who do not learn in all the same way. Grades and tests do not develop the person."
- "And expand beyond just schooling... finding jobs, following up after school is done."

3　Question/Round 3
3.1　Helping Others
3.1.1 Growing Awareness and Sense of Duty

- "It is healing for me to be here hearing all these ideas…I can advocate harder for these ideas knowing that others think this way also."
- "Maybe I'll go back to teaching or become a principal and be an advocate for all."

3.1.2 Preaching to the Choir

- "The choir is growing." I am writing the curriculum for my school. I continue to read and educate myself.
- I need to give him [my son] more experiences and keep exposing him to differences.
- I'm in a book group—"Safe Places to Talk About Race".
- Transcribers' notes: "She needs to challenge her own white people; help them understand our past. She has been able to let other people wrestle with this. Our system is so totally flawed."
- "I see where we need to work here but also in collaboration with other school districts; with all students: students of color and students of white."
- "I've been wanting to write a story on the white perspective of living in the city and the children of the white individuals who go to public inner city schools within Milwaukee. I hear about white parents struggling to send children to inner city schools."
- Transcribers' notes: "She has three white boys and sees part of her role as helping them understand their privilege and power. The life that they have in the Whitefish Bay 'bubble' is not the same experience as others."

3.2　Political Involvement

- "I can continue to agitate politically and press our 'so-called representatives' in government to do the right thing."
- "Well, I am a stay at home mom but I can have conversations with people about these ideas. I can volunteer, contact legislators and donate dollars and time."
- "I want to be a careful and informed voter."

4　Connected Conversation
4.1　Realistic Hopes and Values

- "I have power to shape my daughter and her ideas and help her become the best person I know. I think it's about our youth."