



Why Not?

Action Plan for Urban Education

*Prepared by The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change
Fall 2006*

Mission Statement

The Kansas City Roundtable on Access & Opportunity

“Through the broadest civic engagement attainable, this initiative will cause the development, implementation and monitoring of a high quality urban education pre-Kindergarten to post-secondary pipeline in Kansas City.”

- *The Greater Kansas City Community Foundation*





The KCRT logo depicts an array of intersecting circles. These circles and their arrangement are not only meant to recognize Kansas City’s tradition of fountains, but are also intended to depict infinity, never-ending evolution, and limitless possibilities. The ideals that have been put forth in the creation of the KCRT and by those who have been a part of it thus far cannot simply be articulated and then left to their own devices. Instead, they must be cultivated and nurtured since they—like the water flowing through a fountain—are the source of healthy societies and vibrant cities

(Logo design by Jessie Aristy)



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Background to this Document

The purpose of the following report is two-fold: 1) to capture the ideas and desired outcomes articulated by participants during the meeting of the KCRT on June 22nd and 23rd, 2006; and 2) to provide general recommendations for continuing the KCRT. Each is described below in further detail, as is the process by which both of sets of recommendations were produced.

Process

The process of producing the report began with in-depth telephone interviews with the KCRT Planning Group. The most dominant theme from the interviews was a call for action. Planning Group members strongly stated their opposition to yet another report collecting dust in their offices, as well as their desire to see concrete and innovative action undertaken.

In order to be as responsive as possible to this call for action, the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change modified a version of our Racial Equity Theory of Change process for the KCRT. The Racial Equity Theory of Change (RETOC) is a tool for designing a community change strategy that takes account of what needs to be in place in order to achieve the goal of improved outcomes and racial equity in a community. The original RETOC process is designed for use by small groups of people in a way that is sustained for a critical planning period. The leadership at the GKCCF, however, had identified a large group of Kansas City leaders (approximately 80) who they hoped would participate in and contribute to the strategy during the two-day meeting in June 2006. In order to meet the needs of such a large group, the staffs of the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change and GKCCF created an agenda designed to accomplish the following:

- ◆ Introduce the mission of the KCRT
- ◆ Explore inherent tensions and challenges of such a mission, and
- ◆ Engage participants in the first step of creating a strategy for improving outcomes in Kansas City's pre-k to post-grad pipeline, taking into careful consideration the racial disparities that are apparent at each point along the pipeline.

During the meeting participants were asked to be part of a group focusing on a particular point along the pipeline (Birth to Pre-K, Elementary School, Middle School, High School, Community Colleges & Training Institutions, Four Year Colleges & Universities, Graduate and Professional Schools, and Employment.) Each group was presented with a template on which they were asked to identify:

- ◆ The overall goal or desired outcome
- ◆ The target audiences
- ◆ The "Low Hanging Fruit," (outcomes that seem easy to achieve) and the "Tough Nut to Crack (outcomes that are difficult to achieve and will likely take a long period of time)
- ◆ A timeframe for acting



- ◆ Actions that will need to be undertaken to bring about the goal or desired outcome
- ◆ Actors who will need to be involved
- ◆ A point-person to keep the group accountable
- ◆ Required resources and supports

Time was also allotted for participants to circulate to each of the other groups so that they could contribute their unique perspectives to what all groups had developed. Groups were also asked to devise these charts through lens of racial equity and institutional connectedness and so were provided with a “Keep In Mind” checklist. The checklist is a sheet of questions about racial equity and institutional connectedness (the pipeline concept) against which to develop the strategy’s first cut. A sample chart and the “Keep In Mind” checklist are included in Appendix Four.

Participant Recommendations

The results of this flurry of activity were eight charts, one of which is pictured here:



The charts yielded a wide array of goals and recommendations. Roundtable staff reviewed all charts produced by the meeting participants, as well as transcripts of group discussions in order to compose desired outcome statements that captured the sentiment of the group. These desired outcomes—in ‘raw data’ form—were then processed and categorized into the following six categories:

- ◆ Student supports
- ◆ Parent supports
- ◆ Teacher supports
- ◆ Evaluation for learning and growth
- ◆ Institutional connectedness, communication and collaboration for a strong pipeline
- ◆ Culture of supportiveness and high expectations

Each item was again examined by Aspen Institute staff in relation to the “Keep in Mind” checklist and the RETOC framework—the policies, practices and cultural representations, norms and stereotypes that can be identified as either helping to promote racial equity, or as playing a role in the continuation of structural racism.

The result of the process is this collection of recommendations. The Aspen Institute staff’s review and analysis was as true as possible to participant input as represented on the charts

and meeting transcripts. Due to the variance among the participant recommendations, however, the recommendations have been consolidated and, in some cases, reworded for clarity. This report has been designed and written to be the foundation for future planning sessions of the KCRT once recommendations are fully fleshed out and the KCRT has had the opportunity to prioritize them and consider their feasibility.

Recommendations from the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change

In addition to the recommendations of the KCRT participants, the staff of the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change have devised a set of general recommendations for the way the KCRT should work. These recommendations are based on the Aspen Institute Roundtable's experience and expertise in the field of inner-city revitalization, the work of comprehensive community initiatives, and the endeavors of community building. They are also rooted in the analysis of the interviews conducted with the KCRT's planning group, the June 2006 meeting's discussions, and the charts. It is our intention that they provide a foothold for moving forward, and especially that they are received—as put forth in the introduction—in the spirit of a community-created “living document” that evolves over time.

In the pages that follow you will find a guide for reading this document, a set of general recommendations for the KCRT, and a compilation of all of the suggestions that were put forth in the June 2006 meeting. Consider this a living document—one to be carefully considered, questioned, and expanded. And finally, please know that it has been the great privilege of the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change to have assisted in the launching of the KCRT.



Introduction



Why not? Why shouldn't Kansas City be a place renowned for its excellent public education system where all children can excel and reach their full potential? Why shouldn't Kansas City's neighborhoods be shining examples of safe, supportive and healthy communities where children and families thrive? While there may be many reasons why this does not describe the Kansas City of today, why should it not describe the Kansas City of tomorrow?

Like every other major city in America, Kansas City has lived through economic and production shifts, as well as racial tensions and upheavals. Located in one of the wealthiest regions in America, Kansas City has been, for some, a profitable place to be. But Kansas City's wealth has never been equitably distributed, and in fact the wealth of some has come at high cost to others. One of the most pernicious aspects of Kansas City's inequity is that it has always sorted along racial lines. Communities have not emerged so well from the legacy of this racial division, the effects of which are most apparent in the continued segregation of Kansas City's neighborhoods and key opportunity institutions, notably the public schools.

While they cannot be denied, these inheritances no longer need be accepted. Change is both possible and necessary. But how should it be undertaken, what precisely should be done, who should do it, and how long will it take? The Kansas City Roundtable on Access and Opportunity (KCRT) was convened on June 22nd and 23rd, 2006 to take on exactly these questions and to design a change initiative that would be more effective and longer-lasting than any that has come before.

The convening pointed to a collective vision of the KCRT as an effort to harness the civic capacity of Kansas City. The vision involves improving education and employment opportunities by supporting students, parents, and teachers, and doing so by promoting the values of, racial equity, institutional connectedness, and a developing a culture that encourages and supports intellectual and entrepreneurial curiosity and pursuits.

It is important to be clear about the scope and nature of the KCRT. The KCRT is not a government- or foundation-mandated initiative. Instead, it grew from the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation's (GKCCF) desire to create a permanent space for Kansas City's leadership to come together and articulate a common vision for Kansas City—especially for Kansas City's urban core—and to work collectively to devise strategies for achieving it.

The KCRT is a long-term commitment on the part of the GKCCF. The KCRT is not a select group of Kansas City leaders—"the usual suspects". Instead it is designed to be an inclusive cross-section of leadership—from the grassroots THE POSSE to the elite Civic Council, and from specialists in early learning to those who focus on employment education. At the first meeting of the KCRT, for example, people who have long known of each other but had never met face-to-face, sat down at the same table for the first time.

The KCRT is a multi-racial, multi-ethnic group reflecting all of Kansas City's inhabitants. While the KCRT began with a group of thirty to jumpstart the conversation, and expanded to more than eighty leaders at the June 2006 meeting, its philosophy and design remain one of maximum inclusion. By calling itself a 'Roundtable,' it demonstrates the desire to sustain an expanding circle of cooperation, conversation and commitment in which there is room for everyone. The KCRT is grounded in the belief that everyone wants the best for the



children and youth of Kansas City, and that differences of perspective will only enrich and enliven the effort.

The KCRT recognizes that there are effective schools, positive initiatives and quality programs operating in Kansas City right now and that they need to be supported and strengthened. There are not, however, enough of these good efforts in place to reach a critical mass of children and families to create the kind of sea change needed to get Kansas City communities on a different track. A shortage of public and political will, a paucity of resources within communities, and a lack of connections between communities have meant that neither institutions nor systems are able to reach their potential. Where capacities and connections are weak, the kind of strong and flexible networks necessary to secure the resources that are needed to support the well-being of individuals, families and communities cannot emerge and survive. It is precisely in strengthening and nourishing such supportive civic networks that the KCRT has a pivotal role to play.

As the following pages evidence, those who have contributed ideas to this early stage of the KCRT are well-aware that existing programs need to be supported more fully. They also know where new work needs to be undertaken, and that the work needs to be appealing to and supportive of those it is intended to serve. The work of the KCRT is to provide unprecedented levels of energy and connection to the institutions and organizations that serve and support Kansas Citians. The KCRT did not come together to dictate what should be taking place in Kansas City. Rather it provides infrastructure for convening and nurturing a groundswell of local determination to realize the progress that the great majority of Kansas Citians know is possible to achieve.

Why have we not been able to build strong stable communities in which all our children—regardless of racial, ethnic or economic backgrounds—are well-educated, enjoy gainful careers, and can contribute to their communities? Foremost among the complex of reasons is the need historical interrelationship between education, race and class in America. Virtually anywhere in this country, if a community wants to fix education, it must take on race and class, and if a community wants to address racial and class disparities, it must take on education.

While this fact of American life has been widely recognized by scholars from all points of the political spectrum, and while many within the broader public know this intuitively, it is nevertheless very difficult to reach a consensus on what should be done. Some of the dynamics of the first meeting of the KCRT itself pointed to the high degree of difficulty, especially as people tried to communicate across long-running racial divides. Understandably, old suspicions, frustrations, and misunderstandings were present. But, in what will hopefully be the fighting spirit of the KCRT, the group at that meeting resolved to confront these challenges and difficulties head-on.

The challenges associated with undoing racial disparities are daunting. The intertwined nature of race and education can be emotionally painful for those with the courage to take it on, and engaging in any activity around race and education carries with it the responsibility to develop a respectful process that works through all obstacles. Finding a place to begin can seem overwhelming, since neither “education” nor “race” can be viewed and addressed from narrow institutional perspectives. The surrounding context of laws, historical precedent, policies, practices, cultures and “common sense” animate these areas. Each must



receive careful attention since it is this broader social context that keeps failing public education and employment systems alive and discourages better visions from emerging.

Kansas City has the opportunity to put itself on the map, to be known for having the courage to stick out its neck and work collectively to build a city that is admired and imitated because of its vibrant neighborhoods, equitable and innovative schools and thriving marketplaces. In the same way that Portland, Oregon is a model for green development, Curitiba, Brazil is a world model for urban planning, and Reggio Emilia, Italy is considered a world model for early childhood education, Kansas City can aim to remake itself into a place where people from across the globe come to learn about excellence in urban education and innovation in dismantling the structures that keep racial disparities alive.

Education and employment are the pivotal systems that can transform lives, communities and cities. As the report commissioned by the GKCCF, *Time to Get It Right: A Strategy for Higher Education in Kansas City* put forth:

[Kansas City] has along, dismal history of lack of opportunity for its African American citizens, most of whom are stuck in the blighted urban core. The same lack of educational opportunity are spreading to Kansas City's Latino population. Together these groups are one-third of the city, and they are growing faster than other groups. Kansas City will not be a great city for anyone if the city continues to fail its African-American and Latino populations. The only way to address this problem is by providing educational opportunity. This is Kansas City's—and America's—greatest challenge.

The KCRT was created in direct response to this challenge. No single consultant, superintendent, curriculum or program can provide a quick fix because there are no quick fixes. There *are* exciting innovations and highly effective ways of supporting families, educating children, and preparing a workforce. But in order for such innovations and practices to take root and support the people of Kansas City in flourishing, long-term commitments of creativity, hope and elbow grease will be required. Again quoting the *Time to Get It Right* report, “This will require an unprecedented level of civic leadership.”

This document is a scaffold around which to build the KCRT. It was given shape by the work of the Planning Group and then taken to the next level at the inaugural meeting of the KCRT. Some aspects will receive immediate attention, while others may take some time to strategize around. Some are immediately actionable, while others will require additional resources and forms of expertise. It is the hope of the authors that those who are now and who will be involved with the KCRT recognize this document as their own. It has been put together as a product that reflects the participants' collective vision, one that must continue to grow. As one of the participants in the KCRT Planning Group said at the end of the meeting in April 2006, “We can't keep just trying to do this with the same old fuel we've been using. We've got to use jet fuel this time.”



Recommendations for Continuing the KCRT

The theory of change that has been applied to the KCRT is that the education and employment systems in Kansas City require the sustained attention and energy of all Kansas Citizens, and in particular those whose decisions directly and indirectly affect education and employment systems. It assumes that the GKCCF is uniquely positioned to convene Kansas Citizens in order to amplify their voice and activities.

The formation of the KCRT itself was the first step in the process of building the kind of civic capacity needed to make lasting improvements to the Birth/Pre-K – Post-Grad/Employment pipeline. The KCRT has already shown itself to be a committed, creative and ambitious group that can form the core of any future effort. **Continue using the KCRT as a catalytic tool—a venue for coming together to strategize and act.** Retain and expand the inclusiveness of the effort. This section of the report outlines how the KCRT should continue its work.

Safe & Neutral Convener

1 The KCRT should position itself as a **legitimate and safe space** for the entire range of actors relevant to sustained improvement of education and employment outcomes. Leaders from all sectors should come to think of the KCRT as a resource for uniting and directing constructive activity. It should be clear to any who become involved with it that the KCRT is a place for coming together in productive and creative ways, where personal differences are either left behind or addressed openly and honestly so that the utterly urgent issues of education and employment can be given the full attention they deserve. It is important not to be seen as yet another player on a crowded but too often disjointed field of play. Instead, the KCRT must function as a “tool” that helps all of those in Kansas City working along the pipeline stronger than the sum of their parts. The KCRT should continue calling on Kansas City leaders who are trusted by all communities to provide advice, critique and guidance. The KCRT should be in close communication with school, university and business leaders, all of whom should see the KCRT as an ally to contact regularly and rely on for a variety of supports and connections.* The KCRT can also be an additional actor in promoting the bridging of state line divides by increasing opportunities for contact and dialogue.

* For example, the strategy of providing extra support to students as they make specific grade-level transitions is being implemented in a number of urban school districts around the country, and was a suggestion made by attendees of the KCRT June meeting. Should school leadership decide to implement such a strategy in Kansas City, the KCRT might play the role of convening across sectors those actors whose institutional influence has leverage in supporting such a strategy's potential.



Comparative Advantage of the KCRT

2 Many of the ideas put forth by the participants at the June 2006 meeting are already in place in Kansas City—whether in full or in part. The purpose of the KCRT is to avoid overlap and further amplify the profile and support for these efforts so that they may be more effective and reach increased numbers of Kansas Citians. When realms of activity are discussed or explored, it will be important for those involved to consistently examine whether it makes sense for the KCRT to take them up, or whether it is more strategic to discuss and coordinate with a pre-existing group. KCRT leadership may want to create a checklist or similar mechanism for making that kind of determination. The challenge, then, is to help make existing work more effective than it is to create new activities. This means weaving together, reinforcing and amplifying existing efforts

It will be important for the KCRT to undertake the work of “mapping” and possibly creating a directory, repository, clearinghouse of all of the relevant actors, organizations and institutions so that there is a comprehensive picture of actors and activity doing work that is directly relevant to the pipeline and the recommendations of the June participants. Such maps/directories exist in particular areas and whatever directories are existing should be included in the compilation effort. If well-planned, -managed, and adequately staffed, such an effort, while clearly substantial, could be accomplished in a relatively short period of time. It would then be an important contribution to post this directory on the GKCCF/KCRT website. A mechanism for submitting organizations that may not have been included or were overlooked would be a way for such a web-based resource to exist in an interactive fashion.

Champion of the Urban Core

3 **Take the necessary steps (some of which are included in this report) to have the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation widely recognized as a champion of community life for all Kansas Citians.** The KCRT provides the GKCCF with a structure through which to promote education, democracy, openness, prosperity and community even more explicitly than it already does. An example of why this is needed is illustrated by an interview conducted with a member of the black community doing important education-related work in the urban core. The GKCCF was not an actor in this person’s constellation of community actors. In other words, they did not recognize the GKCCF as a resource or advocate. This person’s organization, however, is exactly the type of initiative that the KCRT/GKCCF wants to be championing.

Organizational Structure and Transparency

4 Formalize and make public the **structure and funding** sources of the KCRT. Emphasize broad engagement through the formal structure and funding, which should mirror the city-wide agenda.

STRUCTURE: The pipeline concept implies many categories of work, and KCRT meeting yielded many recommendations. Based on the initiative’s design and the participants’ input at this early stage in the trajectory of the KCRT, the structure



calls for an ‘overall’ KCRT, with task forces devoted to each of the six focus areas (student supports, parent supports, etc.). See the diagram on page 24.

FUNDING SOURCES: It will be important to work with other Kansas City foundations and corporations, as well as with government representatives where that makes sense, to ensure that the efforts that the KCRT are supported over the long-term. KCRT might consider positioning its Excellence Fund as a fund to which all local foundations, corporations, etc., contribute support to the KCRT. To embark upon this project and then to let it wither because of lack of resources would be a true disservice to those who have so far dedicated their time and knowledge, and to the collective spirit that was in evidence at the KCRT meetings.

Build Trust

5 Foster trust at every possible opportunity. While this may seem obvious, with an effort dealing directly with issues as sensitive and complex as education, race and employment, explicit efforts to build and nurture trust are essential. Valuing creativity, flexibility and humor help to build the kind of trust needed to sustain a large group of people over time. In the words of one participant, “I think that all of the work we do here might be for naught if we do not build trust and credibility among the participants.” Build in opportunities to do self-checks on this. Keep track of who stays engaged and who does not.

Collective Identity

6 Build recognition and a collective identity for the KCRT. The logo that appears on this document, which can also be thought about as a ‘brand,’ is one example of an early measure that can be taken to build recognition and identity. KCRT leadership might also consider distributing certificates of participation, membership cards, or tokens of appreciation so that there is a material ‘take-away’—however small—from the KCRT so that it is communicated to participants that the energy and time they devote is recognized and valued.

7 Retain the Planning Group, or create a somewhat smaller advisory board. Like the overall KCRT, it should be representative of a true cross section of Kansas Citizens by age, race, class, expertise and so on.

Community “Face Time”

8 Create a learning network among KCRT members. Establish a schedule of consistent, creative and cutting-edge gatherings, whether events, workshops or another format, hosted by the KCRT in order to: a) build community and trust, celebrate progress and fortify group connections and identity; b) provide a space/venue for the community to review and learn from existing programs and from each other’s efforts. These convenings should bolster social contact and connections and should use the hospitality of the GKCCF to create a cordial atmosphere in which to bring people together under the



common goal and as a neutral convener. They should also build collective knowledge about what needs to happen and collective responsibility for progress.*

9 Request commitment. It is important that the KCRT/GKCCF establish a tone of hospitality and dedication. It is equally important that those involved with the KCRT put forth their own commitment to the work. Such a process must be solidified over time by building real relationships and working together in solidarity. In order to jumpstart the process, however, consider requesting letters of commitment from all relevant parties. Where KCRT leadership can identify obvious potential commitments, they should be suggested.

Include Students and Young People When- and Where Ever Possible

10 Invite each school in the Kansas City, Kansas and Missouri school districts to establish a KCRT student committee. Include students as much as possible in the activities of the overall KCRT and all task forces.

Champion Educators

11 Include teachers (and the teachers unions where appropriate) as important partners in KCRT endeavors. As with students, invite each school in the Kansas City, Kansas and Missouri districts to establish a KCRT teacher committee. Include teachers in the activities of the overall KCRT and task forces. Consider having a teacher committee at each school. Whenever reports or other items are published and disseminated, be certain that they are received by teachers. Be on alert for different ways to value teachers and boost their morale. Teachers, like the other actors already mentioned, should understand that the KCRT has been established as a resource to support them and their work. It will also be important to establish a strong rapport with the leaders of the teachers unions since establishing unity and a positive environment for teachers and those who represent their interests is vital.

12 Include college and university leadership and faculty members—particularly those whose work is most relevant to the pipeline—as important partners in KCRT endeavors. Where most strategic, include them on task forces. Deepen (or establish) working relationships with research centers, departments and faculty in order to carry out and analyze the reconnaissance that will need to be carried out. Such relationships will not only benefit the KCRT/GKCCF, but have the potential to fortify the university’s capacities and infuse them with the values that the KCRT aims to promote.

* Upon being asked at the end of the April meeting of the Planning Group “What would bring you back?” one person noted that the GKCCF, by virtue of being what it is (a broker of resources and connections), “can get about three more meetings out of us.” Strive to reverse this dynamic.

Champion Parents

13 **Include parents** on the overall KCRT, and on the task forces. If there is interest, KCRT leadership might consider, in fact, establishing a task force devoted entirely to parent support and involvement.

Local ‘Think Tank’ and Strategy Center

14 **Tap into and convene those who specialize in policy work.** What key policy levers do they think need to be mobilized around? Link to those working to fundamentally modify state-level fiscal and tax policies in ways that support the goals of the KCRT. There are existing policy forums, for instance the Chamber of Commerce’s ‘Superintendents Forum.’ The KCRT should understand the range of such groups and forums and gain an understanding of how it might contribute to such existing work. Further, the expertise of those with deep knowledge of the best ways to tap into local, state and federal supports should also be contacted.

Private Sector Partnerships

15 **Deepen (or establish) working partnerships with businesses and corporations**—especially those most relevant to the pipeline. Such relationships are likely to benefit the KCRT, and also have the potential to infuse the work of the business/ corporations with the values that the KCRT aims to promote.*

Innovative and Effective Communication

16 It is vital for the KCRT to establish a dynamic and innovative **communications strategy** and program if the level of attention, involvement, and energy required to achieve the success of the KCRT’s mission. Such a strategy should consist of both internal (existing participants in the KCRT) and external (new participants, the community at large, decision-makers, media) components (This recommendation was also echoed in the recommendations of the KCRT June 2006 meeting).

* For example, places like Kaplan and Sylvan Learning Centers, are not only highly relevant to pipeline concerns (in particular the testing preparation needed to transition from high school to college settings), but are lucrative businesses with the potential to lend in-kind test-prep support, expertise, and possibly financial contributions.

INTERNAL: KCRT Members

- ⊖ Establish a strategy and protocol for communicating with those who have already participated in order to disseminate this report to them, as well as reconvene them for next action steps.
- ⊖ Devise a strategy for those who have already participated in KCRT meetings to commit to participating in follow-up work.
- ⊖ Establish a schedule of convenings and a protocol for communicating with those who are already included in the KCRT so that they are likely to attend future convenings, as well as encourage others to attend so that the circle of inclusion and community-wide learning and support are expanded.

EXTERNAL: To expand commitment to KCRT Goals

- ⊖ Create a communications strategy specific to the different types of media in Kansas City. Be sure to include all venues—print, web, radio, television, and so on. Include venues at all scales, and in particular venues that target specific interest groups/communities such as schools or congregations. Such a tactic will help as the KCRT works to effect broader dissemination of education and employment specific information and to influence the development of a culture of supportiveness and high expectations.
- ⊖ KCRT leadership may consider sending representatives of the media outlets a packet stating the goals of the KCRT and how they might contribute to the overall effort, followed-up with individual meetings and ongoing communication (sending them reports, editorials, press releases, etc.) that will help media professionals to understand how best they can infuse the messages that the KCRT hopes to promote.*

Another possible option, in addition to direct communication, is to organize a conference on ‘Education, Employment and the Media in Kansas City.’ Such an event—if creatively designed and expertly managed—could be an important venue for bringing together media influentials, reporters, and others with students, teachers and others and could be an excellent starting point for the desired goal of nurturing a culture in Kansas City that is supportive of high expectations and excellence in educational and employment outcomes.

A community outreach strategy not only takes seriously many of the recommendations of the KCRT June meeting participants, but also will help the KCRT to achieve the kind of community buy-in and culture of supportiveness and high expectations that were put forth during the meetings.

* A concrete example of such infusion (and there are many more in the participant recommendation section) can be seen with the Kansas City Star. When a person signs up to read the Kansas City Star online, they are offered a number of options for receiving updates on a variety of topics (sports, politics, etc.). There are not “education” or “workforce” or “community life” options, however. While this is a minor example, including such categories could be a step in putting these topics more in the mainstream of Kansas City culture and discourse.

- ⊞ A third external target audience for a KCRT communication strategy is policy-makers and other powerbrokers, particularly those who have influence over the policies and practices that are most directly related to the education pipeline. Once the recommendation of KCRT meeting participants are digested and key areas of work decided upon, it will be important to identify those policy makers who will be allies of the KCRT's goals, as well as those whose policies and other decisions need to be the target of opposition and/or mobilization campaigns. The policy-maker audience is most likely to be reached through one-on-one meetings during which the goals and projects of the KCRT are explained with the help of a very clear and well-designed information packet.

17 **Create a website** that features the work of the KCRT reconnaissance efforts and activities, as well as the work of organizations and institutions active in the pipeline. Such a website can serve as an inventory of existing services and initiatives in Kansas City in addition to providing a consistent and transparent source of information about the activities of the KCRT. By featuring the activities of KCRT member organizations/institutions the website can also serve as a venue for individuals, organizations and institutions to keep up with and learn from each other's work.

18 **Create a “411” call and support center** for families to access education and employment information. Partnering with Sprint and other Kansas City area telecommunications businesses could provide a strong base of support—both technical and financial—for creating and maintaining such a service.*

19 **Tap into the existing community organizing capacities** in Kansas City for the purposes of a) communicating with the community at large (regarding existing resources, the mission and activities of the KCRT and, as they come into existence, new resources available to community members); and b) mobilizing community members to rally around and support education- and employment-related measures, policies, initiatives, etc. According to scholars of community psychology in Kansas City and around the country, Kansas City has a rich tradition and network of community organizing. The leaders of this sector should be invited to meet with KCRT leadership so that they can learn about the new initiatives mission, and so that they can work with the KCRT in order to maximize their own missions as well as that of the KCRT. Community organizing skills and networks will be very important to foster, especially if the decision is made to concentrate efforts in selected areas.**

* Two excellent examples of such centers are Connectinc. in Battleboro, North Carolina, and the New York City 311 line, which is an informational counterpart to 911 (emergency) and 411 (telephone and address directory). New York's 311 was created by Mayor Michael Bloomberg to provide information to New York City residents on everything from where to vote, which side of the street to park cars, how to recycle, how to find housing, park locations and hours, human service availability and location, and a host of other civic information.

** Another initial recommendation for the KCRT is to host a fact-finding convening and networking opportunity on “The State of Community Organizing in Kansas City.” Because it is so important to engage people (especially parents) where they are, effectively getting messages about educational and employment opportunities *in* the neighborhoods where they are most needed will be one of the most important tasks of this effort.

20 Produce an inventory of congregations so that the KCRT can communicate regularly with the leadership of congregations of all denominations. Open communication with this body of leadership can help to get the word out about both general and specific activities of the KCRT if church, mosque and temple leaders are willing to make announcements or to include KCRT-related information in their bulletins or newsletters. Open **communication with the range of congregational leadership** can also provide an important advisory board for the KCRT.

21 Make consistent use of **mapping technologies**. Maps are excellent tools for planning, for communicating about an effort like the KCRT and for keeping track of activities. They are also an excellent way to engage young people. Further opportunities to learn about mapping technologies would be of great benefit to young people.*

22 The KCRT should also develop a group of **high-profile, or ‘celebrity’ champions**—athletes, entertainers and others of renown—who can help to attract attention and support to the work of the KCRT and its affiliates.

The KCRT as a Learning Organization

23 The KCRT is a unique undertaking and those involved with it have a very interesting opportunity to contribute to a much-needed body of knowledge of high national relevance. Due to this unique position, KCRT leadership should squarely position itself as a learning organization** and should **undertake an action research and evaluation framework** in partnership with UMKC and other interested leadership from other Kansas City area colleges and universities. One participant in both the April and June 2006 meetings noted, “We’ve put a lot of emphasis on the what and not enough on the how. If this were implemented, there would be as many tensions in the how as in the what. *How* will we do this?” Designing an action research and evaluation framework to keep track of the KCRT’s activities and progress can be an innovative way to achieve a number of aims:

- ⊖ Provide an action-oriented framework for carrying out the suggestions put forth by KCRT participants, setting realistic goals related to the suggestions and keeping track of their progress;
- ⊖ Include the student participants in an undertaking that will expose them to real learning opportunities, methods for structuring thinking and research, contact with community leaders, and exposure to essential community processes;
- ⊖ Build research and critical thinking capacity within Kansas City;

* The Department of Architecture, Urban Planning and Design at UMKC has at least one faculty member who could serve as a resource person for this area of work should it be undertaken

** See the work of Peter Senge on this topic.



- ⊖ Provide an on-going evaluation framework through which to measure all aspects of progress and change that are specific to the KCRT;
- ⊖ Include university resources in a mutually beneficial way; and
- ⊖ Contribute to the national-level discourse, thinking and strategies for improving education and employment outcomes.

In addition, the research component should distill the “how to” lessons learned by the KCRT for other communities that want to take on an ambitious initiative like this. A sample evaluation form, intended for use in all KCRT convenings, workshops, etc. is included in Appendix Two. Calling for an action research or learning organization agenda, however, does not mean that further studies need to be undertaken. The thorough ‘Great City Schools Report’ commissioned by the Kansas City, MO school district, for example, offers many very specific recommendations for moving forward.

Champion Racial Equity

24 Establish a Racial Equity Review Committee (including students) for all components that emerge from the KCRT. The purpose of a Racial Equity Review Committee (RERC) is to ensure that there is an entity in place to consistently promote sensitivity and awareness that the underlying structure of opportunity is still racialized and that the KCRT must always act to address that inequity. If the KCRT is not going to be ‘business-as-usual’ on issues of race and racial disparities, an RERC will have to be a stand alone element in order to make lasting change on a set of circumstances that have been notoriously difficult upon which to affect change. Such a review committee may want to go through one of the Aspen Institute’s Racial Equity and Society seminars, or a similar training experience. Training experience is very important in addressing structural racism in any community. This is particularly true because race and the effects of racism are emotional topics that have the potential to derail productive discussions. Being aware of and prepared for such dynamics is vital, and training opportunities reinforce preparedness to address them effectively.*

Making It Real

25 Select two urban core neighborhoods—one in Kansas City, Kansas, the other in Kansas City, Missouri—in which to concentrate efforts. A point should also be made to select places where both African American and Latino Kansas Citizens will benefit. Greater Kansas City LINC (Local Investment Commission) has selected ten neighborhoods in which they are focusing their attention. KCRT leadership might want to

* A component that the overall KCRT should consider—but which is directly related to racial equity—is the placement of safeguards to protect those who have long lived in Kansas City’s urban core so that they benefit from gentrification that seems to be gaining momentum instead of being displaced or forced out because of rising housing and tax costs. These safeguards should help to ensure that the benefits of gentrification are evenly distributed instead of being captured by those best positioned to capture them.

consider partnering with LINC to learn from LINC's experience and potentially to support LINC's efforts, though with the KCRT's particular focus on pipeline issues.**

The benefits of a geographically targeted strategy include the ability to capture early evidence of outcomes, which helps with sustaining support for and interest in an initiative. When a city-wide initiative is undertaken, there is a constant danger of its efforts being too diffuse to appear effective. On the other hand, it can be difficult to sustain city-wide support for an initiative that is most active in only one or two neighborhoods. In order to temper such a reaction, it is important to clearly communicate that these two initial neighborhoods are learning laboratories and that there is a plan for building out the initiative so that it reaches other neighborhoods. It will be important to establish an understanding of this in order to maintain the long-term focus on the entirety of Kansas City.

26 The KCRT should sponsor a plan for creating a network of **community learning centers**. Some community learning centers, like the WEB DuBois Learning Center, are already in existence and should be further recognized and supported. There are most probably, however, areas where no such supplementary services are in place. One KCRT member noted that in Kansas City there is a church on every corner, and asked "so why shouldn't there be a [school/education center, etc.] on every corner?" Community learning centers can serve as hubs for both children, adolescents, adults and senior citizens. Such centers could be in stand-alone facilities, or in schools, churches, or other suitable locations. This is an avenue where working with the school districts could be especially fruitful by helping to strengthen the role of schools as community hubs.

27 **Above all, do not be constrained by convention. Envision and create a Kansas City renowned for excellence in education, racial equity and harmony, creativity and productivity.**

** An excellent example of a geographically focused initiative is The Harlem Children's Zone in New York City. In order for the KCRT leadership to explore such a strategy, they may want to travel to New York to meet with the Harlem Children's Zone founder and director, Geoffrey Canada, to discuss his experience and to tour the Harlem neighborhood that has been targeted and the initiative's facilities. KCRT leadership may also want to explore the block-by-block crime reduction strategy that was established during the mayoralty of Mayor David Dinkins in New York City. It is widely recognized as one of the most important components in New York's turn around.

Overview of the Recommendations Developed by KCRT Participants

The KCRT meeting held in June 2006 produced more than 100 desired outcomes and recommendations for improving the Pre-K to post-grad pipeline in Kansas City. The range of recommendations is extensive. This report organizes them into six categories, each of which has an overall desired outcome that captures the June meeting's participants vision and a number of component recommendations for reaching each outcome.

The overarching goal for all the work can be expressed in the following way:

Kansas City is an excellent place to live and to raise children for all people. Education and employment opportunities in Kansas City are among the best in the world, and are based on ideals of equity, individual well-being, fairness, and community.

This goal can be accomplished if we achieve all six of the following independent but interrelated outcomes:

- ◆ Building a Culture of Supportiveness & High Expectations: Educational achievement for all people is of the highest value in Kansas City. The entire community—families, schools, congregations, business, cultural institutions, community organizations, and all others—understands the importance of education and educational achievement and works to promote and support all community members in achieving their highest potential. The culture of Kansas City values and promotes intellectual pursuits and accomplishments. All community members are supportive of the ideals of education, and work to insure that Kansas City students achieve their highest potential.
- ◆ Student Supports: All students at every point along the education-to-employment pipeline in Kansas City have a wide range of excellent educational opportunities presented to them. Students in Kansas City have positive attitudes about school and education and rarely, if ever, drop out of school. Students are encouraged to tap into their individual creativity and are provided with the supports they need to develop their personal well-being and the well-being of their communities.
- ◆ Parent & Family Support: Parents in Kansas city understand and are supported in promoting the optimal development of their children. Parents are always included as part of the equation—the team—involved in promoting the well-being of their children and achieving excellence in education.
- ◆ Teacher & Faculty Supports: Teachers in Kansas City are valued professionals whose compensation is commensurate with the vital role they play in preparing children to be self-fulfilled and contributing members of their communities. High quality professional development opportunities are consistently available to all teachers.
- ◆ Institutional Connectedness, Communication & Collaboration for a Strong Pipeline: The education-to-employment pipeline in Kansas City is strong, dynamic and vital. All institutions along the education pipeline have the



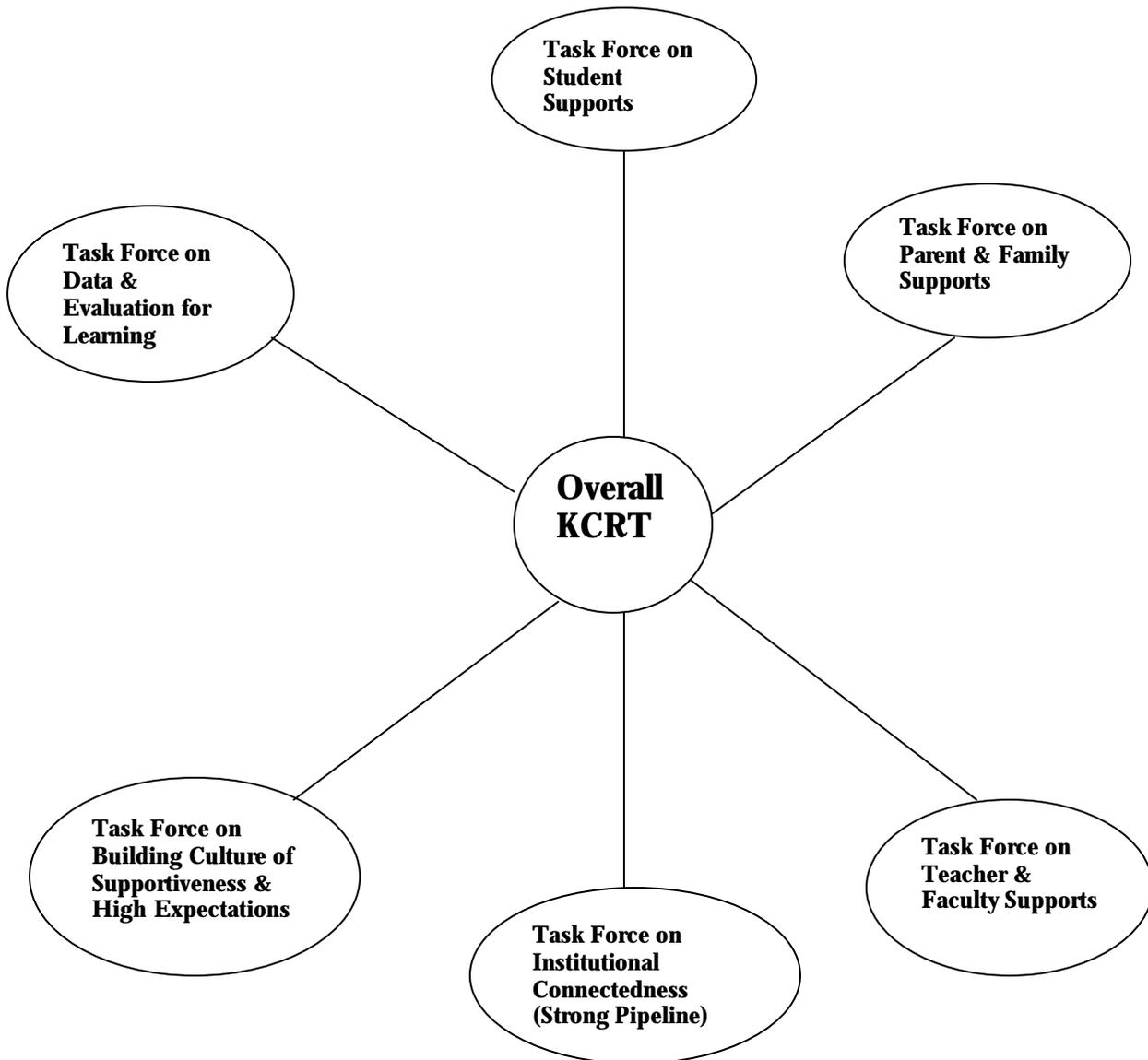
institutional capacities to connect with all other points along the pipeline in support of Kansas City students and workers. There is a comprehensive and inclusive structure for dialogue between the education, labor, business and civic communities in Kansas City that allows them to communicate, strategize and act together on a regular basis.

- ◆ Data & Evaluation for Learning & Growth: The education to employment pipeline in Kansas City is a dynamic system in which all Kansas Citians have a role to play. All information and data are of high quality and accessible to all. Kansas City has a culture and practices of constant evaluation of its educational and employment outcomes that allow decision-makers at every level—from superintendents to principals to CEOs to voters—to make decisions that will be of maximum benefit to individuals and to the community at large.

KCRT June 2006 meeting participants also agreed that awareness of the legacies of racism & consistent efforts to promote equity and fairness is an essential component of creating a new Kansas City. There is not, however, a stand-alone category of awareness of the legacies of racism and consistent efforts to promote equity and fairness. Instead, this component is featured in each of the six overarching recommendations so that it can be systematically addressed in each strand of the KCRT's work.

The Aspen Institute Roundtable's recommendation is that these six categories be parlayed into six Task Forces (or Action Committees). After KCRT leadership and participants have examined the range of recommendations and decided upon priorities and timelines, it would be the charge of each of these Task Forces to, if they see fit, carry out the necessary steps related to the recommendations. The steps are laid out in detail in the second part of this report. The following page depicts the suggested structure for the KCRT—an overall body, along with six task forces, each of which works to realize the recommendations that fall within its category.

Recommended Structure for the KCRT



Roundtable: An assembly for discussion.

Taskforce: A group organized for a specific operation or task.

Note to Readers: The “Page One” Concept

The size of this document and the number of participant recommendations may seem overwhelming at first blush. While there is no doubt that the KCRT is an ambitious undertaking, there is no need for reviewing and acting on its recommendations to be overly complicated. In order to facilitate relationships between this document and the range of Kansas Citians who will encounter it, we suggest that each of these recommendations be seen in light of the “Page One Concept.” By this we mean that each of these recommendations should be considered the first page of an action plan for achieving the goal and recommendation that appears on it. If there were to be a room full of Kansas Citians eager to undertake this change initiative, imagine that each of them would receive a folder with one of these recommendations to carry out—with the help of others, of course.

As you will note, each recommendation is followed by four subheadings. The significance of each subheading is as follows:

- ◆ Taking Initiative for Change: Under this heading the reader will find a set of recommendations for immediate action. Some of them include, for example, convening a meeting of the major actors in the particular field of action, while others include suggestions for working with media.
- ◆ Who Needs to Be at the Table: This heading includes a list of the category of actors that need to be included in planning and reconnaissance. The list is preliminary and not specific. Once it is reviewed, there are certain to be others who should be included. Most categories are self-explanatory (parents, students, teachers, etc.). Nevertheless, it will be important that these general categories include a big enough cross section of parents, for example, to be representative of the community—particularly the urban core community. If parents should be included, it will be vital to an effective strategy development and implementation to include parents who work, parents who do not, parents who receive TANF benefits, non-traditional parents (grandparents, foster parents, etc.). There are two categories, ‘policymakers’, and ‘school leadership’, that may not be self-explanatory. By policymakers we mean those individuals who make decisions that affect the community. These policymakers may be elected officials, heads of institutions, influential elites, or others. Who the precise actor will be will vary depending on the specific recommendation and the context in which it will be carried out. School leadership also denotes a range of actors that will vary depending on the recommendation. School leadership may mean the superintendents, school board members, principals, etc. A special note is made here in advance to alert the reader that students are recommended for almost every category of action.
- ? Racial Equity Checklist: This heading includes a set of questions about increasing awareness of structural racism among all Kansas Citians, as well as suggestions for creating strategies that build racial equity. It is present in order to counter the constant tendency within American society’s policies, practices and cultural norms to unfairly sort people by race. Unless all of us are constantly aware of this tendency and act to stop it, it is likely to continue and to manifest itself in the pernicious ways in evidence in Kansas City’s segregated neighborhoods and schools.
- ? Reconnaissance for Moving Forward: This heading is included to provide a ‘head start’ on thinking about all of the different elements that will need to be understood, at least in part, in order for the KCRT to further plan for concrete action. In many

cases this means acquiring or taking an inventory of the existing work in this area. This section should not be intimidating, especially since much of the information it suggests is important is likely to already exist and the real task will be to identify and access it.

Photos here...



CULTURE OF SUPPORTIVENESS & HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Educational achievement for all people is of the highest value in Kansas City. The entire community—families, schools, congregations, business, cultural institutions, community organizations, and all others—understands the importance of education and educational achievement and works to promote and support all community members in achieving their highest potential. The culture of Kansas City values and promotes intellectual curiosity and pursuits.

Special Note

While there is only one main recommendation in this category, it should be noted that the changing the culture and expectation level in Kansas City was widely agreed upon as one of the top priorities of KCRT participants. It is placed first in the set of participant recommendations because culture and expectations are the air that all of us breathe. Children and adults alike are far more likely to succeed and achieve in a supportive culture that expects them to live up to their potential than they are in the current climate in which expectations are low and the value of education for all is not backed up with supportive policies or practices.

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All Kansas Citians have a sense of investment and pride in Kansas City schools and have high expectations of Kansas City students.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Explore models from around the country and around the world where excellence in education is the cultural norm and where teachers and education professionals in general are held in high esteem.
- ❖ Encourage volunteering and mentoring. Sponsor public service campaigns and help to configure an infrastructure to handle the volume of participants that respond.
- ❖ Support or create a city-wide “Adopt-a-School” program.
- ❖ Work with all media venues to draw attention to educational successes.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Civic leadership
- ❖ Business leadership
- ❖ Policymakers
- ❖ Media leadership and representatives (reporters, etc.)
- ❖ Civil rights leadership
- ❖ Congregations
- ❖ Cultural and arts community leadership and representatives

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ What will be the most effective ways to counter received wisdom about the problems in urban core schools?
- ❖ Are Kansas Citians broadly aware of the relationship between low investment, low expectations and educational achievement?



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Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ Is there an existing format for cataloging the specific needs of schools so that the community can respond appropriately?

STUDENT SUPPORTS

All students at every point along the education to employment pipeline in Kansas City have a wide range of excellent educational opportunities presented to them. Students in Kansas City have positive attitudes about school and education and rarely, if ever, drop out of school. Students are encouraged to tap into their individual creativity and are provided with the supports they need to in order to dedicate their efforts to developing their personal well-being and the well-being of their communities. All community members are supportive of the ideals of education, and work to insure that Kansas City students achieve their highest potential.



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Kansas City has an excellent universal Head Start and/or Pre-K System¹

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide a venue for convenings of existing advocates, practitioners, policymakers and philanthropists so that work in support of excellence in Kansas City's pre-k system can become more uniformly excellent.
- ❖ Organize an awareness campaign focused on building the public will to support those elected officials who champion early education support.
- ❖ Sustain (and increase) support for the Quality Rating System of the Mid-America Regional Council.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Advocates
- ❖ Practitioners
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Scholars/researchers
- ❖ Policymakers
- ❖ Congregations

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ How do current funding policies translate into inadequate funding for pre-k education in low-income neighborhoods of color?
- ❖ What elements contribute to the level of quality of staff and facilities in urban core pre-k programs?
- ❖ Are parents welcomed, respected and invited to play supportive roles in existing pre-k programs?
- ❖ Do staff of existing pre-k programs have high expectations for the pre-school students?
- ❖ Is the staff of existing pre-k programs prepared and trained for the specific context of the urban core? Are they sufficiently aware of the structural barriers faced by parents and students, and do they accordingly act in support of the students?

¹ It will be important to sort out the differences between Universal Pre-K (usually state funded), and programs like Head Start (federally funded).

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Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ According to those who have long been working on this issue, how can the effort for universal pre-k best be supported?
- ❖ Where do elementary school teachers report that students are most lacking in preparation?
- ❖ What are the existing connections between pre-k and elementary schools?
- ❖ What policies might be most strategically targeted in order to implement universal pre-k?
- ❖ What policies might be most strategically targeted in order to improve overall pre-k experience and outcomes?

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All children and their families have access to health care and health promotion services. All children are immunized.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene relevant actors in order to develop a strategy for boosting support for funding for health care and health promotion messages and services.
- ❖ Produce a “Kansas City Health Care Directory” targeted specifically to the needs of urban core residents. Devise an innovative dissemination strategy so that the directory reaches as many urban core residents as possible.
- ❖ Develop a toolkit for medical professionals that helps them to infuse the health care experience with knowledge of child development so that parents can gain increased awareness of how they can best support their children through developmental phases.
- ❖ Identify the policies that have the most impact on the health care available to urban core residents and target those that are insufficient for improvement by both a lobbying and a grassroots mobilization effort.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Hospital leadership
- ❖ Medical school leadership
- ❖ Public health experts
- ❖ Community organizers
- ❖ Policymakers
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Employers
- ❖ Representatives from relevant government agencies

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Does immigration status present barriers to seeking health care in Kansas City?
- ❖ Do the levels and quality of care vary according to race and income level from neighborhood to neighborhood?
- ❖ Are messages about health care communicated in culturally sensitive ways?



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- ❖ Are materials and services provided in different languages?
- ❖ Are health care facilities proximate to most urban core neighborhoods? If they are not, are there well-publicized transportation services?
- ❖ Are medical professionals aware of or trained in the need to be culturally sensitive and to be cognizant of specific needs that urban core residents might have?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What percentage of Kansas Citians are currently uninsured?
- ❖ What percentage of Kansas Citians are currently not immunized?
- ❖ Where are there service gaps and need in the area of health promotion?
- ❖ What institutions currently provide health care to low-income and/or uninsured Kansas Citians?
- ❖ Who are the existing advocates for health care and immunization? What are the watch-dog groups?
- ❖ What screening services are in place for eye- and dental-care? Are they provided in schools?
- ❖ What is the experience of parents with the health care system in Kansas City?
- ❖ What is the experience of young people with the health care system in Kansas City?

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All children and their families have access to physical fitness and recreational activities and facilities.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Investigate the current snapshot of physical fitness activities and facilities in Kansas City.
- ❖ Develop relationships with the community liaisons of the professional sports teams so that they can contribute, both financially and practically, to the goal of providing access and opportunity for fitness activities.
- ❖ Organize community self-studies so that communities can learn and report on what kinds of activities people are currently engaged in and enjoying, and what additional elements can be developed.
- ❖ Work with media representatives to develop an awareness campaign about the importance of being physically fit.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ YMCAs, YWCAs, YMHAs, YWHAs
- ❖ Boys and Girls Clubs
- ❖ Leadership of school physical education programs
- ❖ Community liaisons of professional sports teams
- ❖ Sports leagues
- ❖ Leadership of public health departments on the city, state and federal levels

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are activity fees affordable?
- ❖ Are neighborhoods safe and well-lit enough for young people and families to talk walks and jogs?
- ❖ Do facilities (like fields, courts, etc.) have enough funding for maintenance?
- ❖ Are coaches and leaders supportive of young people from all backgrounds?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the inventory of existing initiatives and facilities?
- ❖ Where do the leadership of existing organizations and programs identify the gaps? Where do they identify the points at which young people fall away from physical fitness?
- ❖ Are there enough coaches and other volunteers to work with young people?



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Early-learning professionals are appropriately credentialed (at least an associate degree).

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene those working in early learning in Kansas City to learn about their perspectives on where they could use extra support.
- ❖ Work with foundations and corporations to sponsor scholarships at each Kansas City high school for students interested in pursuing early learning careers in Kansas City.
- ❖ Sustain support for the Quality Rating System.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Early learning professionals and instructors
- ❖ Those preparing to be early-learning professionals
- ❖ Leadership of early learning centers
- ❖ Leadership of institutions (colleges, community colleges, etc.) that provide training and credentialing in early-learning
- ❖ Policymakers
- ❖ Policymakers responsible for education-related funding
- ❖ Legal/policy advocates

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are there adequate funding mechanisms to support those who want to be early learning professionals to acquire the appropriate credentials?
- ❖ Do current and future early learning professionals undergo training that strengthens their awareness of the structural dynamics of racism and their capacities to support the children and parents with whom they work?
- ❖ Are there specific scholarships available for urban core residents to pursue careers in early learning?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are the current hiring practices of early learning organizations?
- ❖ What is the inventory of programs or curricula in Kansas City that prepare individuals for careers in early learning?



STUDENT SUPPORTS

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- ❖ How can individuals already working in the early learning field be supported in becoming appropriately credentialed?
- ❖ What is the current level of credentialing of early learning professionals in Kansas City?
- ❖ What is the desired level of credentialing?
- ❖ What resources and supports will be needed to bring existing early-learning professionals up to the desired level of credentialing?
- ❖ What policies can either be amplified or put in place to prepare and support those who want to enter the field in Kansas City?

STUDENT SUPPORTS

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Early literacy opportunities are abundant.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene a KCRT Student Supports task force subcommittee to focus on early literacy.
- ❖ Support the public libraries to increase their presence and accessibility.
- ❖ Explore hosting story hours in more locations—libraries and beyond.
- ❖ Encourage the KCRT task force to focus on accessing increased funding for providing more free books to families in the urban core and for devising a strong dissemination strategy.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Leadership of public libraries
- ❖ Leadership of 'Reach Out & Read' and other similar programs
- ❖ Community outreach offices of Kansas City hospitals
- ❖ Congregations
- ❖ Kansas City public health departments

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Do existing programs take into account ways in which they can support parents who may be under high degrees of stress?
- ❖ Are the materials used in early literacy programs culturally appropriate?
- ❖ Are literacy volunteers prepared and comfortable in working in the urban core?
- ❖ Are there concentrated efforts to increase the number of urban core residents working to promote early literacy opportunities?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current availability of literacy opportunities?
- ❖ How can literacy opportunities be best supported?
- ❖ What are the experiences of those currently engaged in this work?
- ❖ What are the experiences of those who have received early literacy support?



STUDENT SUPPORTS

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All early learning centers have safe and pleasant physical environments.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide a convening venue for those working to effect improvements on the physical environment of early learning centers.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Capital program offices (KS & MO)
- ❖ Early learning advocates
- ❖ Policymakers
- ❖ Directors of early learning centers
- ❖ Building staff where programs are located

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ What funding policies are currently in place that either help or hinder the improvement and maintenance of the physical environments of early learning centers serving residents of Kansas City's urban core?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current need for physical improvement?
- ❖ What funding is available for realizing physical improvement for early learning centers?

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Every child who needs or wants a mentor (a caring adult role model) has access to one.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Support Youth Friends and other mentoring programs in maintaining their organizations and in recruiting increased numbers of mentors prepared to work with urban core students.
- ❖ Support mentoring programs in developing training materials and protocols so that mentors are prepared to be as supportive as possible to students in the urban core.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ YouthFriends, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and other organizations focusing on mentoring
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Current mentors
- ❖ Congregations
- ❖ Corporations whose employees might encourage or provide incentives to their employees to mentor students—especially those in the urban core

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ What is the protocol for preparing mentors for working with urban core students? Are mentors trained in issues of structural racism and how it affects the students they mentor?
- ❖ Is the need of boys and young men to have exposure to mentors who are male role models taken into consideration? Do the mentors receive training in how to really listen to the young men with whom they are paired?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current range of mentoring programs in Kansas City?
- ❖ How have students and mentors experienced the programs?
- ❖ What is the protocol for communication between mentors, students and school staff so that mentors might be made aware of where they might be most helpful to students?



STUDENT SUPPORTS

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Kansas City schools have teachers of the highest quality who are sensitive to and flexible with different learning styles.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Work with the school district to change the policy that requires a GPA of only 2.5 for new teachers. Increase the GPA to 3.0.
- ❖ Commission the creation of a Kansas City-specific urban education curriculum. Provide mechanisms for it to be updated as necessary.
- ❖ Stand by the Institute for Urban Education.
- ❖ Work with major Kansas City media outlets to produce “Teacher of the Week” or “Teacher of the Month” features.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Leadership and key staff of schools of education
- ❖ Education students
- ❖ School district leadership
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Institute for Urban Education and similarly focused programs
- ❖ New teachers—recent graduates of schools of education
- ❖ Policymakers
- ❖ Teachers unions

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ What type of training do Kansas City teachers undergo to prepare them for understanding and buffering the dynamics of structural racism that their students face?
- ❖ Are those who hail from Kansas City’s urban core supported financially and culturally to become teachers?
- ❖ What kind of training do Kansas City teachers receive about the role of high expectations in helping their students to succeed?
- ❖ What kind of training do Kansas City teachers receive on the most effective ways to communicate with parents?
- ❖ What kind of training do Kansas City teachers receive in distinguishing emotional and behavioral challenges from “bad behavior” requiring disciplinary measure?

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Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ Where do experts identify the places that teacher education and training programs can be strengthened to better prepare teachers—especially for working in the urban core?
- ❖ What is the inventory of groups currently engaged in reform/improvement of teacher education?
- ❖ What is the experience of school leadership with new teachers?
- ❖ What is the experience of new teachers?

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Curriculum Specific: The curricula of Kansas City schools are aligned with state standards, and both are aligned with best practices and employer needs.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Support a convening of those engaged in the work of curriculum-standards-workforce need alignment in order to learn where further support is needed.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Curriculum specialists
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Employer representatives
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Leadership of the state standards board

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are there advanced placement courses in schools that are predominately attended by students of color?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the inventory of existing work to align curricula, state standards and employer needs?
- ❖ What is the current state of alignment?
- ❖ Where do those currently working on these issues identify the areas of urgent need?
- ❖ What are the current links between schools and employers?

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Curriculum Specific: Learning is relevant to students. Where appropriate, it is hands-on and applied.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ In partnership with the school districts and the Institute for Urban Education, review the literature on hands-on learning to identify models of hands-on learning—both local and national. Widen the availability of such hands-on learning opportunities for students in Kansas City’s urban core.
- ❖ Also in partnership with the school districts and the Institute for Urban Education, survey teachers, school staff and students about where they believe that hands-on learning opportunities would significantly enhance the learning experience and heighten student interest.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Students
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Institute for Urban Education leadership and leadership from other relevant university-based centers
- ❖ Curriculum specialists from school districts
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Relevant actors from business, government, civic and cultural communities

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are teacher expectations of students high?
- ❖ Are students and their abilities taken seriously by their teachers and school leadership?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ Are Kansas City based businesses, cultural institutions, government civic institutions and so on prepared to match their leaders and employees with schools and teachers in order to assist in the provision of hands-on learning experiences? What infrastructure is in place to coordinate such matches?



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Curriculum Specific: Entrepreneurial and financial literacy are consistent components of education in Kansas City.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Work with financial institutions and the school districts to provide each student with a savings account.
- ❖ Develop a program for creating student positions or student board of directors for Kansas City financial and business institutions.*
- ❖ Support a community awareness campaign on accessible and innovative wealth building strategies.
- ❖ Establish contact with The National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE). (There is a local affiliate in Kansas, but not in Missouri).

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Civic Council
- ❖ Kansas City financial institutions
- ❖ Chambers of commerce
- ❖ Leadership and faculty of economics departments of local colleges and universities
- ❖ Leadership of business schools of local colleges and universities

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ What is the existing work with parents and students to increase awareness of wealth-building strategies?
- ❖ Where existing or new entrepreneurial and financial literacy programs introduce innovative community members, are there efforts to include men and women of color as guest speakers, program designers, etc.?
- ❖ Do existing or new entrepreneurial and financial literacy programs help students of color to understand and overcome the barriers to success that exist because of the racial hierarchy that exists in America? Do they also help students of color to

* An affiliate organization of America's Promise has developed such a model. For further information contact America's Promise through www.americaspromise.org



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- ❖ identify programs, policies and support system to help them to overcome these structural barriers?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ Where in the curricula of Kansas City schools is the entrepreneurial spirit explicitly reinforced?
- ❖ Where in the curricula of Kansas City schools is financial literacy addressed?
- ❖ How can these parts of the curricula be strengthened?
- ❖ What is the role of business and corporate leaders in contributing their knowledge and time to establishing a strong curriculum in this area?
- ❖ What programs are currently in operation that address entrepreneurial and financial literacy?

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Curriculum Specific: Curriculum review teams are inclusive.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide a venue for curriculum reviewers and other interest parties to come together to strategize on how to expand the inclusiveness of the review process.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Education scholars/researchers
- ❖ Curriculum specialists
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Teacher unions
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are people of color present on curriculum review committees, particularly people of color who have deep awareness of the needs of Kansas City's urban core?
- ❖ Are curricula culturally sensitive? Do they reinforce areas where extra support is most needed?
- ❖ Is the curriculum review process a culturally sensitive, tolerant, patient and open one?
- ❖ Where possible, do curricula include accurate information about different racial and ethnic groups and provide teaching guides?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ Who currently reviews curricula?
- ❖ What other perspectives would enrich and enliven the process of curriculum review?

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Curriculum Specific: Curricula include soft- and life skills components that are up-to-date, culturally appropriate and given the priority status they deserve given their value in the wider world.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide a venue for a convening on soft skills that purposefully includes students, representatives from institutions of higher education (deans, faculty, etc.) and employers. Ensure that any strategy that emerges from it is sustainable and provides ample opportunities for dialogue between students and those who require the acquisition of soft- and life skills.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Students
- ❖ Employers
- ❖ Employees
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Community college representatives
- ❖ College and university representatives
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Curriculum specialists

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Do existing and/or new soft- and life skills curricular components deal effectively with the tensions that students experience as they transition from different settings—neighborhood to school to work, etc.?
- ❖ Are teachers, school staff and employers trained in being sensitive to the development of the soft-skills of their students and young employees?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ In what ways are soft- and life skills currently dealt with in Kansas City schools' curricula?
- ❖ How do those in higher education and employers from a variety of sectors identify the soft- and life skills gap?



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The social and emotional health of children (and their families) is taken seriously and supported.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Support an emotional well-being awareness campaign.
- ❖ Provide a venue for a convening to develop strategies for promoting emotional health and awareness of its importance.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Leadership of mental health departments of Kansas City hospitals
- ❖ Leadership of Kansas City public health departments
- ❖ Leadership of medical schools and public health schools
- ❖ Mental health advocates
- ❖ School leadership

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are high quality and affordable psychological support services available in the urban core?
- ❖ Are mental and emotional support services culturally appropriate? Do they take into account the trepidation surrounding mental and emotional health that many people of color experience?
- ❖ Is an awareness of the relationship between mental and emotional health clear to students, community members, teachers, school staff, employers, and the range of actors relevant to successful transitions through the points along the pipeline?
- ❖ Is there awareness of the relationship between stress and mental and emotional health among the range of actors?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current discourse on social and emotional health in Kansas City schools and communities?
- ❖ What is the inventory of current programs—in and out of schools—in place to deal specifically deal with social and emotional health?



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Access to technology in Kansas City is pervasive and students of all ages are well-versed in the range of its productive uses.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene those currently working on technology use and access so that they may develop a strategy for amplifying their efforts.
- ❖ If one has not already been conducted, sponsor a school-based technology survey to learn about use and gaps in use in schools and homes.
- ❖ Develop an achievement-based reward system: consistent good grades or marked improvement result in acquisition of computers (possibly donated by the Gates Foundation?).
- ❖ Develop a program to train high school students in different technology applications, and then devise an arrangement with the school district in which they are hired as assistants to teachers.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Kansas City Public Library leadership and relevant staff
- ❖ School districts' technology leadership and relevant staff
- ❖ Relevant businesses and professionals
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ PREP KC
- ❖ Relevant policy makers
- ❖ Relevant community based organizations that provide technology access and instruction

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Is affordable computer equipment and maintenance available and proximate in Kansas City's urban core?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are the existing technology needs of schools? Of students?
- ❖ How feasible is it to conduct school-based technology surveys? Have the districts attempted this, both in relation to classroom and home access?
- ❖ What is the inventory of initiatives and programs focusing on technology access?



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Students and their families are well-aware of the range of education/school options available to them, including alternative schools, supplementary programs, tutoring programs, etc.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Sponsor an “Education 411”—a hotline for information on education related matters.
- ❖ Support the districts in producing a map of the school system and the higher education system. Distribute widely.
- ❖ Facilitate information dissemination by developing a communication strategy targeted to congregations.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Congregations
- ❖ Community colleges recruitment leadership
- ❖ College and university recruitment leadership
- ❖ School guidance counselors
- ❖ Tutoring service providers (like “Homework Zone”)
- ❖ Leadership of the Kansas City Public Library

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ What are the barriers—geographic, policies, practices, affordability—to accessing the full range of educational options?
- ❖ Does every student have someone within their schools assigned to support them in navigating the education system?
- ❖ What supports are available to students as they prepare to take admission tests or other entrance exams for schools, programs, colleges, etc.?

STUDENT SUPPORTS

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Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the inventory of current communication venues between students, their families and the schools system? Community colleges, colleges and university?

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Community and Saturday schools are open and accessible to all.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene a Student Supports task force subcommittee to conduct an inventory of community learning centers and to explore an expansion strategy.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ University faculty who specialize in this area
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Community-based organizations
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Community leaders
- ❖ Congregations

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Whether existing or new, are community learning centers participatorily designed with the input of a representational cross-section of the community?
- ❖ Do community members feel a sense of ownership and affinity with existing or new community learning centers? Do they feel welcome there?
- ❖ If fees are necessary, are they affordable to all?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current inventory of education-oriented community centers?
- ❖ Where education-oriented community centers exist, are they linked in any way to school curricula?

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School staff are well-attuned to the multi-faceted needs of students.*

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide a venue for convening those working on these issues to come together to explore a variety of student support strategies. Include a participatory design and evaluation component to any support strategy.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Teacher unions
- ❖ Relevant college and university actors

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are teachers in the school districts aware of and sensitive to the barriers faced by students of color in school and in society?
- ❖ Are faculty members equipped to and supported in providing the kind of extra support that students need?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What structures are currently in place to support students—academically, socially, emotionally, etc.?
- ❖ What is the feasibility of a strategy in which one teacher is responsible for keeping track of the progress fifteen students? Do teachers and school staff in the school districts believe that this would be a productive use of their time? How would such a configuration mesh with teacher unions contracts?

* Recommendation from Middle School Group: Each school faculty member is assigned 15 students with whom to be in close communication so that faculty members can lend or point students in the direction of supports in the event that students find themselves in a position of need. Students

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Internships are readily available to all interested students in Kansas City. Such internships and other preparatory programs move young people in Kansas City towards socio-culturally preparedness to take advantage of education and employment opportunities.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Host a convening for relevant actors to devise a strategy for refining expanding internship programs for Kansas City students.
- ❖ Support school districts in hiring internship coordinators and an internship bank.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Employers/internship hosts
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Students interested in internships
- ❖ Students who have participated in internship programs

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are internship hosts trained to understand the context of structural racism and the roles they can play in helping student interns to overcome the barriers it presents?
- ❖ Do students have means of transportation for going to and from internships?
- ❖ Do the internships have well-articulated goals that are mutually constructed by the intern, school and employer?
- ❖ Are there race-based biases in access to different internship types or duration?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current range of internships available to students in Kansas City? How are they structured?
- ❖ How many students are currently involved in internships?
- ❖ Which institutions and/or employers currently have internship programs? Are there ways for these programs to be expanded? Are there other institutions and/or employers who are willing to participate?



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- ❖ What steps might be taken to encourage the participation those institutions/employers that do not currently have any internship programs?

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Universities in the Kansas City metropolitan area provide students and their families in both middle and high-schools with information about and assistance with college prep courses, the college admission process, and accessing financial aid.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene innovative actors and relevant decision makers to devise a strategy to improve current communication strategies.
- ❖ Support the production of easy to understand materials specifically targeted to urban core families.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ High school leadership
- ❖ Community college, college and university recruitment officers
- ❖ Financial aid officers
- ❖ Congregations

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are information sessions proximately located or easily accessed?
- ❖ Are they conveniently scheduled?
- ❖ Are they appropriately publicized?
- ❖ Are they sensitively and clearly communicated?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are the current venues—both in and out of schools—for students and their families to learn about the college admission and financial aid processes?
- ❖ How can existing venues reach more students and families?
- ❖ What protocol are currently followed by guidance counselors?
- ❖ What is the experience of students and parents in navigating the admissions and financial aid system?

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Small learning communities provide students with a strong network of deeply engaged personal allies.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ In partnership with the school districts, investigate the current status of class size and school configurations in Kansas City on a school-by-school basis in order to discover what small learning communities are currently in existence, the desirability of creating additional small learning communities, and the feasibility of creating additional small learning communities.
- ❖ In partnership with the school districts, investigate the current configurations of teacher/school staff and student relationships—in both small learning communities and in traditional school settings—in order to discover the most effective ratio of student to teacher in the range of settings. Ensure that the investigation is undertaken in light of the most current and respected research on the topic of school and class size.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Teachers Unions
- ❖ University-based researchers

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are teachers, school staff and school leadership well-versed in the specificities of the challenges faced by their students of color? Are they equipped, emotionally and professionally, to support their students to meet these challenges?
- ❖ Are teachers, school staff and school staff equipped to work with the parents of their students, particularly those parents who have faced difficult backgrounds?
- ❖ Are there particular policies on the local, state or federal level that may keep schools in Kansas City's urban core from being reconfigured to better support students?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ Are there funding sources that might be accessed in order to allow sufficient support for teachers to gain further training and awareness on issues of structural racism and how to help their students in overcoming the barriers it represents?



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School and community institutions are honest and open with young people about human sexuality so that students can make wise choices about sexual expression and reproductive capacities.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene existing advocates, activists, practitioners to come to a consensus about the state of work in Kansas City and to plan for action.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Students
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Advocates and experts

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are there funding policies or practices that keep programs from reaching their potential?
- ❖ Is the way in which information about sexual health and well-being communicated effectively given the age of the target audience, their lived experience, and the cultural context in which they have developed?
- ❖ Are clinics and other venues for service provision proximate to Kansas City's urban core?
- ❖ Do messages take into account the effect of homophobic tendencies of some aspects of black and Latino culture on young men who might be gay?
- ❖ Are messages respectful of culture and religious beliefs while simultaneously communicating potentially life-saving information?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are the existing programs in place to deal with sexuality and sexual health? What kinds of information do they provide? How many young people do they reach? How can these programs reach and support a greater number of young people in making good decisions?



STUDENT SUPPORTS

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- ❖ What programs are in place that raise awareness and provide resources to prevent the transmission of HIV-AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases? (See: Kansas City Free Health Clinic at kcfree.org)
- ❖ Where in current curricula are issues of sexuality and sexual health covered?

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Kansas City school districts have well-supported drop-out prevention initiatives. They provide extra support and guidance to 9th graders (the grade level at which students are most likely to drop out of school).

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Identify the current inventory of drop-out prevention programs and their strategies in Kansas City.
- ❖ Identify the most promising strategies drop-out prevention strategies—both locally and nationally.
- ❖ In partnership with the school districts and other relevant partners, explore ways to expand those strategies that are most effective.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Former drop-outs
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Community leaders
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Congregations

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ How aware are teachers, parents, students, community leaders, etc. of the processes through which students do not necessarily ‘drop’ out of school, but are pushed out of schools because the school setting is not a supportive or nurturing one?
- ❖ Do existing drop-out prevention programs take into account and address the role of disciplinary practices on drop-out rates?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ How do those who run the programs and those who evaluate them believe that they can be strengthened to achieve better outcomes?



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The voices of young people are present and involved in planning and implementation of education and employment initiatives.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Establish a KCRT youth/student advisory board comprised of students. This advisory board should include middle and high school students. Young people should also be included on the KCRT's task forces.
- ❖ At each school in both the Kansas and Missouri districts, establish and help to maintain a KCRT committee.
- ❖ Devote KCRT staff time to developing relationships with the leadership of the organizations and institutions so that they can begin the process of including young people on their boards or initiating youth advisory boards.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ School leaders
- ❖ Business leaders
- ❖ Nonprofit sector leaders

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are the opportunities for all young people to become involved with Kansas City's leadership institutions and organizations structured in such a way as to make participating feasible?
- ❖ Is transportation to and from meetings provided or accessible?
- ❖ Are students made to feel welcome and that their perspectives are taken seriously?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current representation of young people on the boards or advisory boards of Kansas City institutions, organizations and initiatives?
- ❖ Is the input of young people sought when the leadership of relevant institutions, organizations and initiatives devise their strategies and implementation plans?



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Tutoring is required for all students who fall below a C average.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide a venue for convening the relevant players so that they can devise a strategy for beginning and carrying out this work.
- ❖ Develop a cadre of junior- and high school students to tutor those students who are younger than them, or who have mastered subjects and are willing to tutor their fellow students. Provide them with a stipend and training so that the experience is one that can be included on a resume and/or college application.
- ❖ Develop a cadre of college students and adult professionals to tutor high school students.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Leadership and perhaps some staff of existing tutoring services
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ School leaders

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Will services be affordable? Will they be either free or on a sliding scale?
- ❖ Where will services be provided? If they are provided in schools, will students be able to get home safely if their parents or another responsible individual is unable to accompany them?
- ❖ Will it be clear to those students who are receive tutoring services that the services are in place to be supportive of them and not to stigmatize or punish them?
- ❖ Are those providing tutoring services trained in having high expectations and in eliciting excellence?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the inventory of safety nets currently in place for students in danger of failing?
- ❖ If tutoring were to be required, how would it be financed? Where would it take place? Who would serve as tutors?



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Higher education is affordable to all Kansas Citians.

Universities in the Kansas City metropolitan help to reduce tuition debt burdens.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide a venue for convening relevant actors to a) review the current landscape of policies and practices that determine affordability of higher education, and b) devise a strategy for uniting in order to amplify their efforts.
- ❖ Support an awareness campaign among middle- and high school students that leads to student/youth organizing around the issue.
- ❖ Identify the most relevant policymakers and develop a campaign to hold them accountable to working on the issue.
- ❖ Explore the feasibility of increasing the number of scholarships funded by Kansas City banks and corporations?

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ College and university leadership
- ❖ Policymakers
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Financial institutions
- ❖ School leadership (high school, and possibly junior high level)

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ What are the policies and programs that help low income students of color to meet higher education costs?
- ❖ What are the higher policies and programs that hinder low income students of color from meeting higher education costs? (For example, decline in funding for federal Pell grants and state based Tuition Assistance Programs.)
- ❖ Is the process of acquiring financial aid accessible to students and parents?
- ❖ Are the materials for acquiring financial aid available in Spanish and other languages?

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Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current “snapshot” of costs?
- ❖ What is the index of affordability?
- ❖ What is the inventory of financial aid packages available to students—both federally and specific to particular universities in the Kansas City region?
- ❖ What is the inventory of scholarships currently available, especially for low income students of color?
- ❖ What organizations, departments within institutions or government are working on the issue of affordability in higher education and/or on helping families to meet costs?

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Students of community colleges, training institutions, and four-year colleges and universities have clear understanding of and direction in the relationship between their courses and their requirements they need to meet their career goals.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene local community college and four-year colleges and university representatives to map the current landscape and to devise methods for improving student academic counseling services.
- ❖ Encourage task force members to develop programs (or fortify and expand existing programs) that pair students with local professionals who will help them to keep track of the relationship between their program of studies and their career goals.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Students
- ❖ Leadership of community colleges and four-year colleges and universities.
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Faculty members

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Do those providing academic counseling services have high expectations of the students with whom they work?
- ❖ Do those providing academic counseling services have an awareness of the extent of the structural barriers faced by the students with whom they work? Are they strategic in assisting students to get the extra support they need?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What kind of guidance supports are currently in place?
- ❖ How do those currently taking advantage of counseling services, and those engaged in providing counseling services report that the services can be strengthened to better support students?

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Universities in the Kansas City metropolitan area recruit and *graduate* increased numbers of students from Kansas City's urban core.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide a venue for convening the appropriate leadership of institutions of higher education so that they can explore the current statistics on enrollment and graduation rates, and devise strategies for intervening to improve graduation rates.
- ❖ Support the formation of a group of recent college graduates from the Kansas City universities most frequently attended by young people of color from Kansas City's urban core so that they can provide information and support to those about to enroll or recently enrolled.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Community college and four-year college and university leadership and appropriate staff (heads of counseling services, etc.)
- ❖ Students (current and former)
- ❖ Faculty members

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Do the faculty of higher education institutions have high expectations for students of color?
- ❖ Do the faculty of higher education institutions receive training to heighten their awareness of the structural barriers faced by students?
- ❖ Do the faculty of higher education institutions receive training in the cultural competence needed to help students of color—especially low income students—to overcome barriers students face?
- ❖ Are the faculty of higher education institutions supported in providing extra assistance and/or guidance to those students who would benefit from it?
- ❖ Are there safeguards in place that get students the kinds of services (whether academic, financial, emotional) they require before they have gone too far down the path of dropping out?

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Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are the current recruitment activities targeted to students from Kansas City's urban core?
- ❖ What financial aid packages are available to students from Kansas City's urban core?
- ❖ What kinds of supports (academic, emotional, etc.) are in place for students?
- ❖ What are the graduation and post-graduation success rates of students from disadvantaged backgrounds?
- ❖ Where it is possible to identify and contact them, what caused students from disadvantaged backgrounds to abandon or postpone their post-secondary education? Where trends are identified, what supports can be put in place to minimize the constraints faced by students?

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Kansas City students are prepared to score above national averages on ACT and SAT tests.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Help to arrange meetings between school district leadership and tutoring service companies like Kaplan and Sylvan. Seek to negotiate an arrangement wherein the companies donate test prep services and/or provide them on a sliding scale.
- ❖ Work with all media outlets to provide consistent and accessible information to students and their families—public service announcements, inserts, etc.
- ❖ Explore the model and process used by school districts that have contracted with testing service companies to provide PSAT tests free of charge to students (see New York City example as described in Herszenhorn, David M. (2006). “City Unveils Plan to Urge Students to Take the PSAT.” *The New York Times*, August 22.)
- ❖ Help to develop workshops for parents of students in junior- and high school so that they become familiar with the test process and can better assist their children.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Testing service

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are materials available in languages other than English?
- ❖ Do students receive preparation to make them familiar with the test-taking process and helps them to overcome anxiety and stereotype threat?
- ❖ Are there funds available for very low-income families who cannot afford test prep services?
- ❖ Are there funds available for very low-income families who cannot afford the test fees?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What test prep services are currently provided or available?
- ❖ What is the relationship between classroom learning and test preparation?
- ❖ What methods have proven effective in aligning curricula with test requirements without allowing curricula or classroom time to be driven by standardized tests?



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The range of school discipline policies and practices are constructive. They achieve a balance between shielding cooperative students from disruption while not doing harm to disruptive students. Students who are too disruptive to continue in the classroom are not relegated to their own devices, but are provided with constructive alternatives that help them to overcome the problems or situations causative of their disruptiveness.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene a Student Supports task force subcommittee to assess the current state of disciplinary procedures and their effects on student morale and retention. This task force subcommittee should devise a strategy for modifying policies and practices so that they support students by addressing the roots of behavioral problems instead of putting them at further risk.
- ❖ In partnership with the school districts, identify those schools with the worst disciplinary problems and work to provide immediate assistance (resources, support, training, etc.) to the school staff so that they can quickly and effectively reverse their trend by helping teachers and school staff to work more effectively with their students.
- ❖ Survey teachers to learn how they believe they might be better supported in keeping the positive attention of their students.
- ❖ Survey students, particularly those who have disciplinary records, about what they believe would assist them in being positively engaged in the classroom.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Students (both those who have been disciplined and those who have not)
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Teacher training institutions
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Leadership of youth-serving organizations
- ❖ School psychologists and other relevant mental health providers
- ❖ Congregations



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Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are teachers, school leadership and other school staff trained to preempt disciplinary actions by first seeking to understand the core of students' acting out? Are they provided with sufficient resources and supports for doing so?
- ❖ Are the disciplinary policies in Kansas City's schools of color harsher than their white counterparts?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are the disciplinary practices—school-by-school unless they are district-wide—of Kansas City's schools?
- ❖ What initiatives, if any, are currently in place in the Kansas City school districts to help to decrease disciplinary actions—particularly suspensions and expulsions?

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Students who are involved or at risk of involvement with the juvenile (or criminal) justice system are provided with extra supports.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Establish a special subcommittee of the Student Supports Taskforce that will work with the school districts to focus on identifying and providing supports to those students who are involved or at risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system.
- ❖ Identify all organizations and initiatives that currently provide supports to such at-risk students.
- ❖ Identify promising strategies, both local and national, for working with students involved with or at risk of involvement with the juvenile (or criminal) justice system.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Congregations
- ❖ Mentoring organizations
- ❖ Anti-drug and -violence organizations
- ❖ Congregations
- ❖ Athletic organizations
- ❖ Cultural/arts organizations
- ❖ Mental health organizations and providers
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Teachers and other school leadership
- ❖ Police department representatives
- ❖ Legal services representatives
- ❖ Juvenile (and criminal) justice system representatives

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are the disciplinary policies in Kansas City's schools of color harsher than those of their white counterparts?
- ❖ Are teachers and other school staff equipped to deal with the difficult circumstances from which some of their students of color may be likely to emerge?

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- ❖ Are the officers of the Kansas City Police Departments trained to handle young people in appropriate fashions?
- ❖ Are officers trained on the consequences of structural racism on the young people with whom they come in contact?
- ❖ Are teachers, officers and others who come into contact with those students involved with or at risk of involvement with the juvenile (or criminal) justice system readily equipped with a list of resources (employment, recreation, mental health, etc.) with which to present to young people?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What safety nets are currently in place in Kansas City schools for those young people involved with or at risk of involvement with the juvenile (or criminal) justice system?
- ❖ What relationships exist between the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Kansas City school districts?

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Students in Kansas City have a wide range of opportunities to take part in activities and visit places that are outside of their everyday experiences.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Investigate the range of trips and extra-curricular activities do Kansas City *schools* currently provide.
- ❖ Investigate the range of trips and extra-curricular activities available to Kansas City students from non-school based providers.
- ❖ Identify gaps and work with relevant actors in the business, civic and cultural communities to increase opportunities.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ School leaders
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Relevant activity providers

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are trips and other activities affordable to students from all income levels?
- ❖ Are trips and other activities both enriching and entertaining to students? Does their lasting value equal or surpass the amusement factor?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What existing programs might be under-subscribed and tapped into without having to raise additional funds?
- ❖ What do students identify as trips and activities in which they are most interested in participating?

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Children, youth and their families consistently have exposure to a variety of new positive experiences.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene the leadership of the cultural institutions in the 18th & Vine district in order to identify ways in which they might be supported to provide additional programs and venues for students and their families.
- ❖ In partnership with the appropriate leadership of the school districts, investigate the current links between schools and cultural and other entertainment venues. Develop a plan for a plan for increasing the number of links, and hence the number of venues for positive, out-of-the-ordinary experiences for young people and their families.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Leadership of cultural institutions (museums, music venues, etc.)
- ❖ Leadership of family-oriented entertainment venues (sports, theaters, etc.)
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Congregations

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are trips and activities affordable or free?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ In what types of new experiences do students report that they would like to engage?
- ❖ What types of new experiences do teachers and school leadership believe would both excite students, and enhance their academic experiences and performance?
- ❖ If additional funding sources are required, from where might they come?

PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

Parents in Kansas City understand and are supported in promoting the optimal development of their children. Parents are always included as part of the equation—the team—involved in promoting the well-being of their children and achieving excellence in education.



PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

Parents in Kansas City understand and are supported in promoting the optimal development of their children. Parents are always included as part of the equation—the team—involved in promoting the well-being of their children and achieving excellence in education.

All parents have access to high quality parenting supports.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene and work with school-based parent coordinators to provide parents with opportunities to learn about how to best support their child's development, and to inform them of supports already existing in the community.
- ❖ Work with Kansas City newspapers to feature special columns focusing on child development. A special section could be produced and inserted on an annual basis in the Sunday edition that might include some of the basics of child development, as well as essays and/or interviews with local and/or national child development practitioners and specialists.
- ❖ Work with Kansas City radio stations, television stations and other relevant media outlets to produce regular segments on child development issues, including interviews with specialists and practitioners.
- ❖ Continue to support early childhood neighborhood coaching efforts.
- ❖ Provide the leadership of congregations with information about parenting and child development in formats that can be easily disseminated to congregation members.
- ❖ Work with elected officials on three fronts: 1) to encourage them to identify and support specific parent-friendly legislation and policies; 2) sponsor awareness campaigns and conduct neighborhood outreach; and 3) to include information relevant to parenting and supporting child development in the newsletters and bulletins they send to their constituents.
- ❖ Support and publicize the existing work and programs of hospitals, pediatricians and other health care providers.
- ❖ Coordinate resources with the Kansas City foundation community in order to provide funding for staffing forums and focus groups and to conduct community outreach.
- ❖ Support the Kansas City Public Library in expanding its outreach to parents on the topics child development and supportive parenting.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Parents (a number adequate to represent the experiences and perspectives of parents in the urban core)
- ❖ Parent-support advocates/practitioners and experts on parenting and child development
- ❖ Policymakers responsible for funding programs that are supportive of parent
- ❖ School leadership (particularly those responsible for parent outreach)
- ❖ School-based parent outreach coordinators
- ❖ Leadership and staff of those health care providers (hospitals, pediatricians, etc.) currently providing parenting supports/education



PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

Parents in Kansas City understand and are supported in promoting the optimal development of their children. Parents are always included as part of the equation—the team—involved in promoting the well-being of their children and achieving excellence in education.

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Do existing parenting support/education programs take into account the specific scheduling needs of working parents?
- ❖ Are parenting support/education providers trained to understand and address circumstances and points-of-view specific to particular racial and cultural experiences?
- ❖ Are the curricula or training materials sensitive to particular racial and cultural experiences?
- ❖ Are parent support/education programs proximate to participants?
- ❖ Are the curricula, materials and formats used in parent education meetings culturally sensitive? Are they available in Spanish and other languages frequently spoken in Kansas City?
- ❖ Are those who conduct parent education venues trained to be aware of circumstances and points-of-view that are specific to particular racial and cultural experiences?
- ❖ Are the tones of parent education programs welcoming, supportive and conducted in the spirit of community? Do they avoid that which is punitive or condescending?
- ❖ Are program designers and participants provided with the space to explore whether there are particular stereotypes in play in the program?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What parenting supports are currently in place? (Where do they take place? What formats are employed?)
- ❖ What do parents reports that their needs are?
- ❖ What are the current venues (meetings, home visits, etc.) for parent support/education?
- ❖ Do most parenting supports focus on parents of newborns, or are there things that are in place for parents throughout their child's development?
- ❖ How many parents are reached through these outlets?
- ❖ What gaps exist? How many parents are not served by parent support programs?
- ❖ What methods are used for attracting parents to parent support meetings?
- ❖ What materials are currently used to inform parents about child development and their role in it?
- ❖ What has been the experience of alumni of existing programs? What might they suggest for improving or expanding existing work?
- ❖ What is the view of the field from the perspective of practitioners?
- ❖ Are there additional resources required in order to sustain and expand parent education programs? If so, what resources are required and how can they be secured?

PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

Parents in Kansas City understand and are supported in promoting the optimal development of their children. Parents are always included as part of the equation—the team—involved in promoting the well-being of their children and achieving excellence in education.

Quality affordable childcare is available to every parent in Kansas City.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Publish a directory—both in print form and web-based—of childcare providers. Include cost/fees, location, transportation availability, activities and licensing status. Disseminate printed versions strategically.
- ❖ Pool government, foundation and corporate money to create a childcare support fund to ensure quality and affordability.
- ❖ Explore 24 hour daycare center models (for example the Prospect Family Nursery, Bronx, NY) that are available for parents who may be undergoing stressful situations, emergencies, or are unable to find childcare but need to be present at work or school.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Parents (adequate to represent the perspectives, needs and experiences of the target population of parents.
- ❖ Parent advocates
- ❖ Childcare providers (representing the range of providers in the urban core)
- ❖ Childcare advocates/experts
- ❖ Policymakers responsible for childcare funding and regulation
- ❖ Employers

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ What is the snapshot of public and private funding for childcare? Are there funding shortages?
- ❖ To what extent does lack of affordable childcare keep parents from taking advantage of educational and/or training opportunities?
- ❖ Are childcare providers proximate to urban core neighborhoods? Are there public transportation options available?
- ❖ Are parents in the urban core aware of affordable and/or free childcare options?
- ❖ Are childcare settings clean, safe and welcoming to children?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What institutions, organizations and/or individuals currently provide childcare in Kansas City's urban core?
- ❖ How do the majority of parents in the urban currently access childcare? (This data can be gathered by briefly surveying current child care consumers at existing childcare centers.)



PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

Parents in Kansas City understand and are supported in promoting the optimal development of their children. Parents are always included as part of the equation—the team—involved in promoting the well-being of their children and achieving excellence in education.

- ❖ What roles do hospitals, pediatricians and other healthcare providers currently play in providing information and/or connections to childcare?

PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

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Parents and their children’s teachers and school staff have positive communicative relationships.

There are ample and sensitively-scheduled opportunities for both parents and teachers to build understanding of each other, as well as opportunities to meet and form relationships in support of the children’s educational experience. Students and their families are well-aware of the range of education/school options available to them, (e.g., alternative schools, availability of college prep courses, etc.).

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Support the creation of a parent advocacy, support and information/clearinghouse center and website.
- ❖ Support the school districts in placing a parent resource person in every school responsible for creating a welcoming atmosphere for parents and assisting them in navigating the educational system.
- ❖ Support the school district in providing workshops for parents on educational initiatives and terminology, standardized testing, ACT and SAT exams, and other relevant issues. (P)
- ❖ Support the school district and teachers unions in exploring options of conducting parent-teacher meetings in a range of places to ensure increased contact, including in homes. (H)
- ❖ Develop a partnership with Sprint and other relevant corporate (and, if relevant, public) entities to develop an “Education 311,” an education information hotline.
- ❖ Develop, with the participation of young people/students, parents and teachers, creative and Kansas City specific public service announcements promoting parent involvement. Part of the process should include exploring such PSAs as they have been carried out previously in Kansas City and in other cities.
- ❖ Support regular and well-planned convenings of parents, parent advocates, teachers, school-level and school-district leadership, and other relevant parties at the GKCCF to explore the current state of parent-school relationships and to move the needle on improving them.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Teachers unions
- ❖ School-level leadership
- ❖ School-district leadership



PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

Parents in Kansas City understand and are supported in promoting the optimal development of their children. Parents are always included as part of the equation—the team—involved in promoting the well-being of their children and achieving excellence in education.

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ How well-trained are teachers and school staff around issues of cultural sensitivity and addressing stereotypes? How well-trained are they in understanding the perspectives of those who live in the urban core and in being welcoming, supportive and not condescending?
- ❖ How are teachers trained to communicate with parents around expectations for their children?
- ❖ Are parent-teacher meetings scheduled flexibly in terms of time and location?
- ❖ Are materials targeted to parents straightforward, attractive and approachable?
- ❖ How can students whose parents are not currently able to provide them with educational support be identified and supported themselves without stigmatizing or alienating either the student or their parents? How can these parents be supported in increasing their involvement and support of their children?
- ❖ Do employers in Kansas City support their employees in being involved in school life?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current state of parent-teacher-school staff relationships? How well-connected and integrated are existing programs?
- ❖ What is the current content of parent-teacher-school staff meetings?
- ❖ What parent resources are available in each school building? Is there currently a parent resource person in every building?
- ❖ How do teachers experience their connections with parents?
- ❖ How do parents experience their connections with teachers?
- ❖ What are the most relevant examples of local and national work on parent involvement and inclusion that can be applied to the dynamics of Kansas City?

PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

Parents in Kansas City understand and are supported in promoting the optimal development of their children. Parents are always included as part of the equation—the team—involved in promoting the well-being of their children and achieving excellence in education.

The social and emotional well-being of children and their families is taken seriously and supported.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Support increased teacher and school-staff training around emotional issues, especially as they relate to educational achievement.
- ❖ Support increased messages in all media outlets emphasizing the importance between emotional and physical health, as well as educational achievement.
- ❖ Support increased opportunities for parents to learn more about emotional well-being.
- ❖ Provide information to pastors and other church leadership so that they can disseminate it to their congregations and to those living in the neighborhoods where their churches are located.
- ❖ Support increased connections between hospital-based programs, schools, and other locations for the provision of emotional health supports.
- ❖ Host an ongoing series of forums on social and emotional health that are compelling and welcoming to the urban core audience.
- ❖ Create and strategically disseminate accessible and attractive pamphlets on the importance of emotional awareness and on where parents and students can access supports.
- ❖ Organize a dynamic panel of Black and Latino mental health professionals to tour schools and address students and school staff on the nature of their work, the role of emotions in everyday life, and the importance of being aware of emotional well-being.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ School psychologists
- ❖ Relevant school-level and school-district leadership
- ❖ Employers (regarding coverage)
- ❖ Mental health practitioners
- ❖ Social workers
- ❖ Congregations
- ❖ Juvenile justice system representatives

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ To what extent are emotional issues being treated as disciplinary issues in Kansas City schools?



PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

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- ❖ How well-trained are teachers and school-level leadership on the issues and practices in dealing with emotional issues that are specific to African-American, Latino, and immigrant experiences?
- ❖ Are extra and sensitive efforts made to reach African-American and Latino students because of cultural resistance to emotional awareness and because of the often high-cost of mental and emotional health supports?
- ❖ Are mental health supports located proximately to urban core neighborhoods?
- ❖ Are materials on emotional well-being accessible, straightforward and attractive?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current discourse on social and emotional well-being in Kansas City learning institutions?
- ❖ What are the current programs—in and out of schools—in place that deal specifically with social and emotional health?
- ❖ What is in the mainstream curricula in KCK and KCMO schools regarding social and emotional health?
- ❖ What are student experiences with emotional well-being supports?
- ❖ What are practitioner/provider experiences?
- ❖ What are teacher experiences of working with their students around issues of emotional well-being? What are teacher experiences with their students around emotional well-being supports?

PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

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Families are aware of and make use of the school and community resources that are available to them.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Support community organizers in Kansas City to disseminate and connect families with existing resources.
- ❖ Consolidate existing community resource directories. . . strategically disseminate . . . website
- ❖ Disseminate information regularly to congregations and support them in communicating with not only their members, but the residents of the neighborhoods in which they are located.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students
- ❖ United Way and other similar social service umbrella organizations
- ❖ Policymakers
- ❖ School-district representatives

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are materials published in Spanish and other languages spoken frequently in Kansas City?
- ❖ Are materials disseminated strategically, for instance via mail, in materials sent home by schools, in laundromats and other locations frequented on a regular basis by urban core residents. When working to reach urban core residents, it is important to recognize the uneven access that people have to the internet and other information technology resources.

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What resource directories are currently in circulation or posted on the web? What listings do the school districts maintain?
- ❖ How are existing directories disseminated to community members?

PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

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Quality training opportunities are readily available to parents (and others) who are un- or under-employed.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene a series of meetings for all relevant organizations and institutions to come together to strategize on how to amplify existing work.
- ❖ Consider piloting a program in a selected geographic area. Such a program might consist of hosting a series of opportunity fairs, matching job-seekers with mentors or some type of consistent support system.
- ❖ Create a venue (or support the capacity of existing venues) for fostering relationships between employers, appropriate actors from the criminal justice system, and other relevant agencies to assist those who are re-entering communities after having served time.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Leadership of the Full Employment Council and all other CBOs engaged in job-placement and job training activities
- ❖ Community colleges and training institutions
- ❖ Relevant employers and representatives from their training programs
- ❖ A representative sample of job seekers
- ❖ Policymakers
- ❖ Government officials responsible for welfare-to-work programs
- ❖ Unions, particularly those with apprenticeship and training programs
- ❖ Academics/researchers of employment trends in Kansas City, and of effective strategies for workforce development.
- ❖ Representatives from the justice system, particularly those who work with re-entry
- ❖ Representatives from CBOs who specialize in re-entry
- ❖ Congregations
- ❖ Leadership of community organizing groups

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Incorporate knowledge of community leaders and community members (like TRADES)
- ❖ Do parents have access to childcare?
- ❖ Are there transportation options available?
- ❖ Expectations and stereotypes of employers and those who run training and/or apprenticeship programs



PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

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Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are the current institutions and programs working on issues of workforce development?
- ❖ What institutions or organizations maintain job banks?
- ❖ What are the current strategies of workforce development organizations and institutions?
- ❖ How do people in the urban core most frequently learn about job and training opportunities?
- ❖ Where do workforce development professionals (both leadership and on-the-ground staff) in Kansas City identify the areas critical to improving training and employment outcomes for residents of the urban core?
- ❖ Where do employers identify the areas critical to improving training and employment outcomes for residents of the urban core?
- ❖ What do job seekers identify as the areas critical to improving their rates of success in acquiring and maintaining gainful employment?
- ❖ What programs exist to assist ex-prisoners with community and employment re-entry?

PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

Parents in Kansas City understand and are supported in promoting the optimal development of their children. Parents are always included as part of the equation—the team—involved in promoting the well-being of their children and achieving excellence in education.

All families have access to stable housing.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene a meeting of housing providers (public and private; city, state and federal) to examine existing strategies for promoting housing stability for low-income families.
- ❖ Host an event focusing on the relationships between housing and education in order to raise the profile of the issue and in an effort to increase public will.
- ❖ Introduce a curricula on the fundamentals of housing production and financing in the US for high school students.
- ❖ Assist in raising the visibility and availability of emergency housing services, for example KC hotlines and counseling services that provide rent and or mortgage payment assistance.
- ❖ Cultivate productive relationships with the Kansas City (KS & MO) Housing Authority leadership and management.
- ❖ Identify any existing funds for emergency rent or mortgage assistance. If currently in existence, provide support for raising their profile. If inadequate, explore ways in which KC housing advocates and philanthropy can boost their reach and effectiveness.
- ❖ Take stock of the relationships between schools and housing. Are there counselors in schools who are aware of the housing situations of students? Do these counselors have knowledge of housing assistance resources so that they can adequately provide guidance to parents and/or students who may need them?
- ❖ Take stock of the relationships between employers and housing, as well as unions and housing. Do major employers have mechanisms in place to provide housing assistance to employees who may need them? Do employers and unions provide information resources for employees so that they know where to turn for assistance and information, both for housing emergencies and for learning about the basics of housing financing and homeownership structures?

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ All local low- and moderate-income housing organizations and agencies (both governmental and non-profit)
- ❖ Local Department of Housing and Urban Development representatives
- ❖ Kansas City (KS & MO) Housing Authority leadership
- ❖ Greater Kansas City LINC
- ❖ Representatives of banks and other financial institutions relevant to housing
- ❖ Habitat for Humanity
- ❖ Policymakers
- ❖ Landlord associations
- ❖ Congregations
- ❖ Low-income tenants (to represent tenant perspective)
- ❖ Tenants who have experienced high mobility



PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT

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- ❖ Leadership of school-based counseling services
- ❖ Representatives from the various chambers of commerce and the business community

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ How do current housing finance policies either support or undermine the long-term housing stability?
- ❖ What mechanisms are in place that assist families in moving from unstable to stable housing situations, and from stable rental situations to homeownership?
- ❖ What zoning regulations and/or discriminatory practices might inhibit families of color from finding suitable housing in safe and stable neighborhoods?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current housing need in Kansas City?
- ❖ What is the inventory of low-income housing providers and counselors? What processes do they use in helping families to find and retain stable rental housing? What processes do they use to assist families in becoming homeowners?
- ❖ What housing trusts are currently in existence in Kansas City?
- ❖ What do practitioners in the field of low-income housing provision identify as the most pressing challenges to their work?

TEACHER & FACULTY SUPPORTS

Teachers in Kansas City are valued professionals whose compensation is commensurate with the vital role they play in preparing children to be self-fulfilled and contributing members of their communities. High quality professional development opportunities are consistently available to all teachers.



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Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide a venue for a strategy meeting focused on this issue.
- ❖ Continue to support the work on the Quality Rating System by the Mid-America Regional Council.
- ❖ Develop an advocacy group of employers to push for adequate early learning and child-care funding. Explore the process and model developed by the Bank of America.
- ❖ Encourage a KCRT-based effort to create an ideal compensation package for early learning instructors.
- ❖ Explore acquiring group benefit packages for early learning professionals.
- ❖ Organize early learning instructors and professionals and parents to lobby for policies and measures that boost the quality, affordability and availability early learning in Kansas City.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Early learning professionals
- ❖ Early learning instructors
- ❖ Policy-makers responsible for child-related funding
- ❖ Policy advocates
- ❖ Staff of resource and referral agencies

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ How do funding levels and processes for programs like Head Start affect the quality of early learning provision?
- ❖ How can public and political will be strengthened to recognize that all children deserve high quality early learning opportunities?



TEACHER & FACULTY SUPPORTS

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- ❖ How can public and political will be strengthened to recognize that early learning instructors and professionals must be valued and compensated as professionals?
- ❖ How can parents in the urban core be made more aware of the benefits of high-quality early learning opportunities so that they not only take advantage of them for their children, but advocate and vote to support early learning?
- ❖ What funding sources can be tapped into or created in order to provide early learning instructors in the urban core with the same levels of compensation as their counterparts in more affluent areas?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What efforts are currently underway by Kansas City organizations?
- ❖ What are the current compensation levels for early-learning instructors?
- ❖ What is the role of public policy in setting compensation levels? What points of leverage might be most successfully targeted?
- ❖ Who are the policy makers who need to be reached?
- ❖ How do current compensation levels compare to living-wage standards?

TEACHER & FACULTY SUPPORTS

Teachers in Kansas City are valued professionals whose compensation is commensurate with the vital role they play in preparing children to be self-fulfilled and contributing members of their communities. High quality professional development opportunities are consistently available to all teachers.

There are readily available workshops and other professional development venues for teachers to increase understanding of cultural differences and their aptitude for communicating and working more productively with all parents—from those who are eager to play a role in school life to those whose life stresses make involvement in school life more difficult.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Conduct a survey of parents, teachers and school staff to learn about their experiences of communicating and working with each other. Based on the findings of the survey, work with the leadership of the school districts to address the challenges identified, and to strengthen those areas where parents, teachers and school staff feel themselves to be productive.
- ❖ Distill the best practices that are currently taking place in Kansas City and around the country and disseminate them to parents, teachers and school staff.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Professional development providers
- ❖ Parent advocates
- ❖ Parent coordinators

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are teachers fluent in urban culture and language?
- ❖ Are teachers aware of historical and contemporary manifestations of structural racism?
- ❖ Are there language barriers that keep parents and teachers from communicating?
- ❖ Are meetings involving parents conveniently scheduled and located? Do they take into consideration the constraints faced by working parents?

TEACHER & FACULTY SUPPORTS

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Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current discourse in Kansas City schools about relationships between parents and teachers?
- ❖ What are the best practices for teachers and school staff on optimizing relationships with parents?
- ❖ What are teachers' perspectives on relationships with parents?
- ❖ What are parents' perspectives on relationships with teachers?
- ❖ Where would both parents and teachers most like to see improvement or increased support?

TEACHER & FACULTY SUPPORTS

Teachers in Kansas City are valued professionals whose compensation is commensurate with the vital role they play in preparing children to be self-fulfilled and contributing members of their communities. High quality professional development opportunities are consistently available to all teachers.

Teachers are prepared to be teachers effectively in urban school districts.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Continue support for the Institute for Urban Education at UMKC
- ❖ Convene a leadership committee from UMKC and other schools of education in the KC region to ensure that conversations continue on teacher preparedness for urban districts, and that strategies are developed and carried out.
- ❖ Conduct a survey of teachers to learn about their perspectives on teaching in the urban districts of Kansas City (KS & MO) and where they require additional support.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Leadership of schools of education
- ❖ Faculty of schools of education
- ❖ Institute for Urban Education (and its counterparts at other universities in the KC region)
- ❖ Urban district teachers
- ❖ Students in urban districts—both current and matriculated

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Do the curricula used in schools of education include the history of the relationship between race and urban education in America?
- ❖ How aware are school leaders and teachers of the policies that govern their field?
- ❖ Are school leaders and teachers aware of the roots and value of culturally-specific education?
- ❖ How well are teachers supported in dealing with the psychological issues and fatigue inherent in working in stressful environments?

TEACHER & FACULTY SUPPORTS

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Teachers (K-12) in Kansas City are compensated appropriately (i.e., in amounts that show that teachers are highly valued members of the community making important contributions to the present and future of Kansas Citians).

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene a strategy meeting on the issue of teacher compensation.
- ❖ Explore avenues for supplementing and rewarding outstanding teaching in urban core schools.
- ❖ Set up a public education fund focused on supplementing teacher salaries and professional development.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Teachers unions
- ❖ Policymakers
- ❖ Teacher training institutions
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Foundations

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ How aware are the relevant players of the race-based dynamics involved with public education funding?
- ❖ How can representations of urban districts be modified so that teachers are not viewed as being in a “hazard zone,” but being in a situation that is the outcome of particular historical dynamics that have disadvantage people of color and the institutions upon which they rely and which, therefore, require a special skill set?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are the policies that determine teacher salaries? How exactly should these policies be modified in order to increase teacher salaries and benefits in order to make teaching an attractive career?
- ❖ What legislators, departments, organizations and/or individuals are currently working on these issues? What areas do these individuals identify as the most pivotal points on which the KCRT can lend its support?



TEACHER & FACULTY SUPPORTS

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**Teachers are appropriately credentialed.
Teachers teach in the subjects in which they have received training, and not in subjects in which they are inadequately prepared to transmit knowledge to their students.**

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide a venue for the development of a credentialing program for productive but uncredentialed teachers already teaching in the urban core.
- ❖ Develop a scholarship fund to support the credentialing of uncredentialed teachers.
- ❖ Once the percentages of credentialed and uncredentialed teachers in the school districts are identified, set up a report card system for drawing city-wide attention and monitoring.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Teacher Unions
- ❖ Teacher training institutions
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Relevant business, cultural and civic actors

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are there policies—whether at the local, state or federal level—in place that undermine placing appropriately credentialed teachers in classrooms?
- ❖ Are the numbers of uncredentialed teachers in Kansas City's urban core schools (schools with student populations that are majority students of color) higher than those in suburban or majority white schools? If so, what are the institutional practices in place that allow this to occur?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ How can uncredentialed teachers be identified? How can such identification be supportive and not punitive—provided those teachers are generally productive?

TEACHER & FACULTY SUPPORTS

Teachers in Kansas City are valued professionals whose compensation is commensurate with the vital role they play in preparing children to be self-fulfilled and contributing members of their communities. High quality professional development opportunities are consistently available to all teachers.

Once in the Kansas City school systems, teachers (and all school staff) are consistently exposed to high quality professional development opportunities.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Set up a public education fund focused on supplementing funding for professional development for teachers and school leadership.
- ❖ Provide venues for teacher input into what kinds of professional development they believe to be most crucial. Specifically, explore what elements teachers identify as those which would boost morale?
- ❖ Provide venues for those already working on professional development and related issues to come together to strategize around ways to improve practice and outcomes.
- ❖ Provide a venue for the formation of a team to review the racial and cultural appropriateness of existing professional development opportunities.
- ❖ Provide a venue for teachers to learn about student assessment practices that are simple, short and relatively painless to the student.* In addition, explore data-driven instruction technologies that allow teachers to keep track of students progress pinpoint. Both allow teachers to apply extra help where it is needed along the way

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Providers of professional development (school districts departments of professional development)
- ❖ School district leadership
- ❖ Teachers unions

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are those who provide professional development attuned to the specific contexts of teaching in the urban core?
- ❖ Do the curricula used in professional development help teachers to address issues related to race and structural racism as they directly apply to helping their students?
- ❖ Do current professional development venues promote awareness of history and awareness of structural racism and what teachers and school leaders can do to address it?

* This strategy was recommended by Mr. Leon Dixon, W.E.B. DuBois Learning Centers. Mr. Dixon should be contacted for further detail.

TEACHER & FACULTY SUPPORTS

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- ❖ Do professional development venues challenge teachers to have high expectations of their students?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the inventory of existing professional development opportunities in the Kansas City school districts?
- ❖ Where are there gaps from the perspective of teachers, school leaderships and evaluators?
- ❖ What are the obstacles to increased effectiveness in professional development?
- ❖ Are current professional development opportunities associated with university credits?

TEACHER & FACULTY SUPPORTS

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Teachers are supported in the classroom.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ In partnership with the school district, inventory the supports (teacher aides, parent volunteers, student teachers, etc.) are currently in place for teachers in their classrooms.
- ❖ In partnership with the school districts, investigate teachers' reports of what, if any, additional supports would enhance their ability to reach all students.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Teacher training institutions
- ❖ Teacher unions
- ❖ Relevant representatives from business, cultural and civic communities

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are there particular funding or staffing policies that either support or undermine teachers being adequately supported in their classrooms?
- ❖ Are those individuals present to support teachers in the classroom adequately prepared to assist teachers in the teaching process and students in the learning process, or are they there solely to help teachers to keep order in the classroom?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ Do the school districts have adequate funding to provide additional classroom supports, if needed?
- ❖ Are there local or national models of classroom support that can serve the interests of Kansas City?
- ❖ Are Kansas City businesses and corporations interested and prepared to match some of their employees with teachers—particularly in the math and science fields?

TEACHER & FACULTY SUPPORTS

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Home daycare providers have easy access to information and resources related to health and literacy.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide a venue for a meeting for developing a strategy for supporting an existing network, or developing a new network, to provide workshops and other educational opportunities to home daycare providers so that they are better equipped to support the children in their care developmentally and educationally.
- ❖ Provide a venue for a taskforce to produce a packet for home daycare providers that contains information on ways in which they can support the children in their care developmentally and educationally.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ A representative sample of home daycare providers
- ❖ Leadership from the state licensing bureaus

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are existing materials for home daycare providers available in Spanish and other languages frequently spoken in Kansas City?
- ❖ If new workshops or materials are produced, are they available in Spanish and other languages frequently spoken in Kansas City?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are the best methods for getting information to home daycare providers?
- ❖ What information do home daycare providers currently receive from state licensing bureaus? How might this information be supplemented?

INSTITUTIONAL CONNECTEDNESS, COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION FOR A STRONG PIPELINE

The education to employment pipeline in Kansas City is strong, dynamic and vital. All institutions along the education pipeline have the institutional capacities to connect with all other points along the pipeline in support of Kansas City students and workers. There is a comprehensive and inclusive structure for dialogue between the education, labor, business and civic communities in Kansas City that allows them to communicate, strategize and act together on a regular basis.



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There is a strong and dynamic pipeline connecting the K-12-Community College & Training Institutions-Four Year Institutions-Graduate Schools-Employment pipeline.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Supply a venue for convening leaders from the various points along the pipeline so that they may create (or strengthen) a vision for strengthening the pipeline, a timeline, and a strategy for including a broader range of stakeholders.
- ❖ Ensure that all components of KCRT work take “pipeline connectivity” into consideration in strategizing and implementation.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ School leadership and relevant faculty
- ❖ College and university leadership and relevant faculty
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Philanthropic leadership
- ❖ Community leaders
- ❖ Community Based Organizations
- ❖ Corporate leadership
- ❖ Congregations
- ❖ Researchers and experts in pipeline connectivity
- ❖ Civil rights leadership
- ❖ Policymakers

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are representatives from all communities present at discussions relevant to and strategy sessions regarding pipeline coordination efforts?
- ❖ Do all of the plans for enhancing pipeline connectivity have a *promoting racial equity* component?
- ❖ What are the policies, practices and representations/cultural stereotypes that may either support or undermine collaboration and progress at each point?



INSTITUTIONAL CONNECTEDNESS, COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION FOR A STRONG PIPELINE

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Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is currently in place to facilitate collaboration between actors relevant to the pipeline? What are the current initiatives and programs in place?
- ❖ What are the most effective pipeline models, nationally and internationally?
- ❖ Are there institutions or organizations that are not currently part of coordinating efforts, but are vital to the strength of the pipeline?
- ❖ What institutions and organizations are particularly well-positioned to ensure the coherence of the pipeline?
- ❖ What is the current inventory of dual-credit programs in Kansas City schools? What are the best ways to increase the number of dual-credit programs?

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Early education programs and elementary schools are well linked. Children are prepared for the kindergarten setting, and early education and school professionals regularly meet to coordinate their work, particularly in the area of curriculum.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide a venue for convening those working on these issues to amplify their efforts in coordination and collaboration.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Early childhood professionals and providers
- ❖ Advocates
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ School district curriculum designers
- ❖ Teachers unions
- ❖ Community Based Organizations

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are curriculum coordination meetings layered with sensitivity to the range of life experiences? Do they have inclusive and understanding tones?
- ❖ Is information to support parents in preparing their children for kindergarten clear, straightforward and accessible in appropriate languages? Is the information provided in accessible settings?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the inventory of current links between early education programs and elementary schools?



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There are strong connections and relationships between school staff and relevant community based organizations that allow for community based organizations to reach and support parents whose life circumstances prevent them from being sufficiently involved with and supportive of their children in their educational journey.

Family support service organizations collaborate on a consistent basis in order to maximize service integration and support for Kansas City families.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Explore the Communities in Schools model (www.cisnet.org).
- ❖ If needed, provide meeting venues for schools and CBOs to further coordinate their efforts.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Community Based Organization leadership
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Parent coordinators
- ❖ School counselors and psychologists
- ❖ Police community liaisons

* Communities in Schools “champions the connection of needed community resources with schools to help young people successfully learn, stay in school, and prepare for life.” There is an affiliate of CIS in Kansas City, KS

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Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are programs culturally relevant?
- ❖ Are materials available in languages most frequently spoken in Kansas City?
- ❖ Are programs proximate to students? If they are not, is free or affordable transportation available?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ On a school-by-school basis, what are the current relationships between schools and youth- and family-support oriented CBOs?
- ❖ How well are existing services and programs attended/used?
- ❖ What are the most apparent outstanding needs for which there are not adequate services or programs in place?
- ❖ How are families made aware of the resources available to them?
- ❖ To what degree are the youth engaged in identifying program needs and designing programs?
- ❖ Are the range of community organizations formally involved in relationships with schools? For example, are organizations organic to the community at the table?

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Graduate institutions in the Kansas City metropolitan area have the intentionality and institutional infrastructure in place to monitor community needs so that faculty and students can conduct research that is relevant to identifying issues to be studied, outcomes to be achieved, and programs/initiatives to be implemented and monitored. “Research is conducted in service of the community.”

The leadership and faculty of Kansas City metropolitan area universities increase the value and recognition of the ‘scholarship of engagement’ with communities.

University researchers work with communities to identify educational needs.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Provide increased venues for academics and community activists and residents to become better acquainted and to encourage collaboration.
- ❖ Provide leadership training for university leadership and faculty members to increase awareness of how they can act to promote racial equity in Kansas City.
- ❖ Work with media outlets to highlight the work of college and university faculty who are engaged with the community.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ University leadership and faculty
- ❖ CBO leadership
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Relevant university research centers



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Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ What is the level of awareness of the dynamics of structural racism and promoting racial equity among faculty and students in Kansas City-area colleges and universities?
- ❖ Are the tenure policies cognizant of community- and equity-oriented work?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the current status of the 'scholarship of engagement' in Kansas City colleges and universities? How many administrators and faculty orient their scholarship to the goals of community health and well-being?
- ❖ What either supports or obstructs orienting research and involvement to community well-being?
- ❖ Are there federal resources (from institutions like NSF, NIH and HUD) that can be acquired to facilitate increased connections between colleges/universities and the community?

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There are a variety of quality undergraduate and graduate programs at Kansas City metropolitan area universities focusing on issues of community building, community engagement, and community development.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene a task force of relevant actors to strategize a out how to strengthen, expand and/or create programs and/or curricula with community development orientations.
- ❖ Encourage the task force to create a community engagement curriculum that is specific to Kansas City.
- ❖ Develop a resource guide of programs focused on community engagement?

Who Needs to Be at the Table*

- ❖ Center for the City (Carl Calkins)
- ❖ Center for Non-Profit Leadership (Dave Renz)
- ❖ United Way
- ❖ University Recruiters (Alan DuBois)
- ❖ Civic organizations
- ❖ Civil rights organizations
- ❖ Other relevant university leadership
- ❖ Community Development Corporation leadership
- ❖ Students (high school, college and graduate level)

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ What is the level of awareness of the dynamics of structural racism among faculty and embedded in curricula?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What is the inventory of existing programs? How might they be expanded?
- ❖ Are there new programs that might be established?
- ❖ What national and international models should be explored?

* Specific names appear on this list since they were identified in particular by June 2006 meeting participants.

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The school districts of both Kansas City, Kansas and Kansas City, Missouri do not view their relationship as antagonistic, but as a coming together of minds around the work of increasing student achievement.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Support efforts to change the thinking about the bi-state status of Kansas City from problematic to a more positive and opportunity-oriented view through which the city can benefit from the resources, expertise and experience of two states.
- ❖ Examine other areas of the country with similar bi-state configurations in order to learn what strategies have proven to be effective there.
- ❖ Examine other areas (possibly transportation and other infrastructure-related areas) in order to learn from their methods and to perhaps apply such cross-sectoral lessons to education.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ School district leadership
- ❖ Elected officials (local, state and federal levels)
- ❖ Relevant “education support” organizations (like PREP KC and others)
- ❖ University leadership
- ❖ Leadership of regionally oriented organizations

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ What are the racial tensions that exist around the bi-state configuration? How can they best be identified and openly addressed?
- ❖ Are there policies (local, state or federal) with racial overtones that make it difficult additionally difficult for bi-state cooperation to take root?
- ❖ What are the cultural stereotypes that are held by residents of each state about each other that stand in the way of bi-state cooperation? How can they be addressed by decision-makers so that they do not stand as obstacles?



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Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are the current venues for communication and/or collaboration between Kansas and Missouri districts and institutions?
- ❖ What are the highest priority issues on which a bi-state collaborative should initially focus?

INSTITUTIONAL CONNECTEDNESS, COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION FOR A STRONG PIPELINE

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Teacher recruitment strategies employed are strategic and attract teachers who have had excellent training and who are dedicated to excellence in the teaching and learning process.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ In partnership with the school districts and teacher training institutions, convene a recruitment and retention taskforce.
- ❖ In cooperation with teacher training institutions, explore what peer supports are available to education students. Investigate ways to increase the instances of such supports.
- ❖ Increase the venues for education students to spend more time in urban schools and neighborhoods so that they have more experience and increased understanding of the environments within which their students live and can better assist them in the learning process.
- ❖ Continue to support the Institute for Urban Education, particularly in the areas mentioned above.
- ❖ Develop a protocol for determining the preparedness of new teachers to teach in Kansas City's urban districts.
- ❖ Work with targeted media outlets to highlight teaching as a profession. Explore PSA's and other methods. (One interesting example is the 2006 campaign of the New York City Department of Education).
- ❖ Explore successful recruitment strategies from other urban school districts.
- ❖ Work with government and foundation leadership to increase scholarships and support for education students so that they can achieve higher GPAs and be more deeply motivated to engage in their profession.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Schools of education/teacher training institutions
- ❖ Education students
- ❖ School districts' recruitment specialists (human resource departments)
- ❖ Superintendents and other school leadership
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students



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Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Do teachers recruited to work in Kansas City's urban districts receive training in the challenges their students face as a consequence of structural racism? Do they receive training in how to best support and be sensitive to their students?
- ❖ Do human resource personnel have a protocol for determining the preparedness of potential teachers to teach in Kansas City's urban districts?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are current teacher recruitment strategies?
- ❖ What are the connections and relationships between the leadership of Kansas City schools and the colleges and universities responsible for educating and training the majority of new teachers in the Kansas City, Kansas and Missouri?
- ❖ How do those involved in recruiting teachers believe that recruitment strategies could be strengthened?
- ❖ How do those involved in recruiting teachers believe that teacher training could be strengthened?
- ❖ How do those involved in teacher retention believe that retention could be improved?
- ❖ How do the leadership of schools of education believe that recruitment can be strengthened?
- ❖ What supports (psychological, etc.) are in place for teachers? Support groups? Professional development oriented supports?

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There are a variety of venues where policy-makers and those most directly affected by their decisions can come together.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Identify the relevant policy-makers within the school district and on the city, state and federal levels.
- ❖ Model venues on the process undertaken to select the most recent superintendent.
- ❖ Use the convening power of the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation to host venues in different parts of Kansas City.
- ❖ Develop a guide for hosting Education and Public Policy Forums, possibly partnering with the political science departments of local universities.
- ❖ Identify the best ways to ensure student, parent and teacher presence at convenings and ways in which to use Education and Public Policy Forums to organize students, teachers and parents in support of education.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Elected officials
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Community based organizations
- ❖ Civil rights organizations
- ❖ Foundation representatives

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are venues for meeting with policy-makers located in all neighborhoods?
- ❖ Are materials provided in tandem with meetings clear and accessible?
- ❖ Are meetings publicized in all neighborhoods and to all communities? Are they publicized well in advance?
- ❖ Do meetings have translators present for the benefit of Spanish speakers?

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Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are the existing venues for policy-makers, students, parents and teachers to come together? How do those involved with those venues believe they could gain increased participation?

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Charter schools and traditional public schools recognize their common causes.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene a subcommittee to identify points of contention between charter schools and traditional public schools and to devise strategies for working together with increased harmony.
- ❖ Contact the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools to learn what models and strategies they have for improving relationships between the leadership of charter schools and traditional public schools.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ School district leadership
- ❖ Charter school leadership
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ National experts

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are the committees that develop around this issue inclusive? Do they have representation from all of Kansas City's diverse communities?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What are the current venues for communication between the leadership of charter schools and traditional public schools?



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Faculty, the lifeblood of the pipeline, have ample opportunities to exchange experiences, knowledge and ideas with their colleagues along different parts of the pipeline.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Assist the school districts in creating (or strengthening) programs through which elementary, middle and high school teachers, as well as college/university professors and instructors—especially in math and science—serve as advisors to each other in a peer learning format.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ School, College/Training Institution and University leadership (from all points along the pipeline)
- ❖ Teachers/Instructors/Professors
- ❖ Students

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Do those initiatives (whether existing or to be created) that facilitate exchange between education professionals include elements that help these educators understand the significance of structural racism in relation to student achievement?
- ❖ Are educator exchange initiatives diverse? Do they include educators and perspectives from all of Kansas City's communities?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What venues for exchange between teachers/instructors/professors are currently in operation?
- ❖ In what areas would teachers/instructors/professors most like to be better connected?
- ❖ What points do curriculum and transition specialists identify as the most fruitful areas for exchange and cross-pollination between teachers/instructors and professors?

DATA & EVALUATION FOR LEARNING & GROWTH

The education to employment pipeline in Kansas City is a dynamic system in which all Kansas Citians have a role to play. All information and data are of high quality and accessible to all. Kansas City has a culture and practices of constant evaluation of its educational and employment outcomes that allow decision-makers at every level—from superintendents to principals to CEOs to voters—to make decisions that will be of maximum benefit to individuals and to the community at large.



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Data on school performance (schools, teachers, students) is of high quality, readily available, and used to better understand the best ways to support excellence in teaching and learning.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene a 'data coordination' task force to map the sources availability of relevant databases.
- ❖ Partner with the school districts to post information on a secure website (including lessons, homework, grades, attendance) so that it is readily available to students and parents.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ School district leadership
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Evaluators and data experts (from within the school districts as well as independent and university-based research centers)
- ❖ Research departments of the teachers unions

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Is data disaggregated by race?
- ❖ How far along the pipeline is student progress tracked? For example, is the progress of students kept track of beyond college admission? Are college graduation rates tracked as well?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ Are test scores and other educational data compared not just to local, but to national averages as well?
- ❖ What is the inventory of all existing data sources relevant to Kansas City? What are the organizing principles of the data?
- ❖ What have been the main sticking points in the debate around data? How can they be most clearly addressed?
- ❖ Is practice data (what's happening in the classroom) linked with outcome data (scores, graduation rates)



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There is a Quality Rating System (QRS) in place for after-school programs similar to the QRS in place for Pre-K programs.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene those who created the QRS and the leadership of after school programs to discuss the current status of after school evaluation and to identify steps for moving forward.
- ❖ Design and pilot an After School QRS with a group of interested after school programs—including both staff and students.
- ❖ Explore the San Francisco Beacon model, which are renown for their innovation and effectiveness.
- ❖ Be explicit about what the desired outcomes of after school programs are. For example, are the programs in place to “keep kids off the street,” or are they intended to play a role in increasing school achievement.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Leadership and relevant staff of after school programs.
- ❖ Leadership of QRS efforts.
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Representatives from philanthropy
- ❖ Policymakers

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Will the QRS be designed by a diverse group of stakeholders?
- ❖ Will the QRS be designed in such a way as to account for the extra supports that students in the urban core might need?
- ❖ Will the QRS have components that measure how well the out-of-school programs are preparing students to face the structural barriers they face as students of color: helping to support strong identity formation—both individual and cultural, supporting them in awareness of health issues, and so on?
- ❖ Will the QRS design be vetted with the students who will be participating in them?

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Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What evaluation strategies are currently in use in Kansas City out-of-school programs?
- ❖ If the leadership of Kansas City out-of-school programs believe that a QRS system would be useful to their work, how do they believe it could be most effectively designed, structured and implemented.
- ❖ What evaluation strategies from around the country have been identified as particularly productive?

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Kansas Citians are aware of the impact of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and other education policies and have strategies in place for dealing effectively with them.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Host a special community forum on No Child Left Behind. Use the forum as an awareness and organize venue to educate parents and students about the role of public policy in their everyday lives.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ School leadership, especially school staff responsible for NCLB compliance
- ❖ Students
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Youth activists/organizers
- ❖ Elected officials
- ❖ Education policy experts/advocates

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Have the racial impacts of NCLB been investigated?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ What existing research and activism is in place—both nationally and in Kansas City?



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A variety of school structure modifications are explored by educators and the community at large, including introducing full-day kindergarten, increasing learning time (e.g. Saturday schools), and gender-specific classes and schools.

Taking Initiative for Change

- ❖ Convene a task force subcommittee meeting to explore the opportunities to make significant changes to school/education structures.

Who Needs to Be at the Table

- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students
- ❖ School leadership
- ❖ Teachers unions
- ❖ Researchers and practitioners with expertise in the specific issue areas

Racial Equity Checklist

- ❖ Are the modifications that come under consideration effective for students of color?
Is there evidence of their effectiveness in closing the achievement gap?

Reconnaissance for Moving Forward

- ❖ Which structural modifications have proven to be effective, both in Kansas City and elsewhere?

Appendices



Appendix One

Overall List of Desired Outcomes Put Forth by KCRT Participants



Overall List of Desired Outcomes Put Forth by KCRT Participants

CULTURE OF SUPPORTIVENESS & HIGH EXPECTATIONS

- ❖ All Kansas Citizens have a sense of investment and pride in Kansas City schools and have high expectations of Kansas City students.

STUDENT SUPPORTS

- ❖ Kansas City has an excellent universal Head Start and/or Pre-K System.
- ❖ All children and their families have access to health care and health promotion services. All children are immunized.
- ❖ All children and their families have access to physical fitness and recreational activities and facilities.
- ❖ Early-learning professionals are appropriately credentialed (at least an associate degree).
- ❖ Early literacy opportunities are abundant.
- ❖ All early learning centers have safe and pleasant physical environments.
- ❖ Every child who needs or wants a mentor (a caring adult role model) has access to one.
- ❖ Kansas City schools have teachers of the highest quality who are sensitive to and flexible with different learning styles.
- ❖ Curriculum Specific: The curricula of Kansas City schools are aligned with state standards, and both are aligned with best practices and employer needs.
- ❖ Curriculum Specific: Learning is relevant to students. Where appropriate, it is hands-on and applied.
- ❖ Curriculum Specific: Entrepreneurial and financial literacy are consistent components of education in Kansas City.
- ❖ Curriculum Specific: Curriculum review teams are inclusive.
- ❖ Curriculum Specific: Curricula include soft- and life skills components that are up-to-date, culturally appropriate and given the priority status they deserve given their value in the wider world.
- ❖ The social and emotional health of children (and their families) is taken seriously and supported.
- ❖ Access to technology in Kansas City is pervasive and students of all ages are well-versed in the range of its productive uses.
- ❖ Students and their families are well-aware of the range of education/school options available to them, including alternative schools, supplementary programs, tutoring programs, etc.
- ❖ Community and Saturday schools are open and accessible to all.
- ❖ School staff are well-attuned to the multi-faceted needs of students.
- ❖ Internships are readily available to all interested students in Kansas City. Such internships and other preparatory programs move young people in Kansas City towards socio-culturally preparedness to take advantage of education and employment opportunities.

- ❖ Universities in the Kansas City metropolitan area provide students and their families in both middle and high-schools with information about and assistance with college prep courses, the college admission process, and accessing financial aid.
- ❖ Small learning communities provide students with a strong network of deeply engaged personal allies.
- ❖ School and community institutions are honest and open with young people about human sexuality so that students can make wise choices about sexual expression and reproductive capacities.
- ❖ Kansas City school districts have well-supported drop-out prevention initiatives. They provide extra support and guidance to 9th graders (the grade level at which students are most likely to drop out of school).
- ❖ The voices of young people are present and involved in planning and implementation of education and employment initiatives.
- ❖ Tutoring is required for all students who fall below a C average.
- ❖ Higher education is affordable to all Kansas Citizens.
- ❖ Universities in the Kansas City metropolitan help to reduce tuition debt burdens.
- ❖ Students of community colleges, training institutions, and four-year colleges and universities have clear understanding of and direction in the relationship between their courses and their requirements they need to meet their career goals.
- ❖ Universities in the Kansas City metropolitan area recruit and graduate increased numbers of students from Kansas City's urban core.
- ❖ Kansas City students are prepared to score above national averages on ACT and SAT tests.
- ❖ The range of school discipline policies and practices are constructive. They achieve a balance between shielding cooperative students from disruption while not doing harm to disruptive students. Students who are too disruptive to continue in the classroom are not relegated to their own devices, but are provided with constructive alternatives that help them to overcome the problems or situations causative of their disruptiveness.
- ❖ Students who are involved or at risk of involvement with the juvenile (or criminal) justice system are provided with extra supports.
- ❖ Students in Kansas City have a wide range of opportunities to take part in activities and visit places that are outside of their everyday experiences.
- ❖ Children, youth and their families consistently have exposure to a variety of new positive experiences.

PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORTS

- ❖ All parents have access to high quality parenting supports.
- ❖ Quality affordable childcare is available to every parent in Kansas City.
- ❖ Parents and their children's teachers and school staff have positive communicative relationships. There are ample and sensitively-scheduled opportunities for both parents and teachers to build understanding of each other, as well as opportunities to meet and form relationships in support of the children's educational experience. Students and their families are well-aware of the range of education/school options available to them, (e.g., alternative schools, availability of college prep courses, etc.).



- ❖ The social and emotional well-being of children and their families is taken seriously and supported.
- ❖ Families are aware of and make use of the school and community resources that are available to them.
- ❖ Quality training opportunities are readily available to parents (and others) who are un- or under-employed.
- ❖ All families have access to stable housing.

TEACHER & FACULTY SUPPORTS

- ❖ Teachers in Kansas City are valued professionals whose compensation is commensurate with the vital role they play in preparing children to be self-fulfilled and contributing members of their communities. High quality professional development opportunities are consistently available to all teachers.
- ❖ There are readily available workshops and other professional development venues for teachers to increase understanding of cultural differences and their aptitude for communicating and working more productively with all parents—from those who are eager to play a role in school life to those whose life stresses make involvement in school life more difficult.
- ❖ Teachers are prepared to be teachers effectively in urban school districts.
- ❖ Teachers (K-12) in Kansas City are compensated appropriately (i.e., in amounts that show that teachers are highly valued members of the community making important contributions to the present and future of Kansas Citians).
- ❖ Teachers are appropriately credentialed. Teachers teach in the subjects in which they have received training, and not in subjects in which they are inadequately prepared to transmit knowledge to their students.
- ❖ Once in the Kansas City school systems, teachers (and all school staff) are consistently exposed to high quality professional development opportunities.
- ❖ Teachers are supported in the classroom.
- ❖ Home daycare providers have easy access to information and resources related to health and literacy.

INSTITUTIONAL CONNECTEDNESS, COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION FOR A STRONG PIPELINE

- ❖ There is a strong and dynamic pipeline connecting the K-12-Community College & Training Institutions-Four Year Institutions-Graduate Schools-Employment pipeline.
- ❖ Early education programs and elementary schools are well linked. Children are prepared for the kindergarten setting, and early education and school professionals regularly meet to coordinate their work, particularly in the area of curriculum.
- ❖ There are strong connections and relationships between school staff and relevant community based organizations that allow for community based organizations to reach and support parents whose life circumstances prevent them from being sufficiently involved with and supportive of their children in their educational journey.
- ❖ Family support service organizations collaborate on a consistent basis in order to maximize service integration and support for Kansas City families.



- ❖ Graduate institutions in the Kansas City metropolitan area have the intentionality and institutional infrastructure in place to monitor community needs so that faculty and students can conduct research that is relevant to identifying issues to be studied, outcomes to be achieved, and programs/initiatives to be implemented and monitored. “Research is conducted in service of the community.”
- ❖ The leadership and faculty of Kansas City metropolitan area universities increase the value and recognition of the ‘scholarship of engagement’ with communities.
- ❖ University researchers work with communities to identify educational needs.
- ❖ There are a variety of quality undergraduate and graduate programs at Kansas City metropolitan area universities focusing on issues of community building, community engagement, and community development.
- ❖ The school districts of both Kansas City, Kansas and Kansas City, Missouri do not view their relationship as antagonistic, but as a coming together of minds around the work of increasing student achievement.
- ❖ Teacher recruitment strategies employed are strategic and attract teachers who have had excellent training and who are dedicated to excellence in the teaching and learning process.
- ❖ There are a variety of venues where policy-makers and those most directly affected by their decisions can come together.
- ❖ Charter schools and traditional public schools recognize their common causes.
- ❖ Faculty, the lifeblood of the pipeline, have ample opportunities to exchange experiences, knowledge and ideas with their colleagues along different parts of the pipeline.

DATA & EVALUATION FOR LEARNING & GROWTH

- ❖ Data on school performance (schools, teachers, students) is of high quality, readily available, and used to better understand the best ways to support excellence in teaching and learning.
- ❖ There is a Quality Rating System (QRS) in place for after-school programs similar to the QRS in place for Pre-K programs.
- ❖ Kansas Citians are aware of the impact of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and other education policies and have strategies in place for dealing effectively with them.
- ❖ A variety of school structure modifications are explored by educators and the community at large, including introducing full-day kindergarten, increasing learning time (e.g. Saturday schools), and gender-specific classes and schools.

Appendix Two
Sample Evaluation Form



Sample Evaluation Form

KCRT - Convening Context & Effectiveness

Please rate the convening on a scale of 1-5:

1-----3-----5

- 1) How safe was the meeting environment for in terms of holding honest and open discussion? _____

- 2) How productive did you feel the meeting was in terms of affecting direct improvements? _____

- 3) How productive did you feel the meeting was in terms of increasing connections and strengthening the network of support? _____
 - a. What concrete connections or new developments were reported on at the meeting?
 - i. _____
 - ii. _____
 - iii. _____
 - iv. _____

- 4) How productive did you feel the meeting to be in terms of working on concrete strategies? _____

- 5) What were the three most productive things about this convening?
 - i. _____
 - ii. _____
 - iii. _____

- 6) What three things about this convening would you change?
 - i. _____
 - ii. _____
 - iii. _____

- 7) What do you recommend be the focus of the next convening?

Appendix Three
Strategy Development Chart



Appendix Four
“Keep-In-Mind Checklist”



**Kansas City Roundtable on Access & Opportunity
Action Planning Meeting
June 22nd & 23rd, 2006**

“Keep-In-Mind” Check-List Sheets

As you develop the action steps, keep the following in mind. Not all items will apply to every category we are working on, but we’ve included them because they may spark other ideas.

Areas & Elements to Keep in Mind	X
What is the <u>existing work</u> in this area? (Programs, initiatives, etc.)	
What are the best ways to keep the pipeline fluid in the plan? Are we <u>avoiding the usual “siloing”</u> of points along the pipeline? Are we avoiding the siloing of sectors?	
How are the <u>curricula</u> in place in learning environments supporting or undermining student success?	
What is the role of <u>affordability</u> in school and employment success—particularly in post-secondary education?	
How do <u>students experience learning environments</u> ? Are learning environments in Kansas City supportive enough of students?	
What is the experience of <u>teachers and professors</u> ? Do they have the supports and knowledge they need to adequately prepare their students for an ever-changing economy?	
Are <u>learning institutions structured</u> in ways that are conducive to supporting students and teachers?	
What kind of community awareness and buy-in should be in place? Are there <u>community involvement or organizing strategies</u> that should be considered?	
What role is played by <u>public policies</u> ? Are there public policies that are undermining the goals of excellent education and employment outcomes for everyone? Are there public policies that are supporting the goals?	
What is the role played by <u>institutional practices</u> ? What institutional practices seem to work for children, students, families? What institutional practices tend to undermine them?	
What is the role played by <u>culture</u> ? What cultural aspects lift people up and help them to persevere? What cultural aspects tend to undermine living up to one’s potential?	
What are the roles played by <u>stereotypes</u> of students of color? How do negative stereotypes keep people—teachers and students, fellow citizens, those working in different sectors—from working together and making progress?	
How do <u>expectations</u> of students affect their individual development?	
What are the roles to be played by community institutions like hospitals, libraries, police departments and other <u>human-service and public-safety oriented institutions</u> ?	
What contributions can be made by <u>national organizations</u> ?	



What contributions can be made by <u>civil rights organizations</u> ?	
What is the role of <u>employers, business, and corporations</u> ?	
What roles can <u>unions</u> and other similarly oriented organizations play?	
What roles can <u>congregations</u> play?	
What is the role of different <u>media</u> outlets in supporting or undermining children, students and families in their efforts to succeed in the educational and employment arenas?	
What contributions can be made by <u>philanthropy</u> ?	
What unorthodox, unconventional, or <u>extraordinarily creative ideas</u> might be applied?	
What are the best ways to build <u>public will</u> around better education and employment outcomes?	
What is the role of <u>infrastructural elements like transportation and housing</u> in promoting better education and employment outcomes?	
What kind of <u>data</u> is most useful in planning and strategizing for better education and employment outcomes?	
What elements can be <u>measured</u> so that progress is apparent in the short- and long-term?	
Anything else?	

Appendix Five



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