The Case for Socioeconomically Diverse Magnet Schools in Rochester

Rochester Beacon Education Forum
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Don Pryor, Great Schools for All
About GS4A

• Evidence-based; citizens advocacy coalition
• Community-wide solutions to reduce impact of concentrated poverty
• Support from Raleigh & other communities
• Advocate network of socioeconomically diverse magnet schools

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School
Poverty
Tipping
Point
40-50%
What We Support

• Both/And Approach - Diverse Magnet Schools **PLUS:**
• Strong community/neighborhood schools
• Expanded # of teachers of color
• Extensive focus on staff/administrator/teacher training on structural racism and implicit bias
• Culture change within District
• Diverse, culturally-responsive curriculum
• Restorative justice practices & “relationship approach”;
  Victorious Minds Academy

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What This is NOT

• A proposal for a County School District
• An extension of the Urban-Suburban Program
• Mandatory
Our Core Proposed Model

• Network of evidence-based voluntary cross-district diverse magnet schools
• Collaborative efforts between city and suburban school districts
• Proven model schools offering opportunities not otherwise available
• Significantly improved odds of student success
Research Demonstrates Impact Across the Country

• Research has clearly demonstrated improvement on educational measures and graduation rates in Raleigh, Hartford, Dallas, Cambridge, Louisville, Omaha, going back to national Coleman report 50+ years ago.

• Research also clear: improved problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, ability to work with those with different backgrounds, preparation for 21st century workforce.
Graduation Rates in Raleigh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected Subgroups</th>
<th>2017-18 Graduation Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
<td>94.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>84.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latinx</td>
<td>77.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+ Races</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>78.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graduation Rates in Monroe County – Selected Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School District</th>
<th>% Economically Disadvantaged</th>
<th>Economically Disadvantaged 2017 Graduation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rush-Henrietta</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gates-Chili</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Irondequoit</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brockport</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Components of Diverse Magnet Schools

- Multi-districts, voluntary, roughly 50-50 mix of low and middle-income students from city and suburbs
- Unique public school curriculum not otherwise available (eg, language immersion, leadership, public safety or health careers, environmental science, early college prep, tech development, business/entrepreneurial, occupational/apprentice programs, etc.)
Components of Diverse Magnet Schools (cont’d)

- Cross-cultural learning and experiential opportunities for all students to prepare for diverse society and workforce of the future
- Diverse teaching and administrative staff
- Develop school community of students and parents
- Community partnering organizations (e.g., human services, business, union, medical/health care, arts) to enhance student experience
- Expanded choices for students

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Is There Local Support for Diverse Magnet Schools?

Professional survey of 300 city and 300 suburban parents of current school children:

• 87% indicated they would consider one or more of the magnet schools listed (93% Rochester / 85% Suburbs).

• Almost three quarters (73%) indicated they would consider sending their child to a magnet school outside their home district on a voluntary basis. (83% Rochester / 70% Suburbs).

• Support for voluntary magnet schools, even across district lines, substantial across all subgroups of parents: geographic, racial/ethnic, & income levels.

• A new generation of parents values such diverse expanded options for their children.
What Needs to Happen?

• Recognize RCSD can’t fix its schools alone. Need entire community, including suburbs.
• Need state support from Regents and state legislators: reimbursement formulas; financial incentives; shared staff, resources, facilities.
• Bring districts to table: Create expanded student options - pilot test diverse magnets.
• Turn current crisis into transformational opportunity.
Would Our Approach Work?

- National research clear
- Data from local school districts supportive
- Models in other communities we can build on – Raleigh, Hartford, others
- Local survey data indicate strong support
- Suburban districts willing to talk