

12. EDUCATION

Introduction

Education can be generally defined as a program or programs to develop and promote the training, general knowledge, or academic, technical, and vocational skills and cultural attainments of individuals in a community or other given political area. These programs may be conducted by schools, including preschool activities and child care centers, colleges, universities, schools for the mentally or physically handicapped, educational radio and television stations, libraries, or museums. Public educational programs may include public school systems and supporting facilities such as centralized administrative or service facilities. It is generally recognized that the health and well being of communities is weakened when schools and students don't achieve success. Moreover, successful schools are critical for a strong community, a high quality of life and a robust economy.

Process

Civic Alliance members reviewed public feedback on community issues and then met with or surveyed a number of key stakeholders in the community. After further research and discussion they decided on the following as key issues for this topic area. City staff provided technical support.

Statement 1

There is not a fully shared commitment throughout the community to support the efforts of the South Bend Community School Corporation to achieve a higher level of academic excellence.

Facts and Supporting Information

- “The percentage of voters who say they get personally involved in helping to make their public schools better has declined steadily since 2001.” (Source: 2004 National Survey of Public Opinion, Public Education Network and Education Week)
- Children in persistently poor families are at higher risk for health problems, household discord, learning disabilities, stunted physical development, school failure, and dropping out of school than those in never-poor families. (Source: Arloc Sherman.1997. *Poverty Matters: The Cost of Child Poverty in America*. Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund)
- Although diversity in the classroom can be an asset, it also can present challenges because teachers and students must deal with the social, cultural, and psychological factors inherent in diversity. Responding constructively to diverse backgrounds requires attention, time, knowledge, creativity and flexibility on the part of teachers, students, and administrators; and this challenge grows in proportion to the range of backgrounds among the students in a given classroom or school. (Source: Hoffman, Diane M..1997. *Diversity in practice: Perspectives on concept, context, and policy*. Educational Policy. Vol. 11)
- “Voters say strong parental involvement and leadership from elected officials are key determinants of community commitment to quality public education for all children.” (Source: 2004 National Survey of Public Opinion, Public Education Network and Education Week)
- According to the Indiana Department of Education:
 - 2003-04 enrollment of 21,872 students as compared to state average of 3,439
 - 16.2% of students in year 2000 were from families below the poverty level as compared to the state average of 6.7%
 - 35.2% of students in year 2000 were from single parent families as compared to state average of 27.8%
 - Percentage of minority students in 2003-04 was 53.6% as compared to the 20.2% state average
 - Indiana ranks 14th in the production of college graduates.
 - 71.2% of 02-03 yr SBCSC students graduated; state average 91.2%, PHM at 87.4% and Mishawaka @ 93.4%
 - SBCSC graduation rates trended generally upward from 1987 through 1998, then generally downward from 1999 to 2002
 - SBCSC graduation rate is 297th out of 319 in Indiana; includes all school types
 - SBCSC ranks #65 of 297 public school districts in State for General Fund per Pupil expenses compared to Mishawaka School City @#66 and Penn Harris Madison @#215
 - 46.9% of 2002-03 students were eligible for free lunch as compared to a state average of 25.1%
- There is limited recognition and support for community educators

Strengths and Opportunities

- 6% of SBCSC Students were in Gifted and Talented programs in 2003
- Parent Teacher Organizations in every SBCSC school
- School Improvement Committee at each SBCSC school that includes parents, administration and community representatives who provide oversight for plan implementation for that school
- Project Respect
- 21st Century Scholars Program (state Student Assistance Commission of Indiana) - opportunity to help a greater number of eligible students enroll in the program, and to keep more currently enrolled students involved.)
- School Resource Officers
- Parent Volunteers/aids in schools
- Existing SBCSC collaboration
- Business community involvement through mentoring, internships and funding
- Improved SBCSC image in local media

- All SBCSC Schools accredited through Indiana Department of Education; all high schools accredited through North Central Accreditation Association
- Community involvement in Plan Z
- Many community programs such as: Children’s Dispensary, YMCA Urban Youth Services
- Corporation Teacher of the Year recognition
- Programs supporting academic achievement for students such as :
 - Robinson Community Learning Center
 - Neighborhood Partnership Centers after school programs
 - Weed & Seed Safe Haven Youth programs
 - Upward Bound
 - Charles Martin Center
 - Leadership Academy
 - Locally funded scholarships

Benefits of Addressing the Issue

- Greater opportunities for parent-teacher interaction
- Improved support to assist parents to more effectively raise children
- Improved student performance
- Provide more enrichment opportunities for students
- Higher lifetime earnings for graduates
- Community would collectively establish expectations of youth for responsibility and achievement
- Partnerships result in broader and more expanded programs

Stakeholders

The following stakeholders were consulted:

- Morris Performing Arts Center, Southhold Dance Theater, Firefly Festival
- South Bend Regional Museum of Art, Shakespeare Program University of Notre Dame
- Fischhoff National Chamber Music Association, Jewish Federation
- Saint Mary’s College, Snite Museum University of Notre Dame
- Community Foundation of St. Joseph County
- Schurz Communications, Inc., South Bend Tribune
- South Bend Community School Corporation Administration
- Indiana University South Bend, Ivy Tech State College, Davenport University, Purdue
- Technology, Bethel College, Holy Cross College
- ACE Educational Outreach, Montessori Academy
- Teachers and Principals of South Bend Community School Corporation
- YMCA
- Participants in St. Aldalbert’s Hispanic meeting

General stakeholder reaction:

Stakeholders agreed that affecting pre and school age youth is not solely the school corporation’s responsibility. They noted so many others, individuals and entities, necessary to assist in the resolution of situations facing children. A significant number of stakeholders believe that parents should be more involved in their children’s education.

Statement 2

Many in the community have a negative perception of the South Bend Community School Corporation.

Facts and Supporting Information

- Limited actual personal contact , experiences, or knowledge of SBCSC schools by many in community
 - According to the IN Department of Education:
 - Graduation rate in the SBCSC for 02-03 was 71.2% compared to PHM at 87.4% and Mishawaka @ 93.4%
 - SBCSC graduation rate is 297th out of 319 in Indiana; includes all school types
 - SBCSC SAT scores between 1988-2003 have ranked below the state average
 - 66% of high school students in graduating class of 2002-03 attended college; no state average given
 - 41% of students taking 2003-04 ISTEP passed both Math and English as compared to a state average of 61%
- 70% of survey respondents disagreed that the perception of the quality of SBCSC is generally positive.

Strengths and Opportunities

- \$47M of planned new construction for facilities (*Source: SBCSC Facility Plan 2004 --2007*)
- Five (5) teachers selected as Indiana Teacher of the Year
- Eighteen (18) teachers have been selected as one of the top ten finalists in the State Teacher of the Year competition.
- Riley and Adams have won national recognition for journalism (Riley Review) and Adams Mock Trial
- National recognition bestowed for the Scripps-Howard Spelling Bee
- Magnet schools K-8 and Magnet Programs in all high schools
- There are a large number of students in extra curricular activities, including but not limited to: athletics, clubs, Student Council, Quiz Bowl, Mock Trial, Poms, Flags, Step etc.
- Upgrading of facilities
- Standardization of curriculum
- Increased fusion of technology
- New student attendance system for high schools
- Test score improvement

Benefits of Addressing the Issue

- A more informed community
- More community is support of SBCSC
- Increased pride in SBCSC among students, staff and the community
- More positive, effective marketing for SBCSC and community

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- YMCA
- Participants in St. Aldabert's Hispanic meeting

General stakeholder reaction:

All stakeholders strongly agreed. However they also recognized or questioned why this occurs given that many could share positive experiences. Stakeholders were split over whether the community is proud of overall student academic achievement. Some stakeholders indicated that in making the transition to this community they were provided negative information through conversation with others. Additionally, stakeholders agreed it seemed that the media provided much of the source of negative information about the SBCSC.

Statement 3

The level of collaboration between institutions, which includes higher education, and the SBCSC is insufficient and limits the community's ability to meet the academic and social needs of our children.

Facts and Supporting Information

- The role of colleges and universities in local K-12 education is typically limited to tutoring programs
- Children in persistently poor families are at higher risk for health problems, household discord, learning disabilities, stunted physical development, school failure, and dropping out of school than those in never-poor families. (Source: Arloc Sherman.1997. *Poverty Matters: The Cost of Child Poverty in America*. Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund)
- Although diversity in the classroom can be an asset, it also can present challenges because teachers and students must deal with the social, cultural, and psychological factors inherent in diversity. Responding constructively to diverse backgrounds requires attention, time, knowledge, creativity and flexibility on the part of teachers, students, and administrators; and this challenge grows in proportion to the range of backgrounds among the students in a given classroom or school. (Source: Hoffman, Diane M..1997. *Diversity in practice: Perspectives on concept, context, and policy*. Educational Policy. Vol. 11)
- South Bend Community School Corporation's 2003-04 ISTEP pass rate and 2002-03 high school graduation rate are both the lowest among school corporations in St. Joseph County (Source: Indiana Department of Education)
- Faculty collaboration is limited resulting in the loss of research opportunities

Strengths and Opportunities

- Existing school system collaborations with many entities
- After school programs funded by City
- Lilly grant for brain drain research
- Internships or links with college students may motivate high school students by showing them a greater range of opportunities.

Benefits of Addressing the Issue

- Children in need will have access to or benefit from services designed to address social and emotional issues.
- Academic achievement is fostered if students' social/emotional stresses are not alleviated.
- Parents and other caregivers will have a vehicle to make connections to needed support services with communication and cooperation between schools and social service agencies.
- Educators across the community will benefit from the professional experiences and knowledge of their colleagues.
- Opportunities for students to advance their academic and/or career preparation through dual credit, internships, and other similar experiences are expanded.

Stakeholders

The following stakeholders were consulted:

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- YMCA
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General stakeholder reaction:

- All stakeholders agreed that while communication and effort occur, the communication needs to be more proactive. Such communication should be for the greater good rather than to benefit a particular organization. Ivy Tech could offer high school credit for vocational education rather than having South Bend Community School Corporation set up its own program and facilities (Source-Ivy Tech)

Statement 4

Young people who are not successful in a traditional high school setting have limited alternative educational options for high school completion.

Facts and Supporting Information

- According to the IN Department of Education
 - Graduation rate in the SBCSC for 02-03 was 71.2% compared to PHM at 87.4% and Mishawaka @ 93.4
 - SBCSC graduation rate is 297th out of 319 in Indiana; includes all school types
 - SBCSC SAT scores between 1988-2003 have ranked below the state average
 - 2.4% of SBCSC students in vocational education: Indiana average is 4.4%
- “Students differ in experience, readiness, interest, intelligences, language, culture, gender and mode of learning.” (Source: *The Differentiated Classroom, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development*)
- “Students who do not graduate from high school likely condemn themselves to a life of poverty.” (Source: *Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement: Research on What Works in Schools: Marzano*)

Strengths and Opportunities

- SBCSC has several alternative education programs including:
 - Dream Team Mentoring Program
 - Adult Education
 - Adult JJC
 - School Age Mothers Program
- Existence of GED programs in community
- SBCSC provides Career and Technical training through hands on experience. Examples are Industrial Cooperative Training (ICT), Cooperative Occupational Family and Consumer Sciences (COFACS), Marketing Advanced, Business Cooperative Experiences, and Health Careers in which high school students get college credit for attending a class at Ivy Tech
- Enrollment in the Career and Technical and Co-Op programs for SBCSC juniors and seniors was:
 - 2004/2005: 549
 - 2003/2004: 568
 - 2002/2003: 624
 - 2001/2002: 545
 - 2000/2001: 573
 - Enrollment for 2004/2005 represents 24% of juniors and seniors.
- Ivy Tech, Davenport, Mackie Brown College

Benefits of Addressing the Issue

- Businesses and the greater community have a skilled labor force
- Non-traditional students are motivated/interested in becoming involved in the community.
- Human capital gain leads to economic gain.

Stakeholders

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General Stakeholder reaction:

Stakeholders agreed there needed to be more creative and alternative options for certain students. The mindset that every student should go to college was no longer valid nor realistic. They thought schools should work more closely with local colleges and businesses to strengthen career education programs

Statement 5

The perception exists that communication and collaboration between the South Bend Community School Corporation and the broader community are insufficient.

Facts and Supporting Information

- Limited proactive communication related to planning for community.
- Lack of communication and planning for physical development can result in increased costs.
- There is no visible, community recognized, partnership between the SBCSC administration/Board and the City administration/Council to guide future efforts.
- No visible, regular lines of communication with school officials on land use planning and development issues.
- An extensive system for internships at local businesses has not been developed

Strengths and Opportunities

- South Bend Police and SBCSC with School Resource Officers.
- City of South Bend and SBCSC with After School Program sites.
- Riley High School Development process.
- Numerous collaborative efforts between the SBCSC and other community entities.
- Community involvement in Plan Z/redistricting process

Benefits of Addressing the Issue

- Greater confidence in SBCSC
- More support for SBCSC
- Positive perception of school corporation administration/board.
- Ongoing collective discussion regarding long term community needs
- Improved financial planning
- More resources to support SBCSC efforts

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General Stakeholder reaction:

Stakeholders indicated they were aware of the perception that the SBCSC was difficult to deal with. Only one stakeholder indicated actual experience with the corporation's reluctance to partner on a particular program.