Schoolcraft Community Schools

Schoolcraft Middle School Mission Statement according to the Student Handbook, “Schoolcraft Middle School will prepare productive, respectful, problem-solvers for their next educational endeavors. We will accomplish this by delivering a challenging, integrated curriculum in a positive environment by a skilled staff.” (p.1).

Collected From The U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 data reports:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic area: Michigan</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>9,339,444</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Population</td>
<td>7,666,434</td>
<td>82.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic area: Kalamazoo County, Michigan</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>236,603</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Population</td>
<td>181,211</td>
<td>89.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fundraising for Schoolcraft:

Need for Education

Schoolcraft Middle School is primarily homogeneous because during school hours, there is limited interaction with people from backgrounds other than their own, both in a socioeconomic and a racial/ethnic capacity. There is no formalized plan to assist in narrowing this experience gap. The diversity program does not become available to students until high school. Awareness and education in diversity needs to be an ongoing experience beginning much younger than high school ages. The students in the middle school have little visible support in recognizing, honoring, and appreciating diversity. Moreover, upon graduating from Schoolcraft Community Schools, these students will enter higher education institutes or the workforce with weak skill set in interacting with others in a diverse globalized environment they will find upon leaving the small community of Schoolcraft.

Lessons learned via community collaboration

Having fifteen parents/guardians who took the time to chaperone the visit to Kalamazoo Valley Museum’s Race Exhibit was an invaluable part of the project. Not only did the adult gain knowledge along with the students as they guided the children through the exhibits, but it also showed the students that this topic is important enough for adults to take time to invest in the students in this regard.

The Schoolcraft Middle School newsletter that is sent home to all parents/guardians noted that this event would not have been possible without the parent/guardian involvement and the community support. There were five teachers who assisted in the project by collaborating in team meetings. These teachers learned that grant writing and project funding is attainable for them to enhance learning within their district. They had never written a grant proposal, and Good Neighbor Grant being a grass-roots effort made the experience simple for them, encouraging future endeavors. There were three parent/guardians who were heavily involved. There were 15 chaperones that shared what a common good is and how it can be a common goal. Four people who are affiliated with WMU realize what their efforts within their communities can do to reach others, creating a ripple effect in the community.

The pre-lesson, students were very open about themselves and their parents. They were given ways to respectfully address biases presented by their parents.

Kalamazoo Community Foundation

“...The Kalamazoo Community Foundation enhances the quality of life for all in the greater Kalamazoo area through community leadership and the stewardship of permanently endowed funds.” (Kalamazoo Community Foundation).

“Some of the most innovative and effective ideas for change emerge from small and informal groups of people within a community. However, these groups may not always be familiar with the methods of obtaining funds to turn ideas into reality. Together/Kalamazoo reaches out to individuals, as well as to small, grassroots neighborhood groups through its Good Neighbor Grants program to support their efforts on behalf of the community. Good Neighbor Grants place resources for change in the hands of those closest to the issues that need to be addressed.” (Kalamazoo Community Foundation).

Everyone Counts Learning Community

Posters: Everyone Counts Learning Community as a resource to build a furthered awareness and understanding to the history of race and racism in our own lives. The powerful impact of this experience can be seen in some of the reflections shared by Westminster Youth and their leaders two months after they visited the exhibit.

The RACE exhibit explores three themes: the everyday experience of race, the contemporary challenges and common ideas about race, and the history of the idea of race in the United States.” (Race Initiative of Southwest Michigan).

Mary Anderson also had an opportunity to support a group of youth visiting the RACE exhibit during her participation in the Everyone Counts Learning Community. Mary is a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church where she often helps out with youth activities. When she learned the Youth Group leaders were considering taking the middle school and high school youth to see the RACE exhibit, she volunteered to assist in coordinating this important learning experience.

Fifteen middle school and high school youth were accompanied to the Exhibit by 5 adult leaders. Although some of the youth had also visited the exhibit with school, they were interested and engaged in learning. After visiting the exhibit, the youth and their leaders met with Demonica Gardner and 3 youth facilitators from Voices United Ms. Gardner and the youth facilitators helped the Westminster Youth and their leaders talk about their experiences at the exhibit and think more about experiences of race and racism in their own lives.

During the pre-lesson, the Westminster Youth and Westminster Adult Leaders talk about their experiences at the exhibit and think more about experiences of race and racism in their own lives. Having fifteen parents/guardians who took the time to chaperone the visit to Kalamazoo Valley Museum’s Race Exhibit was an invaluable part of the project. Not only did the adult gain knowledge along with the students as they guided the children through the exhibits, but it also showed the students that this topic is important enough for adults to take time to invest in the students in this regard.

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