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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

In the Matter of:)
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 MEETING OF)
 THE WISCONSIN ADVISORY COMMITTEE)
 TO THE)
 U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS)

Pages: 1 through 87

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 THE WISCONSIN ADVISORY COMMITTEE)
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Room 140 - 141
 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
 2300 N. Martin Luther King Drive
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Wednesday,
 May 23, 1990

The meeting in the above-entitled matter commenced
 at 9:45 a.m.

Members Present:

JAMES L. BAUGHMAN, Chairperson
 GREG SQUIRES
 CANDICE OWLEY
 KIM SHANKMAN
 JASSIT MINHAS
 RUTH BAUMAN
 GERRY MCFADDEN
 FEDERICO ZARAGOZA

Present:

FARELLA E. ROBINSON

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MR. BAUGHMAN: This meeting of the Wisconsin Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights shall come to order. My name is James L. Baughman, of Madison, and I am the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee.

I would ask that my committee members identify themselves and where they live legally, beginning with Professor Squires.

MR. SQUIRES: My name is Greg Squires. I live in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

MS. OWLEY: Candice Owley, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

MS. SHANKMAN: Kim Shankman, Ripon, Wisconsin.

MR. MINHAS: Jassit Minhas, Hayward, Wisconsin.

MS. BAUMAN: Ruth Bauman, Oconto Falls, Wisconsin.

MS. McFADDEN: Gerry McFadden, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

MR. ZARAGOZA: Federico Zaragoza, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

MR. BAUGHMAN: With us today, too, is Farella E. Robinson of the Civil Rights Commission's Regional Office in Kansas City. We are here to conduct a community forum for the purpose of gathering information on the impact of school desegregation upon minority students in the Milwaukee public schools.

1 We have an open period late this morning, from
2 11:25 to 12:00 p.m., where we will take open statements.
3 Anyone wishing to make a statement during that period should
4 contact Ms. Robinson for scheduling. Written statements may
5 be submitted to the Committee members or staff here today or
6 by mail to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Ms. Robin-
7 son or Ms. Daniels outside will have the address for you.

8 Reminder that some of the statements that are made
9 this morning may be controversial. We want to ensure that
10 all invited guests do not defame or degrade any person or
11 organization. There is more, but I read the whole thing
12 yesterday morning and will spare you.

13 In any case, we will begin our testimony this
14 morning with Ms. Susan Phillips, Executive Director of the
15 Greater Milwaukee Education Trust. Ms. Phillips, thank you
16 for joining us.

17 MS. PHILLIPS: You're welcome. When I talked to
18 Faye, I guess I am really also here as a school board member
19 from Shorewood in the District, that has been a strong par-
20 ticipant in the 220 Program, and was a research associate
21 with the Governor's Study Commission that studied the
22 quality of education in Milwaukee in the 23 school districts
23 around Milwaukee. So I am kind of wearing a couple of hats.
24 I think I am probably safest speaking for myself, and some

1 of the remarks certainly will pertain to my role as Director
2 of the Trust.

3 I think to begin with, I think it is important to
4 state that Milwaukee has come a long ways. I have been here
5 eight years and involved with the schools as it relates to
6 integration, but we have a very, very long ways to go. I
7 think there are many things that we have accomplished in the
8 years since we began to integrate our schools that we want
9 to be very careful to protect as we move into the 21st
10 century. I think integration, though, can never be simplis-
11 tically seen as just a mixing of our black, brown and white
12 students. I say that because I think integration must go
13 beyond our schools, and that is going to be one of the
14 themes that I am going to talk about today and what kind of
15 impact that has had on school integration, with the lack of
16 a great willingness to integrate our community as well.

17 Integration has worked very well in many of our
18 schools, but it only works well when there is a total com-
19 mitment on the part of staff, students and parents to ensure
20 that students view themselves as equal human beings.
21 Examples of such efforts in specific schools and school
22 districts have been cited recently in the wake of growing
23 racial confrontations between black and white students as
24 proof that the effort does pay off and does pay big divi-
25 dends. Recognition that real integration of our students

1 requires promoting and understanding of our differences,
2 promoting positive behaviors, eliminating negative
3 behaviors, starting early -- and I really stress the
4 starting early -- and including parents in the community.
5 Racial understanding takes sensitive people, who can also
6 dispel petty paranoias. I think this is one of the things
7 that where we have integration working, we have a great deal
8 of honesty working as well. I will cite one example, and
9 this has happened in several school districts where it takes
10 a human relation specialist-- someone who really under-
11 stands and then who is trusted by both the students and the
12 staff and the parents-- to really quell some of the concerns
13 that administrators and parents have, even such simplistic
14 concerns as allowing black students to congregate just as
15 their white counterparts do. There is absolutely nothing
16 wrong with that. Why we think we have to break the students
17 up is something that we all need to move ahead and get over
18 with.

19 Somehow we continually forget, though, that the
20 school day is only 6 hours in 24 in a day; 180 days in 365
21 days in a year. That leaves 18 hours a day, at 185 days in
22 a year, for a child's environment to undo some of the posi-
23 tives that may have been learned in school. As you know,
24 sometimes that environment contains powerful prejudices that
25 no one is working to counter: black and white prejudices.

1 Additionally, our integration programs have tended to cause
2 greater socioeconomic segregation that must be countered
3 through greater access, choice and empowering parents with
4 information and how to use it.

5 Milwaukee should continue to support the positive
6 efforts of its schools in the 220 Program. But if Milwaukee
7 does not look beyond our schools to integrate itself, we
8 will continue to make pitifully slow progress. It behooves
9 every public official and every businessman in Milwaukee to
10 be a little more introspective about what their roles should
11 be in the integration of society. As the work place becomes
12 more diverse due to demographics, employers will find them-
13 selves dealing with the same tensions the schools are trying
14 to cope with today. A singular approach to integration
15 through school integration has gotten us moving in the right
16 direction. But until society around our schools changes its
17 mind set or, as the most successfully integrated schools
18 have done, incorporates parents, community and partners in
19 the process, we will only continue to make that incremental
20 progress. It is time for more business partners to get
21 involved because they not only could enhance the goals of
22 cultural and racial understanding and appreciation, but they
23 might learn something in the process. We like to think of
24 our business education partners as being two-way relation-
25 ships. Therefore, where schools have implemented successful

1 programs that take integration beyond tokenism, their meth-
2 odology could be useful to the work place that soon will be
3 racially integrated due to demographics and demand.

4 Recently, U.S. West, a large telecommunications
5 company in 14 western states, instituted a cultural diver-
6 sity program for its employees. In such cases, we might
7 find business again has something positive to share with its
8 school partners. Just as we now are using team building,
9 facilitation, leadership training that the businesses have
10 instituted to share with our school partners, there is no
11 reason that some of that also could not be shared.

12 In 1984, a number of case studies were done in
13 conjunction with the Governor's Commission. A specific and
14 disturbing finding was that racial tension among staffs was
15 high in our schools. Researchers shared this directly with
16 staff and questioned how we could expect students within
17 those schools to successfully integrate themselves when such
18 racial divisions existed amongst the staff. Such tension
19 continues to exist today in our schools, six years later.
20 Some schools have made progress and others have slid further
21 apart. The question must continually be asked of every
22 adult in this community: Do we ask our children to do as we
23 say or do as we do? We cannot forget that actions speak
24 louder than words, especially to young minds. The mixed
25 messages we send our children exacerbate our ability to make

1 progress. The black and white fourth graders who become
2 friends, best friends, cannot go home to the white father,
3 doing a step-and-fetch-it routine as a joke, and the black
4 father blaming every white honkie for his bank account being
5 overdrawn. What messages are those children receiving?

6 Integration works if it goes beyond tokenism and
7 talk, and everyone wants and needs it to work. That means
8 integration must reach beyond schools: to our neighbor-
9 hoods, the work place and our higher education institutions.
10 The best integration is integration that occurs when we
11 empower every student with an education that enables them to
12 access a successful future.

13 Those are really the conclusions of my remarks.
14 Specifically, we talked a little bit about your interest in
15 my opinions about the Chapter 220 Program. I think clearly
16 Chapter 220 does need some work. I am kind of putting on my
17 school board hat at the moment, but I am speaking as an
18 individual, not as someone representing the Shorewood School
19 Board. I think there clearly has to be more equitable
20 distribution of the transportation burden. Maybe there does
21 have to be a temporary one-way integration program working
22 until Dr. Peterkin and the Milwaukee public schools create
23 more seats in specialty schools; and I have difficulty even
24 saying that because I think the integration two ways is very
25 important. But I also think the access issue, and it is a

1 socioeconomic and a racial issue in Milwaukee, is something
2 that we absolutely have to address. Until we increase the
3 number and our quality schools, those schools of choice, it
4 is very difficult to have suburban students coming in and
5 taking those seats of our Milwaukee students. It causes
6 conflict that I think right now we could do without.

7 I think also there has to be an absolute assurance
8 that if there is bonus money in the 220 Program, and of
9 course that is something now that we have for another two or
10 three years, but I think it can be a pack amongst the school
11 districts that it must be used directly on enhancing the
12 integration of minority/non-minority students. At this
13 point, that is not necessarily being done; that is, ensuring
14 that all of our schools have adequate numbers of minority
15 teachers. Maybe that is not just recruiting them, but that
16 is literally creating the "grow your own" programs so that
17 we put up some of that money, even for scholarships, to
18 ensure that if we have minority students in the city or the
19 suburbs who are interested in going on to higher ed to get
20 an education degree, and they come back out, we put the
21 money towards something that pays big dividends for all of
22 us in the end.

23 There has been a lot of talk about vouchers pos-
24 sibly substituting for the Chapter 220 Program. I have been
25 a staunch proponent that really believes that vouchers are

1 no panacea to cure all of our ills. I think most of you
2 woke up and saw the statistics today in our paper of where
3 we are again failing with our Milwaukee public schools. I
4 guess I look at vouchers as certainly no panacea to cure the
5 ills, but I think I am now looking at vouchers in a very
6 different light: not only that it possibly empowers parents
7 with choice-- those parents that we educate to make choices
8 and educate with information-- but I do believe that we
9 probably have a good time period where you would not have
10 much more choice going on than we have today. If you give
11 someone a voucher and they don't know how to use it, they
12 are still going to walk their child to the schools down the
13 street or they are going to put them on the bus to the
14 school that someone tells them their child should attend.
15 But what you would have happening, and this is something
16 that I strongly believe in, is a school-based management.
17 That means that that voucher, be it a voucher for a regular
18 ed child, or a child in poverty-- it should be a little bit
19 more, the amount of money-- or an X ed child-- and of course
20 the amount would have to be incrementally higher as you go
21 from an LD to an EMR child-- but as that child and that
22 parent walk into the school with that amount of money, they
23 are walking into the school with something that empowers the
24 school through school-based management and, more impor-
25 tantly, school-based budgeting, so that the staff decides

1 how best to spend those funds on the best possible education
2 for those students. It is a new twist to kind of looking at
3 all of the choice and voucher discussions right now, but
4 maybe it is the kind of thing that we do need to be looking
5 at, because clearly some of the things that we are doing, as
6 it relates to our students, are not working. Questions?

7 MR. BAUGHMAN: Yes. Thank you very much, Ms.
8 Phillips. Let me start on my left, Federico.

9 MR. ZARAGOZA: Susan, could you give us an update
10 on the status of school-based management initiative and
11 whether you think it is working.

12 MS. PHILLIPS: Painfully slowly. I use those
13 words as it relates to what we are doing with integration,
14 and I would use them more strongly as it relates to school-
15 based management. I think that is probably for a couple of
16 reasons. In fact, one of my staff people just spent two
17 days down in Louisville. They began school-based management
18 the same time we did, three years ago. With enormous lead-
19 ership from their board and their superintendent, they have
20 98 schools participating. After three years, we have 28.
21 We should be getting the numbers this week as to how many
22 are coming on board in the fourth year.

23 There have to be incentives to participate in
24 school-based management. You cannot be asking teachers to
25 take on more responsibility for decision making and more

1 accountability for what they are doing in their schools
2 without having some incentives. I think that is the ability
3 to make personnel decisions; that is the ability to school-
4 base budget, so they decide how best to spend their dollars.
5 That is maybe even having some incentive dollars; and I know
6 Dr. Peterkin has put into the budget an increase. I think
7 it was \$2,000 that the schools had as incentive money. At
8 the moment, the budget contains about \$5,000. I whole-
9 heartedly support that.

10 MR. BAUGHMAN: I am sorry. Can you remind some of
11 us -- maybe I am the only person who does not quite know
12 what school-based management is. You may have given me a
13 definition, but I missed it.

14 MS. PHILLIPS: No, I did not. School-based man-
15 agement is where you push decision making down to the school
16 level, so that rather than schools being directed by central
17 office, the theory is that schools know, and should know,
18 and the staffs within those schools should know, how best to
19 accommodate the learning needs of their students. They take
20 whatever resources they have at hand, be it the staff or the
21 human or financial resources, and they apply those to get
22 the best possible outcomes.

23 MR. BAUGHMAN: Thank you. I am sorry.

24 MS. PHILLIPS: That is all right.

25 MR. BAUGHMAN: Other questions?

1 MR. ZARAGOZA: In the schools where we do have the
2 school-based management programs, has there been an improve-
3 ment in the quality of education? Do we have an update to
4 make some judgments at this point?

5 MS. PHILLIPS: Jose Olivieri and I, and Jose sits
6 on the Trust Board, have both asked for that kind of infor-
7 mation. What we are going to do, since the statistical
8 report just came out, is to actually use that just to see if
9 there is any difference between them; but I think it has to
10 be a far more comprehensive analysis between the schools.
11 My hunch is that you will probably see some improvement in
12 some of the schools. Of the 28, you have some that clearly
13 have moved by leaps and bounds, and others that have really
14 kind of floundered.

15 MR. BAUGHMAN: Questions? Professor Squires.

16 MR. SQUIRES: Susan, I think you make an excellent
17 point about the need to integrate Milwaukee before we can
18 integrate the schools themselves or any other piece of the
19 community. I thought part of an effort to do that is repre-
20 sented by the creation of the Center for Integrated Living
21 as a part of the school settlement. Do you have any
22 thoughts on how well that is working or what could be done
23 to make it work better?

24 MS. PHILLIPS: Well, you are probably aware the
25 position that the Shorewood community did take. I can say

1 this for myself and certainly many of the people that I work
2 with in Shorewood as a school board member and as trustees,
3 that we were disappointed that more of the suburbs were not
4 willing to buy into that piece of the integration program,
5 because we clearly believe-- and I think this is one of the
6 things that has happened in Shorewood and that is why it has
7 gotten the kind of press attention that it has-- that the
8 best kind of integration is complete integration. That is
9 why there are such efforts to reach out to make sure that
10 our parents feel a part of that community, and the best way
11 of doing that is that you have it neighborhood integration.

12 MR. SQUIRES: But that is a different -- you are
13 talking about a voluntary public housing effort launched by
14 the city to try to involve the 25 suburbs. I am talking
15 about -- it is a different program. There were several
16 million dollars set aside by WHEDA for funds to support pro-
17 integration moves, and the Fair Housing Council was given
18 authority to create the Center for Integrated Living to
19 counsel people and --

20 MS. PHILLIPS: Right.

21 MR. SQUIRES: -- do other things. That is about
22 as much as I know about it.

23 MS. PHILLIPS: You are asking what their progress
24 has been?

25 MR. SQUIRES: Yes.

1 MS. PHILLIPS: I am really not sure. I certainly
2 have not read that they have made great progress or at least
3 it has not been reported in the press. I really cannot
4 answer that. It was something that we are certainly suppor-
5 tive of because, again, that moves in the right direction of
6 integrating a whole community and not having it all fall on
7 the backs of our schools. I think that is true all over the
8 country. I mean, unfortunately, what schools are up against
9 these days is being asked to solve all of society's ills.
10 Integration is just one of them. I think we really do
11 forget that school is six hours out of 24 and 180 days out
12 of 365. We all have some other responsibilities as com-
13 munity citizens that we certainly are shirking.

14 MR. BAUGHMAN: Candice.

15 MS. OWLEY: We heard yesterday, from a number of
16 the presenters, a great deal of concern about the sensi-
17 tivity of the teachers, particularly towards the minorities
18 both in -- the white teachers' towards the minorities both
19 in the Milwaukee schools and in the suburban schools. Now
20 you stressed that somewhat, but can you tell us how in
21 Shorewood you try to -- what exactly the program is to try
22 to deal with that, more clearly?

23 MS. PHILLIPS: Well, I will share some of our
24 frustrations and also how we try to solve them, because one
25 of the things that we certainly had hoped for with the

1 creation of the Compact in the last settlement was that we
2 would be getting enormous human resources in support for
3 staff development, professional development, in the human
4 relations area, and because we knew we needed it across the
5 board: for our staff, for our parents, for our students.
6 When we did not get to that, we went on and hired a human
7 relations specialist, who has taken us light-years. I just
8 cannot say enough about this woman and what she has been
9 able to accomplish with all of those counterparts that I am
10 talking about. That could not have happened without enor-
11 mous support from the staff and the recognition of that
12 need, as well as the community. There has been a strong
13 cadre of parents who have wanted to be a part of that and
14 wanted to ensure that integration works. I really do say,
15 and I stressed in my remarks, that I do not think integra-
16 tion can work unless you have everyone wanting it to work,
17 and that takes --

18 MS. OWLEY: So you have particular classes that
19 she puts on, or she is just always available on a --

20 MS. PHILLIPS: She is a full-time staff member.
21 She does put on classes. She works with the students, but
22 she also does a lot of our professional development as well
23 and in the areas of human relations, working with small
24 groups and working with the total staff. That is something
25 that is easier to accomplish in the smaller school district,

1 but I think you can break that down into components in
2 larger school districts as well.

3 MS. OWLEY: How many years have you been involved
4 in the -- has Shorewood been involved?

5 MS. PHILLIPS: Since the beginning: 1976.

6 MS. OWLEY: Seventy-six.

7 MS. PHILLIPS: Our biggest problem is really our
8 space constraints right now, as to how many more students
9 from Milwaukee we can squeeze in. We have found ourselves
10 in the very strange position of our enrollments increasing
11 at the early levels. In fact, a few years ago we were going
12 to close our early childhood centers, which were the kinder-
13 garten centers. Luckily, we did not do that and certainly
14 did not sell them. But right now, with our increasing
15 enrollments and also our desire to increase our number of
16 220 students, the students that we have coming in from
17 Milwaukee, we have had a rub with space, but we have con-
18 tinued to be able to do that.

19 MS. OWLEY: Would you support the random selection
20 of students?

21 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes. That is a personal yes. Our
22 Board has not acted on it yet, but I know there are others
23 on the Board --

24 MS. OWLEY: You do not feel the need to do more
25 screening than that or say people with behavior problems

1 cannot come --

2 MS. PHILLIPS: And that is with the assumption
3 that a child who has really been in very serious trouble
4 would be screened out before they went into that random
5 selection. We do believe in parent choice, though. So we
6 do believe that in that random selection, the 500 parents
7 who choose to send their child to Shorewood would be in the
8 500 that would be randomly selected to attend.

9 The other thing that I -- this is very personal,
10 but I also believe that when we have staff members who are
11 minority, who are working within our district, there should
12 be some preference for their children. I think the whole
13 issue of neighborhoods and ownership of our schools is
14 probably one of the reasons why we have stats like this.
15 Nobody owns the schools anymore. And that is something that
16 we hold rather near and dear to the schools that we have in
17 Shorewood, and I think we really need to concentrate on
18 increasing that ownership in our Milwaukee public schools.
19 When you do not have community, parents of students or staff
20 owning the school, you do not have anything.

21 MS. OWLEY: Thank you.

22 MR. BAUGHMAN: Any other questions? Faye?

23 MS. ROBINSON: Could you sort of give us an over-
24 view of what the GME is, the purpose and how you are funded?

1 MS. PHILLIPS: The Greater Milwaukee Education
2 Trust was created about a year ago February. It was created
3 by the Metropolitan Association of Commerce and the Greater
4 Milwaukee Committee and the Milwaukee public schools and
5 some other funders. It was really created to spur school
6 improvement, attacked as a catalyst to improve student
7 outcomes, bringing both human and financial resources to
8 bear upon the school system to force both bottom-up and top-
9 down change within the system.

10 MS. ROBINSON: Okay. Is it possible that we could
11 get a copy of the staff development plan for the Shorewood
12 school district?

13 MS. PHILLIPS: Sure. Should I send that to you at
14 the --

15 MS. ROBINSON: Yes.

16 MS. PHILLIPS: Okay. I would be happy to do that.

17 MR. BAUGHMAN: Thank you very much.

18 MS. ROBINSON: You're welcome.

19 MR. BAUGHMAN: Andrea Whidbee, are you here?

20 MS. PHILLIPS: I think -- Karen Mietus.

21 MR. BAUGHMAN: It is sort of a punishment for
22 coming in early.

23 MS. MIETUS: I guess I wanted to get a feel of the
24 group. First of all, I would like to just indicate the
25 correct spelling of my name: M-I-E-T-U-S.

1 MR. BAUGHMAN: M-I-E-T-U-S.

2 MS. ROBINSON: That is my mistake.

3 MS. MIETUS: That's okay. I probably should have
4 forwarded it to you earlier on.

5 VOICE: I guess we cannot call it a typo.

6 MS. ROBINSON: No. That was my mistake.

7 MR. BAUGHMAN: On behalf of the Commission and the
8 President, I apologize for that error. Thank you for
9 coming.

10 MS. MIETUS: It is rather common. Our name is
11 somewhat simple, but somewhat misspelled in many instances.

12 MR. BAUGHMAN: You have much in common with
13 millions of Wisconsin residents.

14 MS. MIETUS: This is my second year in office as
15 the Milwaukee City Council of PTA/PTSA President. I shared
16 my letter, as far as attending the forum, with members at
17 one of our committee meetings or our council meetings this
18 last past month. I wanted to get some input from them as to
19 the possible direction that I should present my presentation
20 at the forum today. I guess that the consensus of the
21 group, and so a little back history, is basically the PTA
22 has supported voluntary integration and wanted this to be an
23 effort so that children would have the greatest opportunity
24 for quality education in a peaceful setting, you might say.

1 Due to the changes in our student population over
2 the number of years since '76, the voluntary aspect for many
3 parents has not become voluntary anymore. We have large
4 numbers of school-age children in sections of the city which
5 do not have the adequate schools to necessitate their atten-
6 dance in the local area, and they are basically -- I think
7 it is between 19,000 and 20,000 students that would have to
8 be bused just to accommodate the needs within that area so
9 that they would have a seat in the school.

10 Minority achievement, we feel, has improved in the
11 beginning years; but we also have a concern that there is a
12 gap between minority achievement and non-minority achieve-
13 ment. A number of years back, we expressed our concern and
14 related that through a resolution to our school board. They
15 did address that issue through a task force and some recom-
16 mendations in the area of how to narrow the gap on student
17 achievement. At present, through the new administration,
18 Dr. Peterkin, Dr. McGriff and the school board, there is a
19 consensus that one of the goals, and in many of the docu-
20 ments that I receive when I attend school board meetings, is
21 an emphasis on the school district priorities. The number
22 one priority is increasing student achievement and learning
23 opportunities. We feel that there is that direction, and it
24 is not as fast as some parents would like. Due to the
25 concerns of many parents, I guess we have to realize that

1 institutions, and education is an institution, change is a
2 very slow process. Unfortunately, sometimes too slow.

3 The gap in relation to student achievement, like I
4 said, it has been addressed, and probably addressed within
5 the last year or two more so than previously openly
6 addressed. I think that there is a certain amount of open-
7 ness that has been taking place. There are many initia-
8 tives, as you probably heard previously in relation to
9 school-based management. Parent involvement is a large
10 component of student achievement; and in many instances,
11 parents do not realize it. We try to get the message out
12 that actively involved in your child's education is very
13 important. The foundation of that might be a choice plan or
14 choice to the school that your child would be attending. We
15 do also have a position in relation to choice; and we feel
16 that, yes, children should have an opportunity, with their
17 parents, on choosing the school of their choice, but that
18 that school should be within the public school system. We
19 have, over the years, supported public education and public
20 funds to meet public education's needs, because public
21 education educates all children. We have to work on the
22 needs of all children.

23 We have some specifics that we kind of follow in
24 our guideline in relation to choice. That the community
25 sustains a viable public school system. Parents have the

1 opportunity for involvement in their children's schools.
2 Appropriate and free transportation be provided for students
3 to ensure equity. Specialized schools provide for a fair
4 and equitable selection process. Standards governing school
5 curricula, personnel and student performance provide access
6 to equal opportunities. Adequate and objective information
7 be available to parents so that they can make informed
8 choices.

9 In many instances, parents, when they do make
10 their choice, I feel that a large number of parents still
11 are very supportive of the neighborhood concept. They feel
12 that this is the route for them to go. Many of them cannot
13 go in that direction. We also feel that there should be the
14 greatest amount of opportunity of choice within the public
15 system and that children who wish to go to the suburbs have
16 that opportunity, without constraints, and that children who
17 wish to go to the specialty schools have that opportunity on
18 the most equitable basis.

19 In recent months, there has been quite a bit of
20 talk about the Leap Plan over the new Student Assignment
21 Plan that would be in place in the next couple of years.
22 One of the main areas of concern is that in some instances,
23 it felt that through that process of division, it would be
24 inhibiting the choice for some students. We feel that if
25 there is an equitable way of working out an opportunity for

1 students and parents to have a wide variety of choices on
2 their first application, that this would make many parents
3 feel that their rights are not being inhibited. I know that
4 Dr. Peterkin is working on a revision of that plan, and
5 hopefully there will be an opportunity for a consensus to
6 improve that choice opportunity.

7 What came to mind as I was travelling over here is
8 our definition of quality education. In many instances, and
9 I am not belittling the fact that quality education some-
10 times stems from test scores, I am just saying that
11 possibly, if you would interview parents within a given
12 neighborhood of a school that might be designated to be
13 unsatisfactory, you might have parents that feel that that
14 school is very adequate, maybe even superior, because their
15 child is succeeding. And quality education to an
16 individual, to a parent, to a teacher, is basically how is
17 that individual child within that family functioning.

18 We also have to address that our children do not
19 live in a vacuum, and some of that probably has been men-
20 tioned previously in relation to the needs of our community.
21 We have so many areas of concern: drug and alcohol abuse;
22 teen pregnancy; child abuse in relation to physical, sexual,
23 emotional -- and it goes on and on, the socioeconomic back-
24 ground of the family. These all impact on how the child
25 feels when they come into the school setting. The child who

1 may be working through a divorce within their family cer-
2 tainly is not thinking about math at that time.

3 One of the areas that we feel might be addressing
4 this, and it is in the beginning stages, is cooperative
5 effort between community services and social services and
6 the school system. I brought some of the reports that I
7 have accumulated this last year that I thought might be
8 helpful to the group, and they were basically disseminated
9 through the school board committee reports. The last
10 one, which just came out recently, was the Integrated
11 Pupil/Family Support Services Task Force Report. This is in
12 the initial stages, and it certainly is going to be an
13 effort in which the schools will be working with support
14 services to work out those difficult situations that the
15 child encounters from outside sources so that they can
16 function within the school setting in a, you might say,
17 relieved situation, a comfortable situation, and that they
18 can address education at that point.

19 Not only, let's say, the outside setting, but I
20 think that in relation to -- I might be skipping around, but
21 I would just like to touch on the Chapter 220 Program and
22 our concern in relation to the -- we certainly want that
23 opportunity to continue for minority students. But in
24 relation to the fact that our population, student age popu-
25 lation, is changing over these last ten years, and that a

1 number of seats in relation to those that are available to
2 the white population within the city of Milwaukee, the
3 perspective is that suburban students, white suburban
4 students, are taking away seats from the white students
5 within Milwaukee. Because these are schools which Milwaukee
6 has developed, they feel that they should have a greater
7 opportunity for those seats. Then, of course, with somewhat
8 of a change in relation to possibly the percentages of
9 students attending a given school, they feel that that would
10 even cut down on their availability to be within that school
11 if the 220 stays with that 10 percent available seats within
12 a given school or a grade level.

13 There is also a number of programs that have been
14 in place for some of the inner city schools that have not
15 reached a desegregated status. We feel that those programs
16 are very beneficial. I had an opportunity to visit Palmer
17 School on Monday. One of the reasons I could not come here
18 and hear most of the testimony is I was visiting schools
19 with a national PTA representative for the last two days.
20 We had an opportunity to visit Palmer School. I must relate
21 to the group that when we entered the school, we felt that
22 there was a very warm family atmosphere there. The consen-
23 sus from the PTA president was that everybody is trying to
24 work together for the benefit of the children. There are
25 some initiatives, P-5 high school, that the common idea is

1 that you must have a family atmosphere, and everybody must
2 be working for the benefit of the child. It should be a
3 child/parent-oriented school, one in which everyone feels
4 comfortable and that the student is made to be the focal
5 point of that educational process. It is an IGE school,
6 which is an individually guided education.

7 They also have initiated a high school program,
8 and the opportunity for a teacher and an aide to be in the
9 lower elementary class grade levels to work with the
10 students on a more intense basis.

11 These initiatives must remain, and possibly even be
12 funded, to a higher degree. Early education for our
13 minority students, be they black, hispanic or whatever, is
14 probably very, very important; and I think that a child,
15 when they come to school and they have high expectations, if
16 for some reason they do not succeed-- and I am talking as a
17 parent-- and their self-esteem and their self-concept is
18 diminished, the chances of them succeeding will be dimin-
19 ished also. Children who feel good about themselves and
20 feel like they have accomplished will continue to succeed,
21 and the initiative would be in addressing the needs at the
22 early childhood level.

23 If you have any influence in the federal govern-
24 ment, we also feel that Head Start is extremely beneficial
25 because it involves the parent, actively involves the parent

1 and the child's education. The active involvement of the
2 parent is crucial to the success of the student. We feel
3 that Head Start should be expanded and that Chapter 1 should
4 receive adequate funding.

5 Basically we have, let's say, a need to address
6 all children. We have many children who have exceptional
7 education needs in varied levels of X Ed, and we also have
8 at risk children. But we have an area that does not seem to
9 be addressed: the gray-area child, the child that falls
10 between the cracks because they do not fall into a category
11 in relation to IQ standards. I am not sure how we could
12 address that issue, but I feel that there should be special
13 note or endeavors on possibly making available grants or
14 funding that would initiate programs that address the needs
15 of the gray-area child. Like I say, if they fall between
16 the cracks, eventually they become at risk. At Risk Pro-
17 grams are addressed for the children of a higher age level,
18 and sometimes it is very difficult for that child to regain
19 their self-esteem that they might have lost previously
20 through possible failures. The initiatives, like I say, is
21 an effort for early childhood; adequate equitable funding to
22 address the needs of the student population within that
23 school, be they inter-city school, be they outlying Mil-
24 waukee metropolitan area school, given the student popula-
25 tion to address those needs through funding.

1 I must say that there have been other issues that
2 have come up this last year, like I say, that are just in
3 the working stages and are proceeding to address the needs
4 of the students in innovative ways. One of the last, and I
5 do not think that this has been fully acted upon, but I did
6 notice that Mr. Ken Holt, from Bell, did respond to the Task
7 Force on the African-American Male. Did he also leave a
8 copy of that report with you?

9 MS. ROBINSON: Yes.

10 MR. MIETUS: Yes. At this point, we feel that a
11 variety of programs must be made available. They should be
12 evaluated through their process to see how effective they
13 are. But we have to try innovative ways of educating to
14 these children, and we have to, let's say -- the education
15 process in the past addressed a segment of our population
16 more readily than others. We have to meet the needs of our
17 student population today with the evaluation of schools,
18 specialty schools, neighborhood schools, and how they meet
19 the needs of their children within that school.

20 MR. BAUGHMAN: We would like to leave about five
21 minutes for questions at this point.

22 MS. MIETUS: Okay.

23 MR. BAUGHMAN: When they do that, I would like to
24 ask the committee members if anyone has a question for you.
25 Candice? Ms. Owley?

1 MS. OWLEY: Sorry. I seem to always ask a ques-
2 tion. That is why --

3 MS. MIETUS: That's all right.

4 MS. OWLEY: In this case, I would like to come
5 back to your comments about choice and choice within the
6 system. I guess what I am wondering is, I do not really
7 hear that much discussion in general in other suburban
8 school districts about, well, let's say, in Wauwatosa or in
9 Brown Deer, if parents are screaming for choice. Isn't part
10 of the reason that we talk about it so much in Milwaukee is
11 because there are winning and losing schools, and what we
12 want to choose is the winning schools and avoid the losing
13 schools?

14 MS. MIETUS: I am talking in relation -- basi-
15 cally, our support is for public education. When I say
16 "choice within the system", I mean public education and
17 improvement of public education to serve the needs of all
18 students.

19 MS. OWLEY: But isn't the choice within -- like I
20 would be happy to stay in my school district. In fact, I
21 think it is very difficult when every child on our block
22 goes to a different school. Therefore, the parents do not
23 have one school that they can focus their energies on
24 because each of our kids are in different schools. So one
25 of the things that choice does, of course, is disseminate us

1 so that we do not have enough power in any particular
2 school. But the reason that choice gets -- people do not
3 want to lose that choice --

4 MS. MIETUS: Yes.

5 MS. OWLEY: -- even to go back to a strong com-
6 munity system is because of the sense that there are so many
7 schools that you would not want to choose.

8 MS. MIETUS: I guess I am not really certain as to
9 the focus of your question in relation to --

10 MS. OWLEY: Well, I guess the question is, we
11 spend a lot of energy on choice. We have to expend the
12 energy on improving the quality of all of the schools.

13 MS. MIETUS: I think that choice is just a small
14 component of the start of parent involvement. You know, the
15 start of a child's education and the choice of the school
16 that they attend is a small percentage of that total educa-
17 tional perspective, because not only with having the avail-
18 ability of the choice of the school to go to, without
19 inhibiting that choice tremendously -- at this point, I am
20 talking about the fact that the large majority of, let's
21 say, busing falls on the minority student or the black
22 student. I think that to address that need, the parent must
23 feel that they are adequately informed about the program
24 that their student is best suited for; and through an educa-
25 tional process to the parent in learning style -- you know,

1 the parent really should know the learning style or how
2 their child is -- they have them for the first four or five
3 years. I think that if a parent is informed as to the
4 different programs that are available, what might be
5 best suited for their child, that there could be a direction
6 on -- since they do not have the immediate access to a
7 neighborhood school, they should have the availability to
8 the greatest number of schools to choose from.

9 MS. OWLEY: Well, what do you do at the schools
10 that people do not want to choose? How do you improve
11 those? By just having choice --

12 MS. MIETUS: Oh, that is an ongoing effort. You
13 have to improve the program within each school rather than
14 the sole basis of how a school is succeeding, doing with
15 standardized tests and the choice of that school, because we
16 are just at a population crunch. I do not know if schools
17 aren't being chosen. I mean, there are just limited class-
18 rooms, and that aspect of not choosing a school does not
19 seem to be feasible. Everyone is trying to find available
20 space for the children that come into Milwaukee. After the
21 third Friday, there is a scramble to find room for people
22 who have not been available to the system previously, and we
23 have to find room for them. Basically, at that point, those
24 parents do not have a choice. They just have to take what

1 is available. But you have to work on improving the educa-
2 tion within that school. But it should be more than tests.
3 It should be basically -- I think that there should be some
4 kind of mechanism of -- rather than saying the parents are
5 choosing this school, some kind of mechanism of serving
6 parents within a school as to how they feel that school is
7 adequately meeting the needs of their children. That would
8 be, you know, a very time-consuming, cumbersome endeavor;
9 but I think that at that point, you would actually get a
10 feeling of what the parents feel about that program within
11 that school.

12 Also, they talk about parent empowerment. I think
13 at this stage, in many aspects it is basically words. Some
14 parents have some involvement in SBM schools, site-base
15 management; but that is limited to a number of parents that
16 are on those site-base management councils. If they have
17 some way of getting the message to the larger majority of
18 parents within the school, that should be addressed so that
19 there is more ownership in a school in relation to the
20 parents there. The initiative also has to be from the
21 administrator and the staff on how they make parents feel
22 when they come into the building; how they are received.

23 MR. BAUGHMAN: Ms. Mietus, thank you very much.

24 MS. ROBINSON: I just have one short question.
25 What is the level of participation by minority parents in

1 the PTA here?

2 MS. MIETUS: Oh, I would have to probably -- oh, I
3 could get you a list of the schools that are PTA. PTA is
4 just basically one parent organization within the system,
5 and a number of schools have PTOs, Friends of; they have
6 other types of organizations. But we do not, basically,
7 break it down to levels of ethnic groups. But there are
8 schools, I can tell you, that because they have an ethnic
9 mix within their school, also have an ethnic mix of involve-
10 ment. Longfellow is one of them. It is a bilingual, bicultural
11 school. That was another school that we visited.
12 They have a diverse population that are involved and are
13 becoming more involved. The segment of parent involvement
14 has really diminished over the years, and it just might be
15 from the fact that parents -- there's that distant factor
16 that has to be overcome. But that is, I think, on the
17 upswing recently. We, in the PTA level, have achieved an
18 increase in membership this last year in a number of schools
19 who have decided to become PTA. So there is somewhat of an
20 increase, and there certainly is an increase in minority
21 involvement. But to the extent, I cannot say exactly.

22 MS. ROBINSON: Okay. Did you have some informa-
23 tion to share with us, background materials?

24 MS. MIETUS: I have -- pardon?

25 MS. ROBINSON: Background materials?

1 MS. MIETUS: I just have what I have received --

2 MS. ROBINSON: Oh, okay.

3 MS. MIETUS: -- and I do also have just a brief
4 summary of the letter that we sent to Dr. Peterkin in rela-
5 tion to a student assignment plan and some of the areas that
6 we felt were of concern.

7 MS. ROBINSON: Could I get a copy of that?

8 MS. MIETUS: Yes.

9 MS. ROBINSON: Thank you.

10 MR. BAUGHMAN: Thank you very much, Ms. Mietus.
11 Is Andrea Whidbee here?

12 MS. WHIDBEE: Yes. I am sorry.

13 MR. BAUGHMAN: No, that's okay. We are very glad
14 you came and that is no problem. We just juggled the
15 schedule a little bit.

16 MS. WHIDBEE: The Office of the Ombudsperson. The
17 Chapter 220 Program was established by an out-of-court
18 settlement agreement, signed by Milwaukee public schools, 23
19 metro Milwaukee suburban school districts and the state of
20 Wisconsin, and NACP, as a result of the segregation suit,
21 filed by the Milwaukee public schools. The purpose of the
22 settlement agreement is to improve the quality of education,
23 promote racial and cultural integration and education in the
24 metropolitan school area.

1 In my role as the Ombudsperson, I provide assis-
2 tance to parents and students, and a resolution of problems
3 and concern originating out of the Chapter 220 in the
4 District Student Transfer Program. Since my employment in
5 February of 1989, I have visited all the 23 suburban school
6 districts, interfaced with officials at several levels
7 within the Milwaukee school district. I have, on a regular
8 basis, conferred with parents and students and school dis-
9 trict officials regarding a variety of conflict situations.
10 I have found that seldom there appears to be any process for
11 the resolution of complaints, often perceived to have race-
12 related causes. I have found it necessary to engage in fact
13 finding, often interviewed individuals involved and making
14 recommendations to the parties in conflict. It has been, in
15 my experience over the past year and a half, that there are
16 problems. The school districts do make an attempt to deal
17 with these issues in an equitable manner. I have also
18 engaged in follow-ups with individuals involved to ensure
19 that the promises made by all the parties in conflict are
20 being carried out as discussed. This means that, on
21 occasions, I have to call upon the various managers of the
22 Compact to assist and resolve and process. This may involve
23 the manage of the parent and student services, who has the
24 responsibility for parental involvement and student aware-
25 ness. It also may include in-service and staff members

1 involved in 24 suburban school districts. Now I can kind of
2 break that down for you, exactly what I read to you and what
3 exactly that means.

4 As Ombudsperson, the Chapter 220 Program, basi-
5 cally I am a mediator/arbitrator. With all the 23 suburban
6 school districts, including MPS-- because we do have 1500, I
7 believe, coming in from suburban school districts and maybe
8 like 45, you know, kind of going out into the suburbs-- what
9 I basically do is, once the children arrive and all the
10 paperwork is done, if there is any type of situation that
11 they are experiencing, I am the one, if things cannot be
12 resolved at a built-in level, I am the one that they usually
13 will seek out. That could either be the superintendent,
14 principal, student, parent or teacher. I know that I am
15 here basically to see if there is quality in education. In
16 most of the suburban school districts, it is something new.
17 Some districts have been in the program a little longer than
18 others, but what I have experienced is that there is some
19 concern about the quality of education that their children
20 are receiving. Some districts are making effort to do some-
21 thing with the curricula in terms of how to involve all
22 racial groups that they are now finding themselves con-
23 fronted with -- not so much confronted, but find themselves
24 that they have to deal with; whereas in the past, that was
25 not the case. Finding that there are different learning

1 styles accorded to ethnic groups, and how do we, in an
2 education environment, put that in a setting that everyone
3 can benefit by that.

4 One of the concerns that I get a lot from the
5 parents is that, one, they like the program. They do feel
6 secure about their children participating in the program.
7 It is a voluntary program. One of the things that the
8 parents truly get upset about is the expectation that the
9 districts have of their children in terms of education.
10 Some of the districts feel that the children should know a
11 certain amount of information upon coming into the school
12 district. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

13 When children come in at the K level-- kinder-
14 garten, fourth or fifth year, kindergarten-- that is not too
15 much of a concern there; but the basics, they still have
16 concerns with. NPSs, if I am correct, is now doing screen-
17 ing of the kindergartners going into suburban school dis-
18 tricts to see if they have any EEN need, which is excep-
19 tional Ed needs. Most parents are saying that education is
20 a little more stringent than what their children are used
21 to. The program, as it stands now, parents who have been
22 through the program are saying it is best that the children
23 enter at an earlier level, especially when you get to the
24 junior high school level, when you have hormones raging,
25 identify crises, and then there is education -- and trying

1 to coordinate all of that, with children leaving footprints
2 on the ceiling.

3 What education does, it puts one in the sense of:
4 "Who am I? What am I? Where am I going?" Our school
5 system gives us an identify, lack of, or where we are in the
6 total picture of our society. A lot of parents are begin-
7 ning to notice that in the curricula, there is not anything
8 mentioned about their particular group-- in particular,
9 blacks-- and saying that a lot of the educational things
10 that we have learned in the past are no longer feasible for
11 our children; and they are basically demanding that the
12 districts, not only for their children's sake, but for all
13 children, understand where we, as a race of individuals,
14 have all contributed to society. We will be out in the work
15 force working, and we need to understand who we are and what
16 have we done.

17 A lot of the concerns in terms of education is
18 that, what I hear is, those children cannot learn. Those
19 children are not even interested in education. In reality,
20 that is not true. The conflicts that I have been called in
21 on dealing with education usually stem through behavior and
22 discipline. Those children are not sitting still; those
23 children are leaving footprints on the wall, the ceiling,
24 and swinging from the doors. What is wrong with those
25 children? And having the children, you know, resent being

1 referred to as "those people", and just basically the lan-
2 guage that is being used, and having the academia staff
3 accept the fact that these children do come with who they
4 are, and to accept them at that level and to move beyond
5 that at that point, as opposed to saying, "You're here, and
6 you're going to become a part of who we are."

7 One of the biggest problems that the parents find
8 in even participating in schools is feeling that you do not
9 have a master or a good command of the English language, and
10 for the fear of going into a building and trying to articu-
11 late exactly what the needs of their children are and having
12 them reflect upon their children, so they ought not to go.
13 With the program as it is, and I am the Ombudsperson,
14 usually I am called upon. The parents will discuss what the
15 needs are. It is a lot in the area of education. "We
16 appreciate the education. We would like for our children to
17 stay there. The kids feel that it is just a bit much." The
18 district is saying, "Well, our children can do this. You
19 can also do this." A lot of it has to do with the expecta-
20 tions of the district, expectations of the children, and
21 what society as a whole is dictating to our children.

22 The school system as it was will never be again
23 because we are having a larger population in the global
24 sense of minority children now entering the educational
25 force, whereas the minority teachers are not there. That

1 causes a problem with the children going into the suburban
2 school districts and not having the reinforcement or the
3 understanding of who they are and the different styles of
4 learning that they bring with them. What is going to
5 happen is that, as the universities turn out more
6 middle-class -- this is statistically what I am being
7 told -- more middle-class than upper middle-class teachers
8 who will be white females, your schools will become more
9 browner and your suburban districts will not be as white as
10 they are now. So that is causing for some concern.

11 Some of the districts are putting in place a
12 liaison that can work basically with the children who are
13 220 and children who are also residents. They serve also as
14 a resource person. A lot of the districts are finding
15 out -- in the beginning there were maybe one, two or three,
16 and that is not a problem. When you start talking about 50,
17 100 children coming in, what do we do with them? They
18 perceive it as being a problem. It is only a problem if you
19 look at it as being that. The children are becoming more
20 than willing to learn and able to learn, but it is the
21 perception of the individuals who are doing the teaching
22 that will have an impact on the children. The parents are
23 more than willing to assist their children's education if
24 they knew just exactly what it is that the district is
25 looking for. A lot comes: expectations, self-esteem.

1 Some of the children go into suburban school
2 districts and can match grade level with some of the resi-
3 dent students. That is not a problem. What happens in that
4 instance is that the parents will complain about they are
5 trying to break the children's spirit; that they find the
6 children to be confrontational. You know, if you tell the
7 kid to sit down, be quiet, or they get impatient, you do not
8 call on me, those are the little things that I have come in
9 contact with. Those are the little molehills that turn into
10 huge mountains because when you start talking about, "My
11 child is raising their hand, and you do not answer the
12 child", what message is that giving to the child?

13 A lot of who we are is just that. When you are
14 teaching children and you are standing in front of a class-
15 room, and you are used to a certain population of children,
16 you have a tendency, whether you realize it or not, to kind
17 of lean to one side more than you do to the other. If that
18 child notices that, and they are very good at noticing what
19 is right and what is wrong, and when that teacher is sort
20 of, say, noted for that, he or she usually responds in a not
21 favorable way to the child who has pointed that out to them.
22 So in that sense, it becomes really, really, a detriment;
23 and what the children will usually do is more passive,
24 aggressive: "I won't do anything. He or she is not going
25 to make me do anything."

1 We have a number of children that are in the
2 suburban school districts who, on their Iowa Basics, are
3 unbelievable. They have really succeeded. I mean, they are
4 doing better than some of the resident children there in the
5 district, or as well. But then they call upon me because
6 the children are just sitting there. They will not produce.
7 And that is a concern: why aren't the children, those who
8 can, producing? When I speak with the children, it is
9 basically their self-esteem; feeling isolated within the
10 district and feeling -- one of the other concerns is that
11 when the children who are capable of doing the work and
12 exceeding beyond the expectations of that district, then you
13 are considered an oreo. It is not cool to be intelligent.
14 That is something for white people to do. So there are so
15 many little things that go on within the educational system
16 for the children who are bused in.

17 There have been complaints about children being
18 beat up on the bus, because you try to seminate with that
19 population; and you know where you come from and you have to
20 ride that 45 minutes-- sometimes an hour-- bus ride back to
21 your neighborhood. It can be pretty much of a problem if
22 people are taunting you and just harassing you. So what
23 they have learned to do is not to do anything. The parents,
24 on the other end, are saying, "Well, you know, we sit and we
25 try to talk to the children. Education is the focal point."

1 But to children, school is a social event. "If we happen to
2 learn something, that is good."

3 With the children that are involved in the 220
4 Program, one of the concerns that they have, being that they
5 leave their neighborhood before sun up, in most cases in the
6 winter here in Wisconsin, and come home, and it is 8:00,
7 9:00, 10:00, 11:00 at night, depending on the grade level
8 and the activity the children are involved in, that they do
9 not have that socialization from their neighborhood schools.
10 Excuse me, not neighborhood schools, but from their peers in
11 their neighborhood. So they are kind of isolated in that
12 sense. They are trying to say, "Well, where do I belong?
13 You know, I want to go to this school. I like what the
14 school has to offer, but I don't have any friends." And
15 friends are extremely important, as we know, to teenagers,
16 to children growing up, and having someone to identify and
17 associate with.

18 What some of the school districts have opted to do
19 to bring families and children together for educational
20 purposes is to have what they call "host families." So if a
21 Milwaukee parent cannot attend a parent conference or cannot
22 attend any type of conference that is going on at the
23 school, that host parent would go in that parent's place and
24 would get back with that parent and explain to them what
25 happened. For those of you who are not from this lovely

1 state of Wisconsin, if you hang around long enough, the
2 weather will change; and in those events when the children
3 are bused out and the buses are not able to run, the host
4 family will have that child to spend the night, which in
5 Wisconsin is a very good idea.

6 A lot of things are being done to assist and to
7 promote interracial, cultural and educational experiences of
8 our children. Is there more to be done? Yes. There is
9 much more to be done, but from what I have experienced, we
10 are working on it.

11 MR. BAUGHMAN: Thank you very much. Just for the
12 record, this committee is composed of citizens of the state.

13 MS. WHIDBEE: Okay.

14 MR. BAUGHMAN: Faye is the only Fed.

15 MS. WHIDBEE: Okay.

16 MR. BAUGHMAN: Do whatever she tells you.

17 MS. WHIDBEE: Okay, Faye.

18 MR. BAUGHMAN: The rest of us are state residents.
19 We do this voluntarily. We receive no money.

20 MS. WHIDBEE: Okay.

21 MR. BAUGHMAN: Gerry.

22 MS. McFADDEN: What are the three most frequent
23 conflicts that you mediate from the students' standpoint,
24 from the parents' standpoint, as well as from school person-
25 nel's standpoint?

1 MS. WHIDBEE: And they all run to be the same
2 thing: misunderstanding. The student is saying that: "You
3 are doing this to me because I am black." That is the large
4 majority of the children that I am dealing with. "You are
5 doing this to me because I am black and you are white."
6 Once they get passed me, you know, physically looking at you
7 as being white or I as being black, then we deal with the
8 issue. It is not -- it is like, "Well, maybe I was mis-
9 taken. It's not that." In most cases. Sometimes it is
10 racial, and that is what the children complain about.
11 Children have a keen sense of justice. If that is not given
12 to them, they leave footprints on the ceiling. Someone is
13 going to pay attention to them no matter what it is. The
14 parent is saying that you do not understand my child. In
15 most cases, the parent will opt with the side of the dis-
16 trict, and the child gets upset, because a lot of times the
17 kid is saying things and the parents are not listening.
18 They are not listening to what the kids are saying; only to
19 the way we were raised in-house. We were to respect the
20 authority of the teacher, and we perceived that is what our
21 children should do. It is not the case today. The kid is
22 coming home and saying this and this and this. Only when he
23 gets to the nth degree, then the parent will respond. At
24 that time, the parent comes on to that school official in
25 such a raf -- you know, by that time, the guilt and, "Oh,

1 gee, I wish I had listened" and it is just kind of boiled
2 up. They sometimes will say, "I wish I would be more
3 involved. I should be able to go there." Transportation is
4 the number one issue. "How do I get there?" Especially if
5 your child is attending -- lived in Milwaukee and going to
6 Old Creek -- I mean, the far reaches of Old Creek, like two
7 miles from Racine, there is no bus. I mean, 27th and
8 College is it. You hike the rest of the way. What I have
9 done in those instances is say, "Call the district and say,
10 'Would you please, could you, supply transportation?'"
11 There is an issue, they tell me, with the bus company that
12 the parents are not allowed to ride because of the insurance
13 policy. They read me these rules. What I have done as the
14 Ombudsperson and presented to my oversight committee, which
15 will take it to the CC Council, which oversees this whole
16 operation, is that I requested a budget of \$4,800 for the
17 coming school year to assist parents when they have to do
18 emergency meetings. So they parents say, "My gosh, I'm here
19 for school." If the school calls and you can go down the
20 block, it is like, "Oh, well, no problem." If the school
21 calls and you have something like 12 miles to go, and you
22 have no transportation, that is the concern. That is one of
23 the concerns that the parents have.

24 The concern that the school district has is that
25 trying to understand the population that is coming in. You

1 have resident students who live in some of the suburban
2 districts, and they see the fighting that goes on with the
3 transfer student of the same racial makeup, and they do not
4 understand what is going on. At that point, it is a class
5 situation. The superintendents and the school principals
6 that I have spoken with, you know, they are concerned about
7 the internal fighting that the blacks do. They do not
8 understand why these children come to school and they fight.
9 They said they could understand it a little better if it was
10 a white, a black issue, which we were all more or less
11 looking for. But you do not have a lot of that. You have
12 blacks fighting blacks. And they are to the point of pull-
13 ing their hair: "What is this?" It has to do with identity
14 and self, and in turning in on one's self with that respect
15 and feeling isolated.

16 In particular, you are going to have problems with
17 your girls, when they reach that 13, 14, and 15: the
18 clicks, and that "You say, I say". Being suburban school
19 district, we cannot do the pom poms. "We want a drill team
20 because they can't drill." So we come into a lot of the
21 social-aspect concerns. Parents are concerned about how the
22 children are doing socially.

23 I am meeting with a lot of the school districts
24 over the summer, because I work year-round. While the
25 children are out, what we are going to do is look at the

1 year in retrospect and see some of the things we can do.
2 Some of the complaints that I have had, I am writing those
3 particular schools and saying that: "I have time. Can we
4 sit down and discuss some things that we can prevent from
5 happening again next year?" The districts are really amen-
6 able to that. They are more than willing to say, "Okay.
7 Come in." Some of the districts -- with some of the recom-
8 mendations that have been made, they actually have followed
9 up on them. Budget constraints did not, you know, impede
10 that.

11 MS. McFADDEN: Okay. Do you ever get community
12 organization involvement in some of your training, or do you
13 have a tendency to work from a crisis standpoint as opposed
14 to providing an ongoing type of training and support?

15 MS. WHIDBEE: Well, my number one -- you have
16 heard me mention the Compact for Educational Opportunity. I
17 am separate from that.

18 MS. McFADDEN: Okay.

19 MS. WHIDBEE: But I do interface. When I go into
20 a school and there is a problem with a teacher not under-
21 standing this particular student who is black -- Ray
22 McFarlane doe's staff and student services. He has had 25
23 years of experience dealing with racial and cultural
24 instances. Plus he has been a teacher. So he usually
25 handles that. See, the thing is, we are only a staff of

1 one. I am the Ombudsperson, with 23 suburban school dis-
2 tricts, which numbers 6,100 children. It is just I. Ray
3 McFarlane, he is the only one on the staff services. We did
4 have a person by the name of Dr. Linda Stewart, who has gone
5 on to another position, who was doing parents and student
6 services. And that is it for the 23 suburban school dis-
7 tricts. So there is not enough of us to do what we need to
8 do.

9 My focal point is the child. How is the child
10 getting along in the school district? How is the transition
11 going? What are some of the concerns you have about this
12 student? That is where my focal point is. I come in con-
13 tact with the parent by virtue of the fact that that is the
14 child's parent, but my focal point is the child and how the
15 child is doing.

16 MR. BAUGHMAN: Other questions?

17 MS. OWLEY: Yes. I do not know whether it would
18 come from you, but will we have any data on how many chil-
19 dren who participate in the 220 dropped back out? Do you
20 have that kind of information?

21 MS. WHIDBEE: I have that. The only way that I
22 come in contact with that information is that when the
23 parent calls me and says, "I am pulling the kid out."
24 Sometimes when we meet, they say, "Well, maybe this kid is
25 really manipulating me into doing something", because the

1 kid usually does not want to go, and the parent is saying,
2 "Well, you need to go." Some children adjust and say,
3 "Okay. It's not that bad", because they are leaving their
4 friends and their community behind. Once the children get
5 over the fact that they can make it and that there are some
6 achievements, it's no problem. But we do have information
7 on how many children drop out, retentions.

8 MS. OWLEY: Do you have it by school or by com-
9 munity that, for instance, some -- We heard some presenta-
10 tions that gave us little different pictures of different
11 school districts: one presentation that sounded incredibly
12 positive and successful and another one that we were less
13 sure about. Do you have them broken down by --

14 MS. WHIDBEE: I do not, but you can call MPS, the
15 coordinator with 220 Program. Andrew Douglas would have
16 that type of information.

17 MS. OWLEY: So that they could evaluate why one
18 community, perhaps -- why it is working better in one com-
19 munity than another. I just wondered --

20 MS. WHIDBEE: Well, some of the things that have
21 come up -- I guess those of you who are here and live within
22 the city, the Franklin and Oak Creek incident, things like
23 that, when we did go into Franklin to look at it -- and God
24 bless the media: the way that they can portray some of the
25 incidents. It was not all that it appeared to be.

1 MS. ROBINSON: Could you describe what happened?

2 MS. WHIDBEE: What actually happened, it was a
3 boyfriend, girlfriend type of situation. This young man got
4 real amorous with this other young lady, who was really not
5 interested in him; and it stemmed from that. The young man
6 did not do anything. His friends jumped on the other guy.
7 At that point, they thought that perhaps the principal did
8 not discipline enough; that the discipline was not enough.
9 So he suspended the kids. The boy who was beat up said,
10 "Well, that was not good enough. I do not want them to be
11 suspended." He wanted some other action taken. So what he
12 did was get some other friends together, and they got picket
13 signs over the weekend. Now parents knew about it. It was
14 well organized. And they just walked out. It was not a
15 racial issue because the kids were saying they were just
16 tired of the way the discipline was being dealt. The
17 teachers were unhappy with the way the discipline was going.
18 They were told to do this, and the next minute they would do
19 that. And the kids were having a heyday.

20 One day the principal called. The white kids were
21 throwing dice down the hall. The next day the black kids
22 were throwing dice. And they want to see what you are going
23 to do about this. Instead of saying, "No dice" -- well,
24 what they were doing, they said, "We're not throwing dice.
25 We're only throwing one." Now these are the things that

1 they were doing. But what the media did not show was the
2 fact that we had been back three times and asked the
3 parents, resident and nonresident, to sit down and discuss
4 what is -- and the media did not show you the resident
5 parents were saying, "This is not a racial issue; this is
6 something that has been going on before the 220 students had
7 even arrived." This, unfortunately, with them being there,
8 and the other things that were going around socially, they
9 just kind of got drawn in there. The young lady who got
10 knocked down, was knocked unconscious, I think she said, for
11 two or three minutes, was that they were coming in and she
12 was going out. She was just in the wrong place at the wrong
13 time. Although she did receive, I think they said, two or
14 three stitches. She said she was just trying to get out of
15 the way. But in the emotions of everything, that did not
16 seem to come across that way.

17 The parents are concerned about discipline. They
18 said, "Children are not what we were." That is a big com-
19 plaint, I mean district wise, is discipline. "Do the chil-
20 dren own the school? We are there to teach the children.
21 If you continuously say, 'Sit down,' there is no discipline
22 in place." That was one of the greatest concerns. What
23 they actually were saying was that the person in charge was
24 good for his time, but it was changing of the guards. He
25 has been there 30 years and, I mean, there were some good

1 things that he did do. Mr. K did do some good things.
2 Kazinski, I believe his name is. But after 30 years, you
3 know, sometimes you have a tendency to do things the way you
4 were doing them in the past; and like the commercial said,
5 "This is not your father's Oldsmobile."

6 Believe me, these children are challenging. I
7 mean, just in the normal social setting, and I am sure we do
8 the same thing, the way we were raised and those of us who
9 have children try to do our children the same way, they say,
10 "Oh, no, no. That was something back in your day."
11 Although we take the best of what we are and try to imple-
12 ment with our children, and I think those of us who are in
13 the educational business basically do the same thing, what
14 worked 20 years ago with the students does not work today.
15 The kid is so many light-years ahead of, "Yes, I am waiting
16 for you at this next bend." When you think that you have,
17 "Ah, gee, I am right there," he or she has moved another two
18 centuries ahead of you. They constantly keep you on the go.
19 Children are so smart and they are challenging. They are
20 looking for a challenge. So that sends us back to the
21 drawing board.

22 Parents are saying, "Immediately do something."
23 Their children -- in some of the suburban school districts,
24 resident students and resident parents are saying, "Please
25 give us a dress code." In one district, they had this

1 little click; 12-year-old little girls said you could not
2 come into my group because your dad did not make -- your
3 father had to make \$50,000 or more, or else you could not
4 join the group. So when we talk about integration and you
5 talk about education, there is also the social aspect.

6 One of the biggest things that came out of Frank-
7 lin High School, that whole incident, was how do we teach
8 our children social skills in terms of coping, understanding
9 and living with other ethnic groups? That is what came out
10 of it. There was a task force forum, and we are working
11 with them still. There were some individuals from MPS,
12 because we are so small in number one, that they went out
13 and they really got some questions. What happened out of
14 that whole incident was that there were only 68 black stu-
15 dents at Franklin, out of a student body of 800. Out of
16 that 68, they were asked to have representatives to repre-
17 sent them. That was done. Then from the 10 that were
18 represented from the 220 side, those individuals were asked
19 to pick out 10 students that they could get along with real
20 well. Knowing kids, what they did was the opposite. They
21 went down the list and found out the ones on the picket line
22 and found the ones that they really did not like. So for an
23 hour and a half, they had a good, how can I say, sounding
24 board session. After that, it worked out well. The staff
25 liked to fell out. "Oh, gosh. This isn't going to work."

1 They are doing fine. They now have a peer mediation group
2 that has gone in for peer mediation. So it is working. It
3 takes times, but it is working.

4 MR. BAUGHMAN: We need to roll along, but I want
5 to thank you as one of several teachers on this panel. I
6 thank you, too, for what you are doing. It sounds like you
7 are perhaps -- we had a little bit of teacher bashing yes-
8 terday, and I had a feeling that every teacher in Milwaukee
9 and all the surrounding communities were members of a clan.
10 It is kind of nice to hear somebody saying it is a little
11 bit more than that.

12 MS. WHIDBEE: It is a little bit more than that;
13 and when the frustration level gets up to here, you know,
14 you would be surprised how we feel. Then we got to get it
15 out. Then, "Okay, we're human. Let's sit down and talk."

16 MR. BAUGHMAN: Thank you so much. I hope you get
17 help.

18 MS. WHIDBEE: We only have two and a half more
19 years for the program.

20 MR. BAUGHMAN: Well, anyway, thanks again.

21 MS. WHIDBEE: You're welcome.

22 MR. BAUGHMAN: Our next witness, and I am sure I
23 am going to mispronounce your name, sir, is Chia Thao.
24 Would you like to come sit forward? Sir, if you would
25 pronounce your name one more time so we do not mall it.

1 MR. THAO: Okay. My name is Chia Thao. I am the
2 Director at the Hmong/American Friendship Association.

3 MR. BAUGHMAN: Welcome.

4 MR. THAO: Thank you. Thank you for the oppor-
5 tunity being invited to share with you today. I believe
6 that I am broken English, so if you do not understand me,
7 please feel free to stop. I will repeat it again.

8 What you may be hearing from me may be different
9 because the traditional or because the cultural, whatever,
10 through my own perspective, on Milwaukee public school and
11 also Chapter 220. I believe that the refugee committee,
12 most of the parent who come to this country is totally
13 different than the American parents who grow up in this
14 country. I will say 80 percent of them do not read and
15 write any languages. Even their own language, they cannot
16 read and write because they have no formal education in
17 their country. In Laos, we do not have education until
18 1920. So after the French colony came to Laos, then the
19 school were established at that time. After the French, the
20 American CIA came to Laos, and they helped to establish
21 school, -- school or hospital for the Laotian population;
22 and we learned from that time. So when they come to this
23 country, they do not read and write their own languages.
24 They are eager to go to school, not just the children, but
25 including the parents.

1 In our school system, we believe that the children
2 would learn everything from school because they trust the
3 teacher. They say teacher is responsible for teaching
4 children, and the parent responsible to have enough food, to
5 have enough clothing or money to buy school supply. So
6 education would be responsible from teacher. That is what
7 they think in their own system. But in this country, it is
8 different because the school teacher also need the parent to
9 help their children learn. But how can refugee parents help
10 their children? They do not even read and write their own
11 language, so this is the different.

12 For Chapter 220, I believe there is some -- going
13 on in the committee, but the parents do not get the informa-
14 tion because they do not speak English. Teacher aide of
15 school consulted, which is helping the MPS teacher to com-
16 municate with refugee parents; but since we have very, very
17 few person who work during school hour and too many parents
18 that need to know or to learn more about school system in
19 the U.S. And Chapter 220, when a few try go out in the
20 suburb and enter Chapter 220, when they come back home, I
21 heard that they are more happy than they are in the MPS in
22 the local area. They say that if you go out, you will be
23 comfortable to talk to teacher more than in Milwaukee,
24 because in here we have several anti-group who are missed
25 together. The refugee not only from Laos. They are from

1 Vietnam; they are from Cambodia; they are from Thai; and we
2 have several different anti-group.

3 So I believe that the MPS should understand that
4 parent from the refugee committee is different than the
5 parent in this country. This should have someone who inter-
6 pret and who translate between the communication line. All
7 the MPS material should be translated to their own language
8 so those who can read and write can understand the system
9 better. In order to utilize the MPS system or Chapter 220,
10 I believe that the refugee parent is not in a position to be
11 able to utilize those resource because they have a problem
12 with the language barriers. In order to be able to use this
13 resource, MPS should have a bilingual teacher aide or bilin-
14 gual social worker who work closely with the parents.

15 I have identified a few problems that I would like
16 to share with you today: we lack offer life direction and
17 goal; language barrier; discipline; and early marriage;
18 cultural and traditional differences; family structure;
19 refugee children pick up negative lifestyle; alcohol and
20 drug abuse; low self-esteem; and family violence. This will
21 be the problem we are facing the refugee parent today.

22 Outside identify the problem, I will summation
23 some solution for this problem:

24 Mandate for bilingual transitional education for
25 eighth grade and up. If the children start from Head Start,

1 there will be no problem because they catch up the thing
2 with the American fence or children in the summer or grade.
3 But for refugee children who come here or a student who come
4 here, enter age of 15 or 16, they would just put them to
5 eighth grade or ninth grade. They just like death. They
6 learn nothing. And they didn't even have the school --
7 ground, because they left Laos in 1975; and if they stay in
8 the refugee camp in Thailand for more than ten years and
9 they didn't have nowhere to go to school in Thailand.

10 A local elementary and secondary school should be
11 opened after school hour to allow a tutor to work with the
12 refugee student.

13 Increasing quality education between teacher and
14 parents, using a bilingual teacher.

15 Also local health offices and schools should
16 provide more public information on alcohol and drug for
17 parents and children.

18 Local school district should look for a creative
19 method of evaluating students' progress that do not dis-
20 criminate against low English-proficiency student.

21 Quality cultural-sensitive counseling staff focus-
22 ing on inter-generation conflicts.

23 Open line of communication between all institu-
24 tions.

1 Education workshop program with specific group
2 need. Example like movie or recreational activity.

3 I feel that the refugee students do not have
4 access to any recreation at all. So after school, they stay
5 home. If they cannot stay home, they want to go to the park
6 and play. That is the only alternative they have. There is
7 no recreation of a -- form for those children.

8 I believe that, one, you talk about the 20th
9 century and, the other hand, we talk about the 1st century
10 or even before that. So this is the total different, and
11 this is what I observe. Thank you.

12 MR. BAUGHMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Thao. I
13 want you to know that this committee is very interested in
14 the problems of both here and also in western Wisconsin, and
15 I hope, for the record, that you will regard us as so inter-
16 ested. If there are things that are going on regarding your
17 civil rights or civil liberties that are a concern, that you
18 will feel free to contact me or, more especially, Ms. Robin-
19 son, if you do not already have her address and numbers.
20 But I wanted you to know that for the record.

21 Members of the committee, do you have any ques-
22 tions?

23 MS. OWLEY: Can you just tell us the size of the
24 Hmong population in Milwaukee and in the Milwaukee school
25 system; percentage of students?

1 MR. THAO: You mean the student only or the size
2 of the population?

3 MS. OWLEY: First, the size of the population and
4 then the number of students; and also, did I understand you
5 to say that the feedback you have gotten is that they like
6 the 220 suburban schools better? Is that what you said?

7 MR. THAO: Yes. Well, I think the population of
8 the Hmong refugee here is about 4,000 --

9 MS. OWLEY: Four thousand.

10 MR. THAO: -- individuals. For those students in
11 MPS, I will say 350 to 400 students.

12 MR. BAUGHMAN: Two thousand, sir?

13 MR. THAO: Four thousand.

14 MR. BAUGHMAN: Four thousand.

15 MR. THAO: Yes, the total population. The reason
16 they say they happy with Chapter 220, they say they learn
17 more than they learn in the city or the local. But they
18 just do not know how they can get into Chapter 220.

19 MS. OWLEY: That is because the information is not
20 adequate for them?

21 MR. THAO: Un-hum. And I believe that Chapter 220
22 come up to my mind only last year. So we have been here
23 about ten.

24 MS. OWLEY: And you did not know about it before
25 that.

1 MR. THAO: No.

2 MS. OWLEY: Do you work with that Ombudsperson
3 that was here earlier?

4 MR. THAO: No.

5 MS. OWLEY: The woman that was before you, her
6 purpose is to help the students and then the parents with
7 children participating in 220, regardless of their race.

8 MR. THAO: No.

9 MS. OWLEY: Perhaps you should talk to her some,
10 and she can be of some help.

11 MR. THAO: No, I haven't.

12 MS. OWLEY: How many students are in the suburban
13 220? How many Hmong students are there? It must be small
14 numbers?

15 MR. THAO: Well, I believe it is probably about 20
16 or 30.

17 MR. BAUGHMAN: Other questions?

18 MS. SHANKMAN: Are there any particular districts
19 that the Hmong students prefer over others?

20 MR. THAO: You mean in the MPS?

21 MS. SHANKMAN: No; in the 220 Program. Any par-
22 ticular --

23 MR. THAO: Well, I think they been spread all over
24 the suburb. I believe that the most number will be South

1 Division High School and Washington High School. Those two
2 will be the majority of the Hmong student.

3 MS. OWLEY: Excuse me. Do they have inadequate
4 information, then, about the choice within the school system
5 also? Do they know about the magnet high schools or magnet
6 schools within the system?

7 MR. THAO: I do not think they know because as the
8 committee, we also provide our workshop once a year to
9 invited the staff or to invited high school teacher and
10 middle school teacher to come to talk to them; to tell them
11 how to get into those school. But I believe that not every-
12 one come, because when you sit at the workshop, some, all
13 them, may not be able to come, and only a few of them get
14 those information.

15 MS. OWLEY: And at this point, none of the litera-
16 ture that comes from the school system is in the various
17 languages that the Hmong people speak?

18 MR. THAO: No. Only a few.

19 MS. SHANKMAN: Does the Milwaukee public schools
20 have any adult education, language education programs for
21 Hmong refugee adults?

22 MR. THAO: Yes, they do. They do have for their
23 children; not their adults.

24 MS. SHANKMAN: Oh, not for the adults.

1 MR. THAO: Not for the adult. Adult only from
2 MATC or other site, and ESL only for children.

3 MR. BAUGHMAN: Thank you very much, sir, for
4 coming in again. Oh, sorry.

5 MS. ROBINSON: Could I get a copy of your presen-
6 tation?

7 MR. THAO: Sure.

8 MS. ROBINSON: Okay.

9 MR. BAUGHMAN: Thank you again for coming in.

10 MR. THAO: Okay.

11 MR. BAUGHMAN: We have now reached, two minutes
12 ahead of schedule, the open session. I would invite now any
13 people -- one of our loyal followers, if you would like to
14 come up and identify yourself. If you have a Milwaukee last
15 name, I hope you will spell it for the record.

16 MS. BUBOLZ: I have a daughter I have to get to
17 kindergarten in a few minutes, so I just thought I would go
18 first, if that was all right.

19 MS. ROBINSON: Would you identify yourself for the
20 record --

21 MS. BUBOLZ: Sure.

22 MS. ROBINSON: -- and your address, where you
23 live, that kind of thing.

24 MS. BUBOLZ: My name is Jocelyn Bubolz. I live in
25 Milwaukee, Wisconsin. My address is 6625 W. Fiebrantz

1 Avenue, and I am a city resident. I have a ten-year-old and
2 I have a five-year-old, so I have been involved with the
3 school systems for about that many years. I first was
4 interested in the school system when my daughter was about
5 two or three, when I started to find out what was involved
6 to register in the Milwaukee public schools.

7 I think communication is one of the major problems
8 in the school system. They publish brochures. You have to
9 know who to ask and how to find out about programs. I
10 think, as the gentleman who spoke before me said, having
11 publications in languages, that people need to be able to
12 read them, is an important factor. MPS publishes a publica-
13 tion, I believe it is called "Directions", where it talks
14 about the different elementary schools and the different
15 specialty schools. But I think sometimes you need to have
16 something simpler to introduce people. You have to be able
17 to send something home to residents before their children
18 are in the school system to say: when your child is two,
19 you need to get interested in the school system if you are
20 interested in Montessori education, because by the time your
21 child is three, it will be too late. If you are interested
22 in certain specialty schools, you must register when they
23 are three to start when they are four. Otherwise, it will
24 be too late and you will miss out on the opportunity to

1 participate in that specialty school. So I think communica-
2 tion is a problem.

3 I think that some of the speakers yesterday men-
4 tioned what parents, all parents, really want for their
5 children. They want to have their children welcomed in the
6 schools, and I think this takes the principal and the
7 teachers inviting parents in. It is fine to send home a
8 flier and say "we are having this program"; but what will
9 bring parents in is if they are specifically asked many
10 times. "Won't you come to this meeting and participate with
11 this?" Being invited is important.

12 The way people are treated is important. I was a
13 little concerned because there are about 6,000 teachers in
14 the Milwaukee public schools that I think are members of the
15 MTEA. Of course, I can only speak from my experience. The
16 two schools that my children have attended, I have been very
17 impressed with the principals at those schools; how much
18 they know about the Milwaukee public school system. I can
19 ask them any questions, and they can tell me anything. I
20 have been impressed with the particular teachers; the
21 quality of education they are providing; the way they are
22 treating people; the family environment in the school; and
23 the way the staff and the parents and the teachers work
24 together, I think, is what has made those schools what they
25 are today.

1 I am involved in two of the specialty schools, and
2 I think -- I was not involved when they were first started.
3 When they first started, they are not what they are today.
4 It has taken 10 or 15 years of building to make those
5 schools what they are today.

6 I think one of the problems in the school system
7 today is a morale problem. You have heard mention of Dr.
8 Willie's plan, this Leap Plan. It hit the papers about
9 February 11 of this year. That was the first time that most
10 of the 6,000 teachers and many of the principals heard about
11 this plan, and certainly the first time that most of the
12 parents heard about it. I think that this was backwards. I
13 think they should have been talking to principals and
14 teachers and parents first so that it was not a surprise.
15 Then the reaction had to be: we have got to get involved
16 and we have got to find out about it. There was quite a
17 parent network that sort of evolved. People started going
18 to school board meetings. Hearings were called. You would
19 go to hearings and you would listen to what other people had
20 to say. Then you would go up and say, what is your name and
21 phone number? I would like to talk to you. We found out
22 about each other informally, just by listening to what other
23 parents had to say. I think because of the parent involve-
24 ment, I think that much of the Willie Plan is going to be
25 scrapped because most of the people in the community who

1 have responded, from all different types of groups, have not
2 been pleased with the plan per se. I think it took awhile
3 to do this, but I think that this is perhaps a good thing.
4 There was too much negativism. It was preventing us from
5 moving forward in positive ways.

6 I think that it would be good for the administra-
7 tion to talk with teachers. I think teachers have been
8 asking for things like smaller class sizes for years, and
9 this has been ignored. The paper on Sunday had an article,
10 where it mentioned that that was one thing they were going
11 to work on. Well, I say, finally they are going to work on
12 this, and this is a good thing. Now how can any one teacher
13 teach 35 kids, particularly if they have any disruptive
14 kids? Plus, there is a lot of paperwork. So I think you
15 have to cut down on the paperwork the teachers are involved
16 in. You have to have a way to deal with disruptive students
17 so that one student is not preventing the teacher from
18 teaching the rest of the kids. You have to have smaller
19 class sizes. I think these are very important things. Once
20 you can improve on each school, then I think there will be
21 less problems.

22 If you try to divide up the district; what-
23 ever -- Another of the problems that I saw is the communica-
24 tion problem. You have heard it mentioned in a number of
25 different ways. Last year they divided up the district into

1 what they called "service delivery areas", which were just
2 supposed to be administrative districts; and they formed
3 community advisory councils which were made up of business
4 people and teachers and parents and staff. There was a lot
5 of interest in these councils. But I think the problem has
6 been that these councils have met -- although they have been
7 very heavily involved, the information from these councils
8 has not really gotten out. This was evidenced by the fact
9 that this year, when they were trying to get people to run
10 for these councils, there was a deadline of May 11 if you
11 wanted to participate. Shortly after that deadline, I got a
12 letter home, addressed to the parent of "so and so", and it
13 said, "We did not get enough parents nominated, and we are
14 extending the deadline." I think the reason is because the
15 parents felt that the councils were not either given enough
16 power or enough clout, or were not being listened to, or
17 that possibly the process for choosing this council -- there
18 were problems with the process. So parents thought, "I was
19 burned once, and I am not going to get involved again."

20 I think communication is a problem between the
21 administration and principals and teachers, and also between
22 administration and parents. I know I call the school system
23 and I ask questions, and I get referred around to three
24 people. To give you an example, I asked at the school

1 administration building for a list of each of the six com-
2 munity advisory councils, the members. To this date, I have
3 not been given any of those lists. I was told by a person
4 that this was private information because those lists gave
5 names and phone numbers and addresses. Well, if they exist
6 for parents to give input into the school system, then how
7 are you going to get input if you have no phone numbers to
8 contact people? I was later told by someone higher up that
9 I should have been given this information. It was public
10 information. But to date, I have not been given this infor-
11 mation.

12 So I think that the administration needs to change
13 the perception. They need to encourage at the central
14 administration building, if people ask you questions, give
15 them answers or find out for them. Otherwise, you get the
16 feeling that things are done behind closed doors; and this
17 gives you a very bad feeling about the school system.

18 Another thing that I think has to be done is that
19 there are stated rules about the school system, such as, I
20 was told that all the specialty high schools, once you
21 finished the middle school level, you start the lottery all
22 over again for those; that there are no feeder patterns.
23 But apparently there are hidden practices, and certain
24 schools have fed into certain high schools, or that there
25 has been a neighborhood component for a certain high school.

1 I think everything has got to be really above board. I
2 mean, if there are going to be rules, you do not want them
3 broken or only known to certain people. Let's just put the
4 cards on the table and let everybody know the rules. Then
5 you know what you are up against.

6 One of the things that one of the speakers yester-
7 day talked about was how our magnet schools are inter-
8 nationally known, and certainly nationally known. I think
9 that in some other school districts where they have had
10 magnet schools, they have gradually, over time, added a
11 school here and a school there; and I think, when they
12 introduced this Willie Plan, they talked about sort of
13 dividing the city, which immediately limited access to those
14 schools. They said, "Well, we will just replicate those
15 schools that are popular." Well, you cannot just replicate
16 instantly certain schools. So one of the parent complaints
17 was: improve all the schools, replicate those schools which
18 are very popular first. Then you will not need to draw any
19 sort of line down the city. It will just sort of naturally
20 occur.

21 I think some of the specialty schools would not
22 even be costly to replicate, and I am thinking of an IGE
23 school and I am thinking of the school for the gifted and
24 talented. I think it is a mind set. I think it is a
25 parents, teachers and staff working together. I do not

1 think it involves a lot of equipment at either of those
2 schools, whereas other specialty schools would be hard to
3 replicate: ones that require a lot of, say, extensive
4 computer equipment. So there are certain kinds of schools
5 that could be duplicated, and it would just be a matter of
6 training staff and so forth.

7 I just want to mention a magazine that I just came
8 across recently. It is the Spring 1990 Fortune issue, and
9 the whole issue is devoted to saving our schools. I do not
10 know if you have seen it, but it talks about business and
11 community and teachers working together. Another paper,
12 that is a couple of months old now, is Rethinking Schools.
13 This is published by a number of teachers. I am not sure if
14 they are just Milwaukee public school teachers. It is not a
15 publication of the school system. They wrote an article on
16 the seduction of choice, where they were mentioning a few
17 good points in the Willie Plan, but also mentioning some of
18 the problems. I think it is a very well-written article and
19 has been appreciated by both teachers, principals, the
20 administration and the community. So I think it might be
21 something you would be interested in. I do not have a spare
22 copy. I could try to get you one.

23 MS. ROBINSON: What is the name of the paper?

24 MS. BUBOLZ: OKay. The paper is called Rethinking
25 Schools, and it is the March/April 1990 issue.

1 MS. ROBINSON: Where might I be able get one?

2 MS. BUBOLZ: I have an address: 1001 East Keefe
3 Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212. The phone number I
4 have is (414) 964-9646.

5 MS. ROBINSON: Okay.

6 MS. BUBOLZ: I probably talked sort of scattered,
7 and I only wanted to talk through my experience. I think
8 one of the things about the Leap Plan that people who cri-
9 ticized it, criticized the fact that it talked about the
10 negative aspects of the school system and did not really
11 mention any of the positive aspects. I think there was
12 problems maybe in the structure of the paper itself, in
13 definition of terms and that sort of thing.

14 I am real glad to see that you have been holding
15 hearings here and wish that a lot more of the public would
16 have been able to come out for it.

17 MR. BAUGHMAN: We feel the same way. Do you have
18 time for a couple of questions?

19 MS. BUBOLZ: Sure.

20 MR. BAUGHMAN: Does anyone have a question? Well,
21 thanks for sitting through all of this. We should have had
22 you join us for dinner last night.

23 MS. BUBOLZ: I wish I could have come yesterday
24 afternoon, but I had to work.

1 MS. ROBINSON: What issue is that Fortune maga-
2 zine; what month?

3 MS. BUBOLZ: It is the Spring of 1990.

4 MR. BAUGHMAN: It would not be Spring, though.
5 Fortune does not come out -- they are biweekly.

6 MS. BUBOLZ: This must be a special thing.

7 MR. BAUGHMAN: Do we have anyone else, please?
8 Would you step forward? Welcome.

9 MS. ZUBRENSKY: Hi.

10 MR. BAUGHMAN: Again, we would ask that you tell
11 us your name; but also spell it.

12 MS. ZUBRENSKY: Ruth Zubrensky, 3404 N. Summit;
13 that's the city, Milwaukee, 53211.

14 MR. BAUGHMAN: Welcome.

15 MS. ZUBRENSKY: Thank you. I did not prepare any
16 remarks; I did not even realize I was going to be up here.
17 I am bad enough when I prepare them, so this might be a
18 disaster.

19 I am both a mother whose kids were bused after
20 Judge John Reynold's decision on the Milwaukee schools; and
21 then as a researcher, I worked for two and a half years on
22 the school desegregation case against the suburbs for main-
23 taining all white suburban school districts. I was part of
24 a housing team that studied housing patterns in the suburbs
25 for two and a half years. I do not know if your panel is

1 interested in this subject. I do not know if that is one of
2 the charges. It is? There is an awful lot to be said about
3 that.

4 MR. BAUGHMAN: About the housing --

5 MS. ZUBRENSKY: About the housing component.

6 MR. BAUGHMAN: Or mandates. That is very broad.

7 MS. ZUBRENSKY: Okay. Well, just right off, there
8 are about 50 boxes of materials, research materials: all of
9 the official records of all the suburbs we have gone
10 through; all of the community newspapers we have gone
11 through; how housing was handled in the suburbs from the
12 early '50s on. We have profiles of every suburb and their
13 histories. I think, personally, this is very important;
14 this whole integration of the suburbs as part of the whole
15 220 Program. I know that Andrew Douglas and others, and now
16 the Center for Integrated Living -- are you all familiar
17 with the Center for Integrated Living -- has been trying to
18 work with Chapter 220 parents.

19 I am very desirous of seeing greater integration
20 of the suburbs -- and the absolute insult that was handed to
21 the Department of City Development of the Milwaukee City
22 Hall. After asking 24 suburbs if they would take one or two
23 low-income housing units, only Shorewood said they would.
24 That repeats a pattern that has gone way back in the 1970s.
25 Doyne, the then county executive, allocated a million

1 dollars to have developers -- it would write down the land
2 that the county owned in the suburbs, and the developers
3 would get a break. They would then have to guarantee a
4 certain amount to lower-income people and modest-income
5 people. That was a complete disaster back in 1970.

6 Then there was the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional
7 Planning Commission that was a conduit for HUD monies. They
8 were allocating a certain amount of low and modest income
9 housing as goals for different clusters of suburbs. That
10 was rather disastrous. None of the suburbs felt they had to
11 pay any attention to sewer pack.

12 The Inner-Governmental Cooperation Committee had a
13 long series of recommendations: how suburbs could start the
14 process of gaining developers who would have a housing
15 component that would house lower and modest-income resi-
16 dents. That again failed disastrously. Wauwatosa turned
17 down a million dollars in community development block grant
18 funds so that they would not have to build maybe 10 or 12
19 low and modest-income housing units.

20 West Allis was supposed to build twenty-five 235
21 houses. When it was found out that it was a black devel-
22 oper, ultimately that whole project went down the drain; and
23 that same area went for condominiums. Greenfield has the
24 most condominiums in the state of Wisconsin, and they all
25 excluded children from 16. Now we have a new federal

1 housing act -- that is something very important -- will be
2 added now in terms of those communities.

3 But looking it over, the state had a role that was
4 not the greatest; the city, the county. What can I say?
5 There is just a tremendous amount of evidence that all
6 levels of government were not brave enough to come out and
7 force the issue.

8 Today I, myself, think there are good people out
9 in the suburbs. There are church groups. There are well-
10 meaning people. I think one of the things that has to be
11 done somewhere, some monies have to be found to organize
12 groups and help face their histories out in the suburbs, and
13 what has occurred, and why it is so lily white, and what
14 this Berlin wall -- all these suburbs have these walls in
15 terms of lot sizes and zoning requirements and two-car
16 garages. And it is sort of a strange twist of history. I
17 suppose the north-tier suburbs are more liberal in a sense
18 of not resenting or feeling so threatened, but their homes
19 are so big and expensive, it is impossible. Whereas the
20 southern-tier suburbs have a good complement of fairly low
21 and middle-income housing; but because working people lived
22 out there and did not have those resources, but they are by
23 and large much less receptive to integration. So it is
24 still a tremendous job, I think, here for a county area.

1 I do have some newspaper articles. When the
2 desegregation lawsuit was tried in front of Judge Curran, we
3 had two housing experts that were trying to feed in all of
4 this research that had been done. This is the newspaper
5 coverage showing the kinds of restrictive covenants that
6 were still on the books and some of the other devices that
7 suburbs used. I will hand this over to you. But, again, I
8 am hoping that somewhere along the line we can write up the
9 experiences of that team that worked on that school desegre-
10 gation lawsuit and write it up for popular consumption so
11 people can see also on the education end of it.

12 Now we have a situation where all of the super-
13 intendents in the area have come out for a multi-racial
14 school system. The superintendents are by and large good
15 people that can be worked with. I think that we just have
16 not been able to fill in the institutional gaps: who is
17 responsible and how to make an effort to try to integrate,
18 because I think that would help, of course, somewhat the
19 whole problem of busing and not being unnatural out there in
20 the school, and feeling so different, being called "220
21 kids", and having all of the problems that you have heard
22 described.

23 I do think another serious problem, that I am sure
24 Dr. Peterkin addressed, was this problem: whites moving out
25 of the suburbs and having a certain number of seats reserved

1 back in the specialty schools so that they can then come
2 back in and get into those specialty schools around that
3 way, which just defeats everybody's purpose absolutely.

4 I think that the Chapter 220 has helped some kids
5 learn how to deal in an interracial world, and I hope it has
6 taught some whites how to deal in an interracial world. I
7 think it is a very two-way street, and it cannot always be
8 the burden on the minority community.

9 MS. ROBINSON: I would like to say that your
10 presentation is very timely, because since going through
11 this whole day-and-a-half forum, I am deliberating on doing
12 a chapter on housing patterns and residential segregation as
13 a way of background to show how that has impact on some of
14 the educational problems.

15 MS. ZUBRENSKY: I would love to work with you on
16 that.

17 MS. ROBINSON: So if you could give me your tele-
18 phone number, I would certainly appreciate it.

19 MS. ZUBRENSKY: I would love to work with you. I
20 think that would be very, very good. I happen to have a
21 whole newspaper clipping. I have just clipped every article
22 back really from the '70s. I can show you the whole news-
23 paper coverage of the issue. In fact, I have a Journal
24 article showing that from 1980 to 1987, only 180 minorities

1 moved to the suburbs, out of a population of 150 million
2 -- I mean, 150 thousand. I mean, it is bad.

3 MR. BAUGHMAN: Professor Squires has a question.

4 MR. SQUIRES: How would you assess the Center for
5 Integrated Living up until now?

6 MS. ZUBRENSKY: Well, I think that it has done a
7 wonderful job. It is so needed. It is something that is
8 going to have to be around for a long time. That is another
9 question that your committee might have to look into or help
10 make recommendations. It has only been three years, just
11 like the Ombudsperson has only been for three years. It is
12 already running out of money. It already does not have the
13 staff that it needs. WHEDA, in its loan program, is going
14 to be running out. New negotiations will have to be made
15 with WHEDA for more long-term, low-interest loans for those
16 who will make pro-integrative moves. I think it has to be
17 expanded; not contracted. I hate to see it go out of busi-
18 ness, and yet it is slated to go out of business after this
19 school desegregation time runs out.

20 MS. OWLEY: Do you have other recommendations that
21 you would make, Ruth, in terms of specific to the housing of
22 things that you think need to be done?

23 MS. ZUBRENSKY: Well, the whole zoning issue has
24 to be looked into somehow, because it is just always the
25 same. It is always the big homes -- now \$700,000 homes. I

1 personally would like to see, like we have environmental
2 impact statements, I would like to see some kind of a popu-
3 lation impact statement, where every developer would have to
4 account to some kind of standards of admitting a certain
5 variety of residents in their developments. I think it is
6 just incredible --

7 MS. OWLEY: Would that be in the suburban --

8 MS. ZUBRENSKY: Everywhere.

9 MS. OWLEY: I mean, you could actually develop
10 -- through the zoning, you could actually write something
11 like that. At least I would be familiar somewhat with
12 Milwaukee that we put in a lot of strange things into zoning
13 so that when people come in and want variances or whatever,
14 there are certain things they have to meet. So you would
15 think perhaps something in Milwaukee and in the suburbs?

16 MS. ZUBRENSKY: Maybe it would be worth looking
17 into.

18 MR. SQUIRES: There are cities that have
19 inclusionary zoning requirements, where developers have to
20 build a certain number of low or middle-income housing units
21 if they are to get permits to do the housing project they
22 want.

23 MS. ZUBRENSKY: That is the ticket, I think.

24 MR. SQUIRES: Boston is a place that might be
25 worth looking at in terms of that.

1 MR. BAUGHMAN: San Francisco does that, too;
2 doesn't it?

3 MR. SQUIRES: Yes. I think so.

4 MS. ZUBRENSKY: Let's see, what else. Well, as I
5 say, I came unprepared, but I will think about it. If there
6 is any help that I can be or any service, I would be so glad
7 to.

8 MS. ROBINSON: I have one question. Have there
9 actually been any minority families that have been helped to
10 move into the suburbs and vice versa as a result of that
11 portion of the settlement agreement?

12 MS. ZUBRENSKY: The Center for Integrated Living.
13 Yes.

14 MS. ROBINSON: And they have, in fact --

15 MS. ZUBRENSKY: Yes, yes. For instance, they
16 polled all Chapter 220 families to see if any of them are
17 interested; and I am sure they have helped some. I do not
18 know the exact record, but I am sure that they have.

19 MS. OWLEY: Maybe we could get that from them;
20 that information.

21 MS. ROBINSON: Yes. Yes, that is what I intend.

22 MS. ZUBRENSKY: That reminded me of the fact, too,
23 that there is a little incipient, that maybe you have heard
24 from some of the MPS officials, to work with principals who
25 have integrated schools now to try to interest the parents

1 and those kids who are bused in to locate in those neighbor-
2 hoods that serve that school, or the school serves the
3 neighborhoods. I know I spoke to one black principal of the
4 Southside Elementary School, and I said, "Well, why don't .
5 you move in down here?" She was quite hesitant to even
6 consider it. It is still a problem. Milwaukee is a very,
7 very tough nut to crack. You just do not feel comfortable
8 everywhere. And we have plenty more white neighborhoods in
9 Milwaukee that need to be broken down as well as the
10 suburbs, too.

11 MR. BAUGHMAN: Any more questions? Ms. Zubrensky,
12 thank you very much.

13 MS. ZUBRENSKY: Thank you.

14 MR. BAUGHMAN: We only have about seven minutes.

15 MS. MIETUS: When we were talking about, let's
16 say, teachers and staff, and how they relate, when the
17 integration process was first initiated, there was a large
18 contingent in relation to human relations in-service for
19 teachers and in-service for intercultural activities for the
20 children. Now I think that it is sort of left up to the
21 individual school how they address it. Since we are going
22 to have a large population of new teachers coming in, and if
23 they have not had a course on urban education or how to deal
24 with -- how to address the needs of an urban child, there

1 probably should be a consideration of an ongoing type of in-
2 service or human relations for staff and for students,
3 besides MPSs addressing multi-cultural K through 12 cur-
4 riculum. But that is going to be a long ongoing process
5 before that is really in place to the fullest benefit for
6 the students; and also access to the schools before and
7 after school, as the gentleman from the Hmong community
8 related, a way of implementing the buildings to help parents
9 learn about working with their children. Some schools, as I
10 said, with Palmer, they have done it on an individual basis.
11 They have a facility in-house where they have materials that
12 are on loan so that they can let the parents use them as
13 means of helping develop skills in your child: games and so
14 on and so forth. So if there would be something that could
15 be done on a broader scope, that might be helpful, too.
16 Thank you.

17 MR. BAUGHMAN: Thank you very much. This meeting
18 is adjourned.

19 (Whereupon, at 11:55 a.m., the meeting was
20 adjourned.)

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

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DOCKET NO.:

CASE TITLE: Meeting of the Wisconsin Advisory Committee
to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

HEARING DATE: May 23, 1990

LOCATION: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence
are contained fully and accurately on the tapes and notes
reported by me at the hearing in the above case before the
U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

Date: 5/23/90

Kathleen A. Meyers
Official Reporter

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