

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN AN URBAN CHARTER SCHOOL

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Eric M. Bowles, M.Ed.

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN AN URBAN CHARTER SCHOOL

Name: Bowles, Eric M.

APPROVED BY:

James L. Olive, Ph.D.
Committee Chair

Pamela C. Young, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Bobbie K. Fiori, Ph.D.
Committee Member

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN AN URBAN CHARTER SCHOOL

Name: Bowles, Eric M.
University of Dayton

Advisor: Dr. James L. Olive

The study examines the problem of practice of community engagement in urban charter schools. Charter schools often do not have the same access to resources or the amount of funding that traditional public schools receive. Creating partnerships with external community stakeholders is a tool that organizations can use to fill in the gap created by the inequality of funding. Part of developing community partners is increasing community engagement with the organization. Community engagement can create multiple types of supports for the students. Engaging the community and involving external stakeholders provides the organization with insight into what outcomes the community wants for the students, providing a range of voices and opportunities for the students. The study provides an action plan to create and sustain community engagement in an urban charter school and provides a framework other organizations can model.

Dedicated to all those who believe in me and to those who do not.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTATIONS

TCS

The Charles School

CHAPTER ONE: PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

Statement of the Problem

Topic

The Charles School (TCS) is a small charter school in Columbus, Ohio that has traditionally struggled with community engagement that has been beneficial for both the organization and the community. While multiple versions of community engagement have been attempted, sustainable results have not come to fruition. The organization and the community need a system of community engagement in place to provide the supports that all stakeholders need to be successful.

Problem of Practice

Schools are constantly under pressure to provide comprehensive services to schools and their communities with minimal resources. The current twin pandemics of COVID-19 and continued oppression of marginalized groups spotlight the growing inequities within the United States' education system. For charter schools to survive, they are required to find other avenues to support their most precious stakeholders, the students. One of the typically underused resources for charter schools is the community. The community can and does provide a wealth of supports and resources that can assist a school in being successful (Kladifko, 2013; Tarantino, 2017). The purpose of the study is to identify opportunities to improve community engagement at The Charles School.

Justification of the Problem

The Charles School has a distinct mission and vision statement that clearly define what the goal and direction of the organization is. The mission and vision were developed over the course of the 2017-2018 academic school year by a group of faculty members

and administrators in order to provide multiple voices for the direction of the organization. The mission statement of TCS is as follows:

“The mission of TCS is to provide a diverse population of Ohio’s high school students access to, and support for, an immersive and successful college experience while completing rigorous high school coursework and preparing for careers.” (The Charles School, 2020)

The vision statement of TCS is as follows:

“TCS pursues excellence by providing a safe and innovative learning environment that cultivates a growth mindset and supports social and emotional learning, while bridging the transition to post-secondary aspirations.” (The Charles School, 2020)

The organization’s ability to meet the needs of the students and fulfill its mission and vision is dependent on providing the supports to meet the needs of the students. The organization cannot fulfill its promise without the aid and engagement of the community.

The organization is entering its fourteenth year and is still in the infancy stage of fostering and growing partnerships with outside stakeholders. Providing multiple avenues of supports for the students in their academic journey could prove to make the program even more successful. To do so, it is important to meet the first objective, creating partnerships within the academic year, especially with the changing environment of academia with the current COVID-19 crisis.

Creating partnerships with external community stakeholders is not enough. Part of developing community partners is increasing community engagement with the organization. The second objective, increasing community engagement, will hopefully create multiple types of supports for the students. Engaging the community and involving

external stakeholders will also provide the organization with insight into what outcomes the community wants for the students, providing a range of voices and opportunities for the students.

Deficiencies in the Organizational Knowledge Record

Community engagement creates a system of accountability in which the entire community is invested in the growth and the development of the students which is in line with The Charles School mission and vision statement. Community engagement allows for the community to have a voice in the social capital produced by the school (Stefanski, Valli, & Jacobson, 2016). Strong community engagement will also create supports to fight the social injustices that the diverse population of The Charles School often face (Warren & Glass, 2019). Community engagement decreases the equity gap and encourages both academic success and social growth in students (McIntosh & Curry, 2020).

While there is substantial knowledge on what is known, a gap still exists with the current twin pandemics of COVID-19 and the racial injustices that continue in the United States. In Ohio, schools were forced to close with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in March of 2020 (Ludlow, 2020). The nation has also faced a second pandemic with the current political and social strife. People of color are facing ever increasing discrimination, as well as institutional and systemic racism, which has been brought to the forefront of national attention with the violence against people of color at the hands of local police departments (Jones, 2020; Countess & Minter, 2020). How are schools supposed to provide both the social-emotional supports for all stakeholders, especially students, in such unprecedented times? How do schools fulfill their responsibility to both

the community and students to create equitable educational opportunities while allowing for the voice of all those invested to be heard? These questions are urgent with the past and current climate of the world and the intention of the study is to address these issues.

The Charles School has not kept sufficient records when it pertains to community engagement. Efforts to engage the community have been limited with only a recent surge to engage the community. The school demonstrates community engagement with activities such as open houses, multicultural nights, and a food truck. The activities have provided opportunities for the community to engage with the internal stakeholders however they have not fostered the relationships needed to create long-term partnerships needed to meet the organizational goals of community engagement. It was not until recently, with the hiring of a community outreach liaison, that The Charles School has taken the idea of community engagement seriously. This school year, the organization has hosted produce drives and monthly Panther Power Hours however it is not nearly enough to meet the needs of our stakeholders. It is a solid step in the right direction but there is a substantial amount of work that needs to be continued to reach the two organizational goals of:

1. Create relationships with external community stakeholders to assist in creating culturally responsive academic and nonacademic outcomes for the students.
2. Increase community engagement at The Charles School by 10% within one academic school year.

Audience

The stakeholder groups that stand to benefit from the study are educators, students, community leaders, and other academic organizations. Educators will benefit

because students are receiving the supports, they need to be successful in the classroom. Students will benefit because they are receiving supports that help their growth both academically and nonacademically by participating in activities such as service projects. The program will also provide a voice to community leaders, allowing them to help shape the next generation of emerging community leaders. Finally, other academic organizations will benefit because they will have a model of community engagement to follow.

Overview of Theoretical Framework/Methods/Research Question(s)

The study will draw upon the funds of knowledge theoretical framework to inform the study (Saathoff, 2015). It is the belief that the students and their families have various funds of knowledge that we can gather from to develop community engagement that is inclusive of everyone (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018).

The study will use exploratory mixed-methods approach which will use quantitative methods to inform the qualitative methods (Mertler, 2020). The study will first use quantitative methods in the form of a community engagement tool to explore the problem of practice at The Charles School. Second, the study will use qualitative methods in the form of interviews to provide an in-depth perspective to the problem of practice (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

This action research seeks to address the deficit in community engagement at The Charles School. The following research questions will guide the study:

1. What systems can be put into place to ensure students receive the academic and nonacademic supports to be successful in The Charles School's early college program?

2. How can The Charles School increase community engagement that is both beneficial to the internal and external stakeholders?

To better understand the research questions, it is important to understand the various groups of stakeholders. Internal stakeholders consist of include administrators, teachers, and the student body. External stakeholders consist of parents and community leaders.

Limitations

The study is intended to provide a plan of action for The Charles School to embark upon a system of community engagement. While there are goals associated with the study, it is unreasonable to expect the study to completely revamp and create a system which will be a cure to the larger inequities that exist within The Charles School and the stakeholders throughout the community. The questions and goals require a multitude of stakeholders to “buy-in” to be successful and resistance to change is always a limitation. The study is a first step in providing framework for the school to continue its growth with the community.

The study is limited by the scope and the timeframe in which the study will be conducted. It is not intended to provide a solution to the problem of community engagement in other organizations however it is possible that it will provide a guide on how to approach the problem.

Review of Related Literature

Frameworks Informing the Study

This study will draw upon the funds of knowledge theoretical framework (Saathoff, 2015). The Charles School and the surrounding community is extremely diverse, and it is important to take a framework that is asset based which recognizes and

utilizes the strengths of the community (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018). The idea of the funds of knowledge will also lend voice to multiple stakeholders not allowing the dominant culture to be the only voice heard; allowing for more inclusivity in the steps taken to achieving the goals set forth (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018).

To be successful in creating a system of community engagement, the organization needs to understand the complexities of the surrounding community and build upon the cultural knowledge they have (Roe, 2019). Schools that have diverse populations, as seen in The Charles School, need to draw upon the framework of the funds of knowledge to maximize the effectiveness of community engagement. To do so, stakeholders such as the faculty, students, and community need to understand who they are and the culture and environment that has shaped them (Dainel & Burgen, 2019). Saathoff (2015) states, when considering the funds of knowledge that “notion can further be applied to viewing communities through the same lens as vibrant and resourceful.” By using the funds of knowledge, it allows the research to take an asset-based approach as opposed a deficit mindset (Hogg, 2016).

Related Research

The literature review will examine the definition of community engagement, community engagement versus community involvement, and what constitutes a culturally responsive outcome for our students. Examining the literature lays a foundation as to what direction the research needs to take to improve community engagement at The Charles School. The importance of understanding what community engagement means and how it improves outcomes that benefit the students goes to the purpose of the research and the problem of practice.

Definition of Community Engagement

Multiple definitions of community engagement exist. Organizations tend to define what engagement is and what constitutes as engagement. There is also a discussion about what constitutes community engagement versus community involvement. One definition that stands out comes from O'Connor and Daniello (2019) in which they state: "a case of educational partnership involving interactions and relationships between a school personnel member (typically a teacher, administrator, or staff member) and/or students in a school setting and a community member or organization working towards academic or nonacademic outcomes" (p. 298). Other definitions espoused within the literature review discusses the need of being culturally responsive in the actions of community engagement which is imperative (Stefanski, Valli, & Jacobson, 2016).

Engaging the community in being a voice in the school helps build lasting and trusting relationships which bolster student learning. The process needs to be collaborative between both the community and the school (Daniel, 2017). The purpose of engagement is to allow for both the development of the organization, the students, and the community through fostering relationships between multiple stakeholders. The idea also puts the school at the center of the community and allows for the growth of human capital both in and outside the school (Casto, 2016). For the purpose of this paper, a merger of both definitions will be used and will consider community engagement to be the relationships with external stakeholders resulting in partnerships that foster both academic and nonacademic outcomes.

Community Engagement Versus Community Involvement

Often when people discuss community engagement, they only mean community involvement. The definition of engagement, for the purposes of this study, is relationships with external stakeholders resulting in partnerships that foster both academic and nonacademic outcomes that are culturally responsive. Sometimes people presume that involvement is actual engagement however involvement might just be the act of attending a school event or a parent being a bystander, which is not to be considered actual, authentic engagement (Stefanski, Valli, & Jacobson, 2016). Often, traditional methods of community or parental involvement have not met the needs of the community, or the students as opposed to engagement which provides inclusive discourse and is not passive in nature such as just sitting through a presentation or a meeting (Auerbach, 2009; Berryman, Ford, Nevin, & Soohoo, 2015). While it has been proven that involvement might lead to more favorable outcomes, it is the wide range of definitions of what involvement is that leaves too many things open to interpretation as compared to community engagement (Pavlakis, 2018).

Community engagement requires active interaction between the community and the organization involved, it is not just a passive interaction (Weiss & Norris, 2019). The idea of engagement also requires for both inquiry and action between the internal and external stakeholders; both groups are responsible and dependent on the outcomes (Weiss & Norris, 2019). Engagement also means that a culturally responsive transaction between both the internal and external stakeholders must occur (Mcintosh & Curry, 2020). Early community engagement and intervention can help those populations who are underserved and marginalized by creating systems to serve those who need it the most

(Altmayer & DuBransky, 2019). For example, community organizations need to actively be involved in creating supports which are beneficial to their own organizations as well as those of the students creating social capital (Mcintosh & Curry, 2020).

The social capital provided to the community is a direct result of culturally responsive community engagement. It has been proven that community engagement results in favorable outcomes when the proper supports are put into place (Epstein & Sanders, 2006). The outcomes are particularly favorable when the most important of stakeholders, the students, play a role in creating community engagement opportunities and have a voice that directly involve their own futures (Hands, Youth perspectives on community collaboration in education: Are students' innovative developers, active participants, or passive observers of collaborative activities? 2014). Community partnerships require the flexibility that a student's voice can lend. Student's voice is another key in creating meaningful engagement and participation by the community (Hands, It's who you know "and" what you know: The process of creating partnerships between schools and communities, 2005).

Another result of community engagement as opposed to community involvement is the sense of place for the students and the community alike. Focusing on centering the school at the center of the community can result in voice for the whole community when it comes to the desired positive outcomes for the school and the future of the community (Casto, 2016; Daniel, 2017). Community engagement versus traditional community involvement is one of the paths to influence and strengthen the educational system as a whole (Krumm & Curry, 2017). There is a clear distinction between community involvement and community engagement.

Culturally Responsive Outcomes

Culture is at the heart of any organization. It is what defines the direction of an organization. Culture particularly influences how a school interacts with the community, its students, faculty, and the community (Colbert, 2010). Due to the diverse make-up of the student body, creating the necessary supports for the students at The Charles School must be culturally responsive to create equitable academic outcomes. The community supports created from the partnerships in which the community engagement occurs needs to be similar culturally to that of the makeup of the student body (Mcintosh & Curry, 2020). At The Charles School, the faculty and staff do not reflect the diversity and socioeconomic background of the students which can result in students not having their cultural needs met which in turn will affect both academic and nonacademic outcomes (Mcintosh & Curry, 2020). Students need an experience that is culturally relevant to their situation and their intended learning outcomes (Hur & Sur, 2018). The problem requires inclusive and culturally responsive practices with community engagement to provide supports for the students (Berryman, Ford, Nevin, & Soohoo, 2015).

A part of culturally responsive community engagement is students having a sense of belonging. The Charles School is extremely diverse with the various ethnic backgrounds, gender identities, sexual orientations, and race. With the vast range of backgrounds and identities, students must be able to feel a sense of belonging. The sense of belonging must also be extended to the community. It is inherent that community engagement is culturally responsive for all the stakeholders, and everyone has a voice and feels involved. Part of that involvement is using community engagement to remove any barriers for students, especially those that are cultural in nature. For instance, community

engagement needs to remove barriers such as language, communication, and socioeconomic. Students and the community cannot be engaged if they do not have a sense of belonging (Bamford & Pollard, 2018).

Often, the families of those most marginalized and underserved students also need strong socio-educational supports. The circumstances of families often, are passed on to the students who might not receive the same traditional supports at home as evident in the dominant culture (Ahmad & Awang, 2016). That is not to say that these families do not contribute to the success of the student. The funds of knowledge framework allow those families to provide their cultural knowledge and assets to the growing expanse of community within the school organization (Ahmad & Awang, 2016; Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018).

The problem is seen with the Latinx population at The Charles School who are often neglected in opportunities for community engagement. Community engagement must meet the needs of each group or family of The Charles School and can be done so by understanding the funds of knowledge framework; ensuring each group's voice is distinctive and heard with a voice of inclusion and equity (Black & Cantalini-Williams, 2017; Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018). The entire community, internal and external stakeholders, with the variety of diverse backgrounds, are more likely to provide the support and the resources the students require and be culturally responsive (Stefanski, Valli, & Jacobson, 2016). Schools need to understand the growing diversity within their communities and the school systems, especially in an urban setting to allow for culturally responsive community engagement (Krumm & Curry, 2017).

Understanding the power dynamics involved between the community and the organization will also aid in creating equitable and culturally responsive supports for the students (Tarantino, 2017; Leo, Wilcox, & Lawson, 2019). The school and the partnerships must engage in power sharing to create a shared vision of what those supports, and outcomes should be for the students (O'Connor & Daniello, 2019). Often it is a complicated dance that must occur to ensure that the relationships for community engagement are mutually beneficial, but it must be for the best possible outcomes for the students (O'Connor & Daniello, 2019; Tarantino, 2017). All the stakeholders involved should benefit from the partnership. Both the community and the school must understand that community engagement does not mean only the school benefits; benefits must be seen all the way around for community partners to remain engaged (Gross, et al., 2015).

Community engagement is imperative for lasting connections for schools to be successful, especially when schools are constantly fighting for resources. Community engagement is also one of the most underutilized tools that school administrators pursue and considered an opportunity missed (Kladifko, 2013). While community engagement is underutilized, it is a collaborative tool that can result in high-impact outcomes and can be used to connect both the classroom and the school (Hutson, 2019). Engagement with the community not only will support the academic outcomes of students but it can also lead to many non-academic outcomes that include a sense of civic responsibility, social justice, and show growth in socioemotional learning (O'Connor & Daniello, 2019; Tarantino, 2017).

Action Research Design and Methods

The lack of community engagement at The Charles School occurs in an educational setting which is one of the hallmarks of action research (Efron & Ravid, 2020). Conducting action research on the problem of practice is meant to engage in a systematic and reflective study to improve the academic and nonacademic outcomes for the students at The Charles School (Efron & Ravid, 2020). The process needs to be reflective in nature to ensure the findings and the plan of action align and provide the best possible outcomes for all stakeholders at The Charles School. Hendrick's Action Research Process allows the researcher to examine a problem of practice and create solutions through a cyclical process of constant improvement (Putman & Rock, 2018). Using the cycle allows the researcher to examine the problem of the lack of culturally responsive community engagement and provides a method to constantly reflect on the findings to create attainable solutions (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Action research allows the implementation of the data and any findings within the organization to address a local problem within the scope of the researcher, to create and implement solutions (Efron & Ravid, 2020; Mertler, 2020). Community engagement is a participatory problem that has plagued the school in recent years. The solutions will require action and resides with the practitioners within the school and the external stakeholders. To create a viable solution, it will take an immense amount of collaboration and action from all stakeholders, which is a key component of action research (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The research will be conducted through the method of action research and a mixed-methods design.

Exploratory Mixed-Methods Design

The action research approach entailed a mixed-methods design to facilitate multiple approaches of data collection. I initially used quantitative methods to explore the on-going deficit of culturally responsive community engagement at The Charles School. The quantitative methods come in the form of several surveys such as The Community Engagement Tool and a Community Engagement Survey to create a baseline of descriptive statistics to inform the qualitative data collected through the interview process and focus groups. (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Stelar, n.d.; Cruz, Manchanda, Firestone, & Rodl, 2020; Community Engagement Tool, 2018) The qualitative method followed in the form of a case study to elicit multiple perspectives of the complexity of the problems that persist with community engagement at the site selected (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). Qualitative methods followed the quantitative methods to provide further explanation of the phenomenon (Mertler, 2020). It is my belief that choosing either just a qualitative or a quantitative design would not provide the necessary data to understand the complexity of the problem (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Building from one method to the other will provide a greater view of the depth of the problem to create more substantial solutions (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Site Selection

The Charles School is a small urban public charter school in Columbus, Ohio. The school has 346 students. The demographic makeup of the school's student body is 50% African American, 13% Hispanic, 12% Caucasian, 2% multiracial, and 2% Asian/American Indian (The Charles School 2018-19 Annual Report to the Community, 2019). The school has 24 classroom teachers, two intervention specialists, one English as

a second language coordinator, and three administrators (deans) (The Charles School 2018-19 Annual Report to the Community, 2019).

Table 1

<i>Faculty at The Charles School</i>							
Variable	Male	Female	Non-Binary	Black	Latin x	Pacific-Islander	White
Gender	6	17	1				
Race				1	3	1	19

Note: Demographics data as of May 1, 2021

The school straddles the Brentnell and Linden area of Columbus, Ohio. The area is economically depressed and lacks many resources seen in other areas of Columbus. The school lacks partnerships from external stakeholders from around the community. Several issues such as the school being an urban charter and the location within an economically depressed area has played a role in the lack of available partnerships. The site provides a location that allows the research to answer the two research questions:

1. What systems can be put into place to ensure students receive the academic and nonacademic supports to be successful in The Charles School's early college program?
2. How can The Charles School increase community engagement that is both beneficial to the internal and external stakeholders?

Researcher Role and Positionality

Access

I currently serve several roles with The Charles School. First, I am the most senior member of the social studies department. I currently teach United States history. I also lead the social studies team in decision making with course assignments and curriculum. At the school, I also serve on the school's leadership team which consists of several leaders within the school that oversee organizational policy. Finally, I am the equity and inclusion instructional coach. I conduct a monthly professional development series that consists of equity, diversity, inclusion, and cultural proficiency. I perform several roles within the organization including decision making.

To gain access to the organization and the participants, I conducted discussions with the three lead administrators concerning the action research. I have been allotted access to any information needed with the agreement of anonymity. My positionality allows me access to much of the information needed to complete the action research. No specific procedures are required to obtain the needed information.

Stakeholders play an essential role in accomplishing the goals of the action research. First the internal stakeholders are integral to the research. Key internal stakeholders include administrators, teachers, and the student body. Each of the internal stakeholders play a role in the success of creating community partnerships to help provide both culturally responsive academic and nonacademic outcomes. Administrators and teachers help foster community partnerships with community leaders who can assist in accomplishing the school's mission and vision. The students, the most important

stakeholder, gain access to the community partnerships that will help them grow and obtain their goals.

The community at large are the external stakeholders. The key external stakeholders are the parents who will play a role in fostering relationships within the community. Parents need to be empowered with their voice throughout the decision-making process, to help determine what community engagement consist of at The Charles School. The second key external stakeholders are the community leaders. Community leaders within the Brentnell community need to be identified and involved in creating community partnerships at The Charles School. To truly become a community school with solid community engagement, external stakeholders must be engaged.

I am a leader within The Charles School and have influence over many of the decision-making processes, especially as a member of the leadership team. It is important that I understand my positionality within the organization to ensure that I am not overinfluencing the process. I acted in a leadership capacity during the process. In doing so, I need to constantly reflect on my decisions and examine how they influence others' decisions and the outcomes of the action research. I maintained an electronic journal in which I will reflect on my decision-making process and my positionality in relation to the research on a weekly basis (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Hesse-Biber, 2017).

I filled the role of a full participant throughout the process. My voice will still be heard throughout the process; however, it must not be the only voice. I kept accurate record of the process to mitigate any undue influence. Again, this process will take place through weekly journaling and reflection. My positionality puts me in a trusted position within the organization. Reciprocity in the process will consist of the organization and

the participants gaining more extensive community engagement while I gain access and research through their participation in the study.

I am currently in my fifth year at The Charles School and have seen many changes throughout my tenure. The organization has seen two deans and 26 teachers depart since the beginning of my tenure. The turnover has established a culture of uncertainty and a lack of organizational knowledge. With four years at the school, I am considered a senior member of the staff. All these facts create a potential bias for a lack of surety with the leadership and a lack of cohesiveness with the staff. The 2020-2021 school year is the first year since I began with the organization, that we returned the entirety of our staff.

To mitigate any potential bias, I constantly referred to the organization's mission and vision statement and understand that the goal is creating a system of community engagement that benefits the students. I also need to understand that any missteps that took place before are not the fault of the current staff. The current staff is starting to become a cohesive unit that is beginning to buy-in into the organization and the organizational goals.

Ethical and Political Considerations

Collaboration with The Charles School was on equal grounds. Both the researcher and the organization benefitted from the research study. Both the researcher and the organization benefitted from a program of community engagement that created positive outcomes for the students. Students played a role in the research as their voice on the types of community engagement, is unparalleled. Parental permission was required before a student under the age of majority can participate. The parents received

an informed consent form approved by the school for their students to participate (See Appendix A). Students also received an informed consent form to participate in the study (See Appendix A). In addition, students were provided an opportunity to understand their role in the research and how it affected them. There were several family information sessions to inform both the parent and the student.

Power dynamics between the researcher and the organization did not play a role because of the positionality and the shared model of leadership used by the organization. The researcher is a member of the organization and is equally invested in the success of the program. Both groups are striving for success of the program. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed for all participants. Pseudonyms were used for all participants. Authorship is that of the researcher while the information and results were shared with the key stakeholders.

Data Collection

Quantitative

The quantitative portion of the data collection process consisted of descriptive methods using The Community Engagement Tool (See Appendix B) which is a rubric type of assessment and the Community Engagement Survey (See Appendix C) which is a Likert scaled assessment that examines the amount, effectiveness, and purpose of the community engagement (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The goal is to gain insight into effectiveness of community engagement within the organization through the lens of several key stakeholders. The questions are answered through subsections of the question that range on a five-point scale. The answers range from “Unsure what we are doing” to “Doing CE (community engagement)” on the community engagement tool (Community

Engagement Tool, 2018). The Community Engagement Survey uses a five-point scale that ranges from “Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The stakeholders that received the engagement tools were parents, faculty, and staff. The idea is to reach as many stakeholders as possible to gain their perspective on community engagement at The Charles School. The participants will be required to complete an acknowledgement of consent, through a consent form, when they respond to the instrument. The instrument will be emailed in a Google Form to the stakeholders along with a consent form and be asked to return both within one weeks’ time. A follow-up reminder message was sent two weeks after initial distribution.

Qualitative

This exploratory mixed-methods design action research used qualitative methods in the form of a case study exploring the on-going deficit of community engagement at The Charles School (Mertler, 2020). The qualitative method proceeded in the form of a case study to elicit multiple perspectives of the complexity of the problems that persist with community engagement at the site selected (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). Three initial semi-structured interviews (See Appendix C) were conducted with two teachers, one intervention specialist, and one student involved with the organization. The first teacher has been at The Charles School since 2012 minus a one-year sabbatical with another program. They have held the role of social studies teacher and several faculty advisor roles. The second interviewee is a teacher at The Charles School. They are directly involved with the Early College Program and works directly with the students who enter their college journey during their junior year. They have taught at The Charles School since 2021 and is a member of the school’s cultural team. The third interviewee is

the lead of the intervention specialist department and started with the organization in 2017. The fourth interviewee is a fifth-year senior at The Charles School. They are involved in events at the school and are regular participants in school activities. The interviews were conducted via Zoom, recorded and the transcript from the recording was used for data analysis. The goal of the first interview was to build repertoire. A second semi-structured interview (See Appendix C) took place with the four stakeholders on the same platform with the intent to gain an insight of why community engagement has lacked with the organization, what steps have been taken to improve community engagement, and how community engagement fits in within the mission and vision of the organization. The transcripts of the interviews were stored on a password protected hard drive to maintain the confidentiality of the subjects interviewed.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data Analysis

After data was collected, the data was cleaned by visually inspecting what is missing. Any missing data was substituted with a constant variable up to 15% of the missing data (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The data was inputted into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) database. The data was ran for descriptive statistics to indicate both general tendencies and the spread of scores (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The descriptive statistics will take the form of a central tendency, variability, and relative standing (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The quantitative data was analyzed to look for general trends, variances, and distribution to identify any points of further data that may need to be collected (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The data

provided insight and a baseline as to what the perceptions are when it comes to community engagement at The Charles School.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data analysis consisted of inductive analysis of both the interviews and the focus groups (Mertler, 2020). The data was reduced by using a system of reading and rereading the transcripts creating a coding system that progresses from descriptive coding, categorical coding, and finally analytical codes, providing a thematic and grounded approach to data analysis (Mertler, 2020; Hesse-Biber, 2017). The data was also triangulated to provide an in-depth examination of the material, providing a view of any consistencies or inconsistencies (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). A memo was kept detailing the coding and thought process behind the analysis of the qualitative data. Throughout the data collection and data analysis, a journal was kept, providing reflexivity throughout the process (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Hesse-Biber, 2017). The qualitative data provided an in depth look at the realities of community engagement at The Charles School and assisted in creating a plan to increase community engagement.

Trustworthiness, Credibility, Transferability, Validity, Reliability

The trustworthiness of the study was established in three ways. The first method is triangulation. The study consisted of multiple sources in which themes can be derived. The second method is research reflexivity. The researcher acknowledges direct involvement with the organization and the potential for bias. The researcher's involvement and biases have been clearly defined. The final method was through thick, rich description. The trustworthiness of the study is paramount (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

The study is transferable because it provides a framework in which other schools or organizations can develop or use the strategies presented to create community engagement within their own organization. The thick description used provides a clear and distinct picture for researchers and practitioners who may wish to replicate this research in their own contexts. The description will become a vessel for future research. The research will also provide an opportunity for a shared experience for researchers in a similar environment (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019).

The Community Engagement Tool is valid through construct validity. It is construct validity because it will measure the variables that are central to the goal. The assessment is constructed to measure the effectiveness and the purpose behind community engagement. The Charles School's needs to do both to create and increase culturally responsive community engagement to create culturally responsive nonacademic outcomes for students (Community Engagement Tool, 2018; Wright, 2008)

For the Community Engagement Tool, the study will use test-retest reliability to measure how reliable the assessment is. The instrument was used within the first week of the study to provide baseline data on the stage of community engagement The Charles School is currently at. The instrument will be given once a quarter to measure the growth or any changes in the purpose and effectiveness of the community engagement efforts of The Charles School. Inter-rater reliability will also be used. Both external and internal stakeholders will be selected to use the tool in the assessment process and the scores will be compared and the reliability will be measured using the Spearman' rho coefficient (Community Engagement Tool, 2018; Wright, 2008).

Limitations

The assessment is limited in how much it can measure. While it is valid and reliable, it cannot measure nonacademic outcomes. The nonacademic outcomes will have to be measured with another instrument. The assessment is also limited by time constraints. The instrument will need to evolve as the expanse of community engagement at The Charles School expands. Finally, the instrument does not measure perceptions of the effectiveness and purpose of community engagement from the lens of external stakeholders. To accomplish this, another form of assessment, in future research, will be used to examine the motivations and effectiveness for external stakeholders.

The study also exposed the limitations of participation. The study concentrated on a singular school with a particular demographic. Taking the program of change and applying to another organization with a different socioeconomic and serves a different demographic may prove challenging. The effectiveness of the study is also limited by the demographics of the staff at the organization. As the demographics of the staff evolve, the identity of the of the organization will evolve as well and may change the perceptions of the study.

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CHAPTER TWO: RESULTS OF RESEARCH

Quantitative Results

Introduction

The chapter examines the results the of the data from the data collection process. The first section discusses the reliability of the data and explains the process in which the data was ran. Next is a description of the descriptive statistics and any correlations that were found. The following portion discuss the qualitative data with the various themes that emerged from the various interviews. To close out the chapter, the trustworthiness and creditability of the study are explained.

Quantitative Statistics

Reliability

A reliability statistics test was run through SPSS and resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.734, slightly above 0.70 which is considered reliable data (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The test was run on the nine items with a like scale from the survey conducted with 51 participants from around the organization. Out of the 51 participants, 49 responses were considered valid, or 96.1% of the of the responses. 3.1% of the responses were removed and considered invalid because the answers were not complete.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Staff, Parents, and Student Surveys (N=51)

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The school's racial and cultural diversity is recognized and openly discussed in a constructive way at parent group and faculty meetings, school council meetings, and discussion groups that include staff and families.	51	3	1	4	2.18	.953
The school's curriculum reflects cultures of families, and there are books and materials about families cultures in classrooms.	51	4	1	5	2.33	.909
Families' cultural traditions, values, and practices are discussed in class	51	3	1	4	2.20	.800
School activities and events are planned with students and their families and respond to their interests.	51	4	1	5	2.92	1.309
Activities and events honor all the cultures in the school	51	4	1	5	2.53	1.120

School staff and families use books and stories about different groups' experiences, to stimulate discussions about their own backgrounds and values.	51	4	1	5	2.69	.990
Teachers and other staff use "teachable moments" and stories from local media to comment on and discuss racially motivated incidents	51	4	1	5	2.39	.981
All families get information about academic and after-school programs for students and how to apply for them.	51	4	1	5	2.73	1.234
Teachers and parents work with community organizers to research solutions to problems that families and students face.	49	4	1	5	2.98	1.145
Valid N (listwise)	49					

Note: The table shows the descriptive statistics from a survey that was given to the staff, parents, and students at The Charles School at Ohio Dominican University.

Quantitative Analysis

The survey was completed by three administrators, six students, eight parents, and thirty-four staff members. The descriptive statistics were quite interesting. The survey was on a Likert scale from One to five. One represented strongly disagree while five represented strongly agree. The survey provided some interesting results. The thought

was that the organization might do well in some areas of community engagement however needs improvement in others. Not a single question had a mean above three which the organization is performing at average. Each question's mean fell between 2.18 and 2.98 meaning that most respondents disagreed with the question or statement. For instance, when the statement, The school's racial and cultural diversity is recognized and openly discussed in a constructive way at parent group and faculty meetings, school council meetings, and discussion groups that include staff and families.

it was made clear that most of the respondents disagreed with a mean of 2.18. The statement goes directly with the idea that the organization needs culturally responsive community engagement. If most people disagree that this statement takes places, it is an indication that the organization needs to improve its efforts at creating a more culturally responsive culture.

The statement, Teachers and parents work with community organizers to research solutions to problems that families and students face, had a mean of 2.98. While that does learn more to the disagree side it remains more neutral than the other responses. The result is slightly encouraging because it is the goal for both internal and external stakeholders to work together to create solutions to best serve the students.

It was disappointing to see that the majority disagreed with the statement, Families' cultural traditions, values, and practices are discussed in class, with a mean of 2.20. During multiple informal discussions, it was the researcher's perception that the organization was more proficient and inclusive in their practices however it was clear from the quantitative results that these perceptions were not necessarily true.

The various questions were checked for Pearson correlations. The most significant correlation existed between the statement The school's curriculum reflects cultures of families, and there are books and materials about families' cultures in classrooms and School activities and events are planned with students and their families and respond to their interests. The correlation leaned towards the positive side which explains the importance that external stakeholders and their culture plays in ensuring culturally responsive behaviors.

Qualitative Results

Four semi-structured interviews were conducted with one intervention specialist, Maria, one English teacher, Shannon, one social studies teacher, Rico, and one student, Faith. Each of the interviews took place over Zoom and followed the questions as listed in Appendix C. Each person interviewed provided their consent, expressed a willingness to participate, and were given to the opportunity to freely express their thoughts and opinions with the understanding they would have anonymity. The interviews were all semi-structured to encourage open dialogue between myself and the participant.

Themes

Throughout the interviews, several common themes emerged from the conversation. Each theme was in line with the problem of practice and echoed the concerns that there is not enough culturally responsive community engagement within the school. First, however, it was important to have the interviewees define community engagement to allow some understanding from their viewpoint. One theme that emerged was the lack of diversity in the types of community engagement. A second theme was there is progress in community engagement but not enough. The interviewees all

provided insight to the lack of access to the early college program in which the organization prides itself on.

Community Engagement Definition

Each of the interviewees had some sort of definition of community engagement that floated somewhere in between the definitions given earlier describing community involvement and community engagement. Shannon gave the most descriptive definition of community engagement when she stated, “reaching out and connecting with the community on different levels” and then went on to state “considering the community’s needs in terms of what that looks like and yeah, getting to know the people we’re a school and we’re in the neighborhood and we’re anchored here.” Shannon’s thoughts echoed the heart of what community engagement is meant to be as defined by this study. Maria also made the point that community engagement “would be a matter of involving, thinking of specifics like working with local churches and the community.” Faith stated that community engagement is “willingly participating, contributing to our schools’ overall culture.” Rico described community engagement as “an event the school puts forth that involves the community. It could be a football game, or it could be a voter registration drive.” He went on to mention that “community engagement can be on various levels. It can be seen as shallow at times.”

Diversity

As seen in the demographics in chapter one of the study, The Charles School has a certain demographic and serves a specific population in the Columbus area. While performing interviews it became quite evident that the school’s community engagement efforts were concentrated to a certain section of the population. As mentioned earlier, it

feels as if parts of the community, for instance the Latinx community, are on the outside looking in even though they are a huge part of the population. Faith made a comment in her interview, “They (the school) focuses on certain portions of the community, they seem to only focus on the African-American Community”. She then went on to say, “in recent years they’ve really made that a focus, really giving young African-American students a voice, but what about the rest of the students”. Finally, Faith stated “I know our school is growing into a more diverse community but right now, they are not including everyone.” Her comments beg to question why other communities are not being served or at least there is a perception of that.

The same thoughts were presented when Maria made a similar observation, “We do a good job of engaging our Black population, but our Latinx population, I see that there is not any community engagement. We need to find their needs too”. She also mentioned the lack of engagement for the students who have IEPs, which is another segment of the population that does not seemed to be served as well.

Rico discussed the dynamics of the demographics and made the comment that “we do the bare minimum for each group” and when asked what he meant by that he stated “we definitely do more for some groups over others it's really hard to know what you should be doing because there's no one out there, telling you this is what you should do for this group, and this is what you should do for that group.”

Shannon discussed the diversity within the organization and how the organization engages the stakeholders. Shannon stated, “The base engagement is not there.” She went on to state that the community engagement coordinator “engages with only one section of

the population.” She expressed her concerns that large sections of the population are not being served.

Not Enough

The interviews made it apparent that certain populations were not receiving the same stature of community engagement as other particular demographics. However, everyone interviewed stated the organization is making improvements, but it is still not enough. Shannon made the point to ask “why are we not asking the community what they need?” Maria went on to make a similar statement when she stated, “we do not ask people what they need or want, we tell them what they need or want.” Both statements led into the conversation that made it clear that The Charles School is not doing enough to bring in community partnerships to help all the students and the communities alike. Rico, in his interview, said “we do not do enough, we try, or at least there is the perception of trying, but what are we really doing”. The same sentiment was echoed by Shannon who stated, “the base engagement is not there, and communication is not clear or consistent”. Faith also mentioned that “I am a little sad to see that less community engagement seems to happen every year.” That final statement by Faith showed the perception of community engagement at The Charles School. Even though we are in a pandemic and have been, it does seem the organization can do better at creating community partnerships to’ better serve the student population and the community as a whole.

Assessment Plan

Evaluation Framework

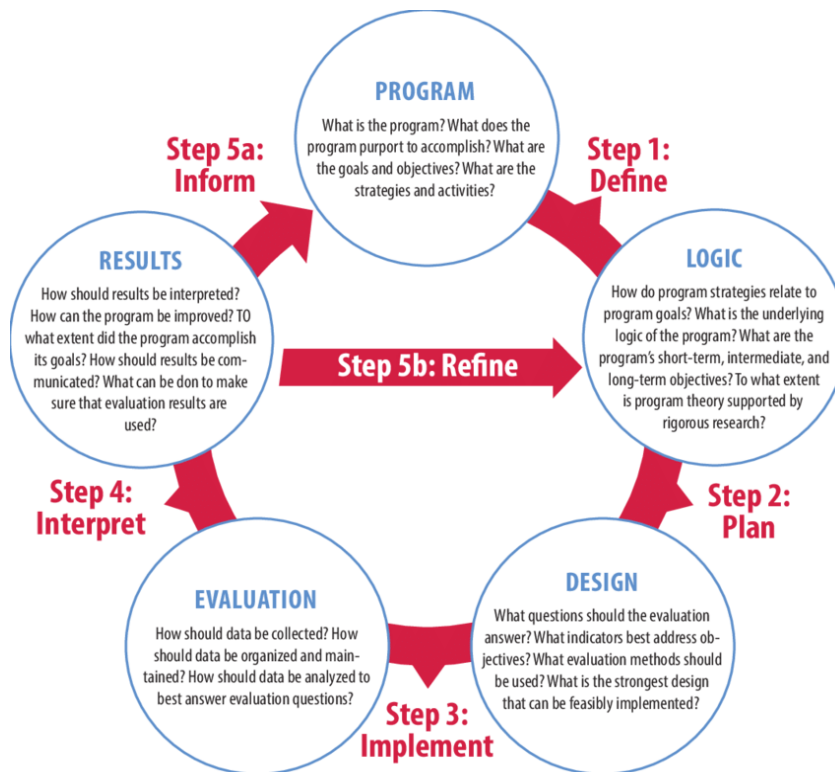
The evaluation took shape in the form of the Embedded Evaluation Model (EMB-E). The framework is a continuous cycle that allows for continuous improvement throughout the process. The process will take place in five steps and will allow for short-term, medium, and long-term objectives that will be demonstrated within the logic model. Part of EMB-E is a participatory approach which allows stakeholders a voice throughout the process which is crucial because all of the stakeholders hold some responsibility for positive outcomes for the students (Giancola, 2021).

The EMB-E framework takes place in 5 steps:

1. Define the program.
2. Plan the evaluation.
3. Implement the evaluation.
4. Interpret the results.
5. Inform the stakeholders of the results and refine the program.

Table 3

Embedded Evaluation Design



Note: This figure represents the five steps for Embedded Evaluation Design (Odell, Kennedy , & Stocks, 2019)

Description of Stakeholder Engagement

When using the EMB-E design, stakeholder engagement is a necessary component to ensure the success of the program (Giancola, 2021). The internal stakeholders of the program consist of the school's administration, teachers, students, and parents. The external stakeholders for the program include the leaders from the local community, which consists of local churches, the Brentnell Recreation Center, local businesses, and the local branch of the library. Each of these stakeholders play a vital role creating successful community engagement. Each stakeholder will be involved at

some point through the process through various engagement councils, surveys, meetings, and forums. At some point, each of the stakeholders is informed the design.

The school has a leadership team that consists of several faculty members and the administration team. These stakeholders, who control the vast majority of the decision making within the school, and were responsible for implementing or at least overseeing the implementation of the program's strategies. The leadership team also participates in the evaluation process because they are also the members responsible for the success of the program.

The results of the evaluation impact the entire community. The community is defined as both the school and those local stakeholders that are interested in the academic and nonacademic outcomes of the students. First, the results of the program are shared with the internal stakeholders within the school including the parents and students. Second, the results are shared with local community leaders through a series of community forums.

Logic Model

The logic model provides the resources and activities needed for the program to be successful at The Charles School. The model also provides the predicted or desired outcomes the program is intended to create (Giancola, 2021). Seen below is the logic model with the desired strategies to create community engagement and community involvement opportunities for the students. Also listed within the model are anticipated external factors and any assumptions that may be made about the program or those involved.

Table 4*Logic Model*

Program: Logic Model

Situation: Create relationships with external community stakeholders to assist in creating culturally responsive academic and nonacademic outcomes for the students.

Inputs	Activities	Participation	Short	Medium	Long
School Building Transportation Funding Local Community Organizations	Family engagement council In order to provide voice for parents on the education their students receive Forum of community leaders with the school leaders, students, and families Monthly engagement events at the school and within the community sponsored by the student government.	Administration TCS Leadership Team Families of TCS Students who have expressed interest in the program Support staff (Interpreter s, administrative assistants) Administration Families Community Leaders Teachers Students	Build relationships with community partners. Create opportunities for student involvement within the community with volunteer and potential community service opportunities creating relationships between local organizations and the students.	Increase engagement between internal and external stakeholders by 10% in the next year.	Build positive relationships between external and internal stakeholders with monthly forums to allow for sustained dialogue on engagement between students and local organizations

<p>Assumptions Community stakeholders will want to take an interest in the success of the school and the longterm impacts of the relationships.</p>	<p>External Factors</p> <p>Factors such as the willingness for community stakeholders wanting to engage with a charter school. High administrative and teacher turnover COVID decreasing opportunity to engage with all stakeholders</p>
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The program evaluation uses the Community Engagement to measure the implementation success. The community engagement needs to be culturally responsive as well to create culturally responsive nonacademic outcomes for the students. To provide a measure of how effective the community engagement outcomes are, the study will use the Community Engagement Assessment Tool provided by the Nexus Community Engagement Institute (Community Engagement Tool, 2018).

The Community Engagement Tool is a rubric type of assessment that examines the amount, effectiveness, and purpose of the community engagement. Some questions are as followed:

- What kind of relationship do you have with community members?”
- “Why are you engaging people?”
- “How are you getting people involved? When?” (Community Engagement Tool, 2018)

The questions are answered through subsections of the question that range on a five-point scale. The answers range from “Unsure what we are doing” to “Doing CE (community engagement)” (Community Engagement Tool, 2018).

Credibility, Authenticity, and Trustworthiness of Qualitative Data

The trustworthiness of the study is established in three ways. The first method is triangulation. The study will consist of multiple sources in which themes can be derived. Each of the participants were allowed to read the transcripts and the findings to ensure that their words were not taken out of context. Each member was also given permission to read the sections of the other interviewees and member check each other. Each of the four interviews showed a similar trajectory in the message about community engagement at The Charles School. The second method is research reflexivity. The researcher acknowledges direct involvement with the organization and the potential for bias. The researcher's involvement and biases are clearly defined and acknowledged. The final method will be through thick, rich description. The trustworthiness of the study is paramount (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

The Community Engagement Tool is valid through construct validity. It is construct validity because it will measure the variables that are central to the goal. The assessment is constructed to measure the effectiveness and the purpose behind community engagement. The Charles Schools needs to do both to create and increase culturally responsive community engagement to create culturally responsive nonacademic outcomes for students (Community Engagement Tool, 2018; Wright, 2008). For the Community Engagement Tool, the study used test-retest reliability to measure how reliable the assessment is. The instrument will be used within the first week of the study to provide baseline data on the stage of community engagement The Charles School is currently at. The instrument will be given once a quarter to measure the growth or any changes in the purpose and effectiveness of the community engagement efforts of The Charles School. Inter-rater reliability will also be used. Both external and internal

stakeholders will be selected to use the tool in the assessment process and the scores will be compared and the reliability will be measured using the Spearman' rho coefficient (Community Engagement Tool, 2018; Wright, 2008).

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CHAPTER THREE: DESCRIPTION OF ACTION/INTERVENTION/CHANGE PROCESS

Schools are constantly under pressure to provide comprehensive services to schools and their communities with minimal resources. The current twin pandemics of COVID-19 and continued oppression of marginalized groups spotlight the growing inequities within the United States' education system. The inequities can be seen in how schools are funded, the lack of resources for schools located in areas with lower socioeconomic statuses, and schools that are predominately white.

One of the largest inequities that exist is the way charter schools are funded. For charter schools to survive, they are required to find other avenues to support their most precious stakeholders, the students. One of the typically underused resources for charter schools is the community. The community can and does provide a wealth of supports and resources that can assist a school in being successful (Kladifko, 2013; Tarantino, 2017). The purpose of the action plan is to answer the two research questions:

1. What systems can be put into place to ensure students receive the academic and nonacademic supports to be successful in The Charles School's early college program?
2. How can The Charles School increase community engagement that is both beneficial to the internal and external stakeholders?

Also, to identify opportunities and enact a plan to improve community engagement and create a model for other schools to follow.

Table 5*Action Plan*

Objectives and Outcomes (What)	Tasks (How)	Person(s) (Who)	Time (When)	Location (Where)	Resources	Funds
Establish at least one service-learning opportunity for students in the next academic school year creating culturally responsive academic and non-academic outcomes	-Email and call community leaders to gauge in the interest in creating a task force of stakeholders to create service-learning opportunities -Meet with a forum of community leaders who have expressed interest -Meet with the community engagement coordinator - Collaborate to find a service-	Administration TCS Leadership Team Families of TCS Students who have expressed interest in the program Support staff (Interpreters, administrative assistants) Community Leaders	Meet with the community leaders and the community engagement coordinator on a weekly basis starting on 8/01/22 and continue until the end of the academic school year on 5/19/23	The Charles School's college readiness center and through Zoom	Building Tables Chairs Projector Podium Internet Chromebooks	\$1000 from TGFS to create advertisements, provide refreshments and any unforeseen expenses.

	learning opportunity that is equitable for all those involved					
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Table 6

Stakeholder Matrix

Stakeholder	Point of Contact	Interests	Power	Engagement Strategy	Notes
	<i>Name, Address, Contact Details</i>	<i>Interests related to evaluation & outcomes</i>	<i>Type of power and ability to impact evaluation plan & implementation</i>	<i>Type and frequency of communication.</i>	
Deans	TCS EMAIL	The success of the program and the outcome with the community .	They have the final say	Meet on a weekly basis-Zoom	Need to ensure they approve of the steps taken to achieve the goals. They should be providing input throughout the process
Students	TCS Email	Engagement opportunities with the community .	Choosing the engagement opportunities	Meet on a weekly basis-Zoom	Students need to have a voice in the process. Engagement activities with the community should match their needs

					and peak their interest.
Parents	EMAIL	Student engagement and end results	If their student participates or not	Bi-Weekly Zoom Meetings	Parents voice is extremely important. They should be partners in this endeavor. It should be a working relationship with them voicing the outcomes they want to see for their students
Community	EMAIL	Student involvement	Providing opportunities	Bi-Weekly Zoom Meetings	The heart of the program is the community providing opportunities. The program directly affects them as well. They need to voice what they want to see from the program and provide culturally responsive opportunities for the students.

The goal of the action plan is to provide opportunities for culturally responsive community engagement to create positive academic and nonacademic outcomes for the students who attend an urban charter school which goes directly to both research questions. The action plan takes several steps to create inclusivity and empower the community. Though the organization is the dominant stakeholder, the change connected to the action plan needs to come from the community. The community must be part of the process and their voice needs to be amplified.

One way to create positive academic and nonacademic outcomes for the students, is by creating at least one service-learning opportunity for each student during the academic school year. Service-learning opportunities can involve several activities ranging from volunteer opportunities, internships, and opportunities for activism and leadership with community organizations. To create the service-learning opportunities for the students, the organization must involve and create buy in from the community.

Several tasks are involved in creating the community engagement. First, the school's leadership will meet with the school's community engagement coordinator to help determine the school's and community's needs and what approaches will be taken. Second, the school's administration and leadership team will email and call community leaders to gauge in the interest in creating a task force of stakeholders to create service-learning opportunities. Third, the administration and leadership team will meet with a forum of community leaders who have expressed interest. The community leaders and the school's leadership, including the community engagement coordinator, will meet with the community leaders on a weekly basis starting on 08/01/22 and continue until the end of the academic school year on 5/19/22 in the school's college readiness center. If someone is unable to attend the meeting, they will have the opportunity to do so through Zoom.

The groups that meet will be considered the community engagement team task force. They will work together to set goals, create weekly agendas, and produce opportunities for the most important stakeholders, the students. The action plan provides the opportunity for multiple voices to be amplified with the vision of creating an inclusive team that has the student's best interest at the forefront.

Several resources will be needed to ensure the meetings can take place. For instance, the building, tables, chairs, projector, a podium, stable internet, and chrome books will need to be available for meetings. Also, \$1000 from TGFS will be allocated to create advertisements, provide refreshments and any unforeseen expenses.

The action plan was informed by creating a resource development plan. The resource development plan informed decision making, and the themes needed to create actionable community engagement through a solid action plan. The action plan ensure that the goals are met, but it does not occur without the knowledge needed to execute the plan.

Resource Development Plan

While researching community engagement in schools, especially urban charter schools, it was clear that the most successful programs included the concept of equitable engagement and service-learning opportunities. Often, the education system is not equitable for all the students. Not all students receive the same access to opportunities to be successful, such as leadership, volunteering, or real-world applications such as internships. Many schools in suburban areas, particularly affluent suburbs, receive more funding making access to such opportunities that much easier. Unfortunately, urban charter schools do not receive adequate funding to fund programs that produce meaningful service-learning opportunities.

Schools were responsible for finding ways to fill the funding, opportunity, and access gaps. Many schools did so by creating systems of community engagement to fill the voids. Though many of the communities were in lower socioeconomic areas, the community provided a vast amount of knowledge and opportunities for students. The

communities also understood that the students were the future leaders and could make tremendous change in the community. The relationships between the communities and the schools were strengthened when the engagement between the two was done in equitable fashion. Schools and the community needed to be partners that was not dominated by one side over the other. The communities understood the needs while schools may possess the knowledge to help facilitate change. The ideas provided from the research created the anchors for an action plan.

Throughout the research process it was also clear that service-learning opportunities, in various forms, provided students with more culturally responsive opportunities and resulted in positive academic and nonacademic outcomes. Students were exposed to a variety of experiences that they would not traditionally receive in a classroom or in a school building. It was also apparent that it helped the community have more voice, ownership, and accountability for the success of the students because they were now directly involved. The situation called for all stakeholders, both internal and external, to play a larger role in the success of the students. The research pointed to service-learning becoming a pillar of the action plan.

The organization needs a specific plan to involve the community and create opportunities for students. The action plan calls for the school to create community engagement opportunities that allow students to have service-learning opportunities that are more culturally responsive than they receive in the classroom. The students need the opportunity to be exposed to more diverse situations and opportunities to interact with the community. Two themes have emerged regarding creating community engagement opportunities for students. The first theme to emerge is the importance of equitable

community collaboration. The second theme to emerge is using service-learning as a tool for community engagement.

Community Collaboration

Collaboration is at the heart of creating community engagement opportunities for the students at The Charles School. To create meaningful opportunities, engagement cannot be created by the internal stakeholders alone, it must be a collaborative effort with community partners (Schmitz, Baber, John, & Brown, 2000). Collaboration with the community and families creates a more equitable situation for students (Auerbach, 2009). Often students and the adults they interact with within the organization do not share the same backgrounds, cultures, or socioeconomic status. Students do not receive what they need culturally from faculty and the dominant culture. Equity is giving students what they need to be successful. We can accomplish that with community collaboration. The communities the students come from have a deeper understanding of the struggles the students have. Partnerships with the community assist in reducing the inequities. The community collaboration becomes more equitable for students because schools can now leverage the resources from the community (Zavadsky, 2011).

It is important to understand that while community collaboration is critical to community engagement, it is also imperative that the partnerships are equitable for both the organization and the external stakeholders (Ishimaru, 2020). If the community engagement is inequitable between the various partnerships, it will and can lead to inequitable academic and nonacademic outcomes. which would defeat the purpose of the action plan (Telles, 2019). Community collaboration which is equitable will also lead to

more access for students that might not otherwise have the opportunity (Thomas & Casale, 2020).

Service Learning

The second theme to emerge is the success of creating a system of service-learning opportunities such as internships, community leadership, and volunteer opportunities through community collaborations. Service-learning opportunities created with local community partners can create authentic experiences for the students that they might not otherwise be exposed to (O'Connor & Daniello, 2019). Service-learning allows students of color, and those not of the dominant culture, an opportunity for leadership outside the confines of a brick-and-mortar school, which is important in creating culturally responsive nonacademic outcomes (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015). For instance, Tuters (2017) stated that service-learning opportunities are often the first time that many students can experience diversity and are exposed to other cultures, providing new perspectives. Service-learning opportunities and experiences can lead to the student's ability to become more involved in the community and better interact with the community as well (Hidayah, Muchtarom, & Rejekiningsih, 2021).

Analysis of Implementation

The implementation of the action plan is based on the theoretical framework of the funds of knowledge. The belief of the framework is the organization can amplify the voices of its stakeholders and use their knowledge to assist in creating culturally responsive learning opportunities for the students (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018). No matter how involved or strong the leadership of an organization is, the organization must use the resources in the surrounding community for the implementation to be successful (Macias & Townsend, 2021). Learning experiences are dominated by the dominant culture, and it is important to include the voices and knowledge base of those who are not included. The funds of knowledge allow the wealth of knowledge that the community contains, especially the parents, to bring that knowledge into the learning experiences (Szech, 2021).

The goal of the action plan is to create asset based culturally responsive academic and nonacademic outcomes. It has been proven that the funds of knowledge framework accomplish that goal by creating an asset-based approach while diminishing the deficit mindset seen in education (Macias & Townsend, 2021). The use of the funds of knowledge addresses the culturally responsive aspect of the goal of culturally responsive outcomes. The funds of knowledge integrate the students' community and culture to contribute to the asset-based approach creating a sense of belonging and inclusivity (Roe, 2019).

The goal of the action plan is to establish at least one service-learning opportunity for students in the next academic school year creating culturally responsive academic and non-academic outcomes. The first major obstacle implementing the action plan will be

the leadership team identifying who are the key players to involve. The deans must be diligent ensuring the key players involve a diverse and inclusive group that represent the cultures of each group of students. The school regularly includes events and opportunities that cater to the Black community while sometimes alienating the Latinx community. The organization will need to include the Latinx voice with student, parent, and community involvement if they want to create culturally responsive opportunities for all the students.

The Charles School traditionally has not been successful involving parents in the decision-making process. Incorporating families is a critical part of the action plan. As mentioned earlier, the family's knowledge and culture are imperative in creating culturally responsive outcomes and an asset-based mindset. The student's identity with the parent's knowledge complements each other, when considering the desired outcomes (Subero, Vila, & Esteban-Guitart, 2015). During the implementation process, the organization will have to explain the importance and the reasoning for the parents to be involved. The organization must be welcoming and understand that families may see the organization as part of the systemic problems marginalized groups face (Coşkun & Katıtaş, 2021).

The next step in the process is cultivating relationships with community leaders and organizations. Community leaders and organizations will be the catalyst in finding and implementing service-learning opportunities for the students. The challenge will be finding service-learning opportunities that represent the population of The Charles School. Also, the organization needs to instill a sense of partnership, ownership, and accountability among the community leaders for the student outcomes. While implementing the action plan the organization will have to be cognizant the timing of the

meetings between the various groups. To be successful, the process needs to be cooperative and give those involved outside the organization a time that is convenient for them. Without the involvement of the external stakeholders, the action plan will fail. The process will take the work of all of stakeholders to be successful.

I believe the action plan will be successful and will create opportunities that will assist the students in receiving an education that is more in line with their cultures. The school has started to invest in creating more opportunities for students to share their knowledge in ways that represent their identities and backgrounds. The students and teachers have led the way in finding opportunities that move away from the traditional curriculum that tends to alienate the students and community. The two biggest issues will be creating involvement from the parents and the organizations leadership. There will have to be multiple approaches to involve parents with certain incentives. Most of the parents at The Charles School hold multiple jobs or have full households. Their availability is limited, and they need to understand the value of their involvement. The organization's leadership likes to be the dominant voice and does not always consider other viewpoints. There will have to be a shift in the mindset of the leadership.

Analysis of Organizational Change and Leadership Practice

The process of change can be a challenge with any organization. It has been a particular challenge at The Charles School because of the robust amount of the initiatives that are emergent within the organization. The school does have a community engagement coordinator that works directly with the organization's leadership. It does not appear that they work with other stakeholders such as the staff and the entire population of the student body. To their credit, community members have been brought into the

school to create opportunities for certain populations of the student body. Over the last two years the growth of community engagement has improved but it has not been culturally responsive to all the students, particularly the Latinx community.

The organization prides itself on creating access and opportunities for all the students however it has failed the Latinx stakeholders. When creating culturally responsive community engagement many of the opportunities are for the Black students. The community engagement coordinator provides those opportunities, yet the opportunities neglect other students of color. The organization is also at fault. The problem is perpetuated with the apparent lack of access to the early college program. Most of the students in the program are Black or Caucasian and often does not provide supports for the Latinx students.

Implementing the action and its success will be determined by the actions of The Charles School. The organization acts as the gatekeeper with their top-down approach which really has not allowed the voices of all their stakeholders to be heard. It has been proven that community level projects work best when the top, or the implementers, are supportive and are inclusive (Joshi & Rao, 2017). For the action plan to be successful, the organization must hear and amplify all the voices of every group providing more of a bottom-up approach to creating culturally responsive community engagement (Lipsky, 2010).

As discussed earlier, for the action plan to have success in creating culturally responsive community engagement, the organization needs to listen to the stakeholders, particularly the local community and the families of the students. Each stakeholder group can provide the cultural responsiveness that is needed for the community engagement. It

is my belief that we must take the knowledge, the funds of knowledge, our stakeholders have and transform that knowledge into engagement opportunities for the students (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018).

The leadership of the organization is struggling to be inclusive, and it seen with their top-down approach which has led to less diversity of voice when implementing the action plan (Sabatier, 1986). The organization's leadership attempts to model itself with shared leadership which would foster a better connection with their stakeholders, unfortunately that has not been the case (Cobanoglu, 2021). The school needs to shift towards collaborative and transformational leadership which have been shown to foster stronger relationships and partnerships with external stakeholders, leading to more success with the goals of the action plan (Jung & Sheldon, 2020).

Observing leadership throughout the process, I have been able to reflect on my own leadership practices. I have seen how a top-down leadership approach feels authoritarian and silences the voices of some of the most important stakeholders. As stated before, the Latinx community has not been represented properly within the organization despite being the second largest population. Looking for culturally responsive outcomes should be equitable for all populations, not dominated by certain groups. My leadership has evolved between servant and transformational. Creating community engagement for culturally responsive outcomes for the students has pushed me to serve others. The resistance within the organization has forced my leadership to help transform the systems in place to create a more equitable and inclusive situation for our stakeholders (Northhouse, 2019). It is clear that when considering creating positive organizational culture, relationships matter. Empowering followers and providing them

some ownership or buy-in allowing them voice created more positive outcomes as opposed to someone who was strictly task-oriented (Holloway, 2012). I can also see that there is a need for multiple leadership types for successful organizational outcomes.

Implications for Practice and Future Research

The implications for practice are substantial. The study provides a framework to create culturally responsive community engagement within a school, particularly those that serve students in a lower socioeconomic era. Students react to learning experiences that are relatable to their identity and background. Other organizations can adapt the funds of knowledge framework to create an inclusive community engagement practice by drawing upon the knowledge of the families they serve. The key is for organizations to ensure they allow their stakeholders' voices to be heard with fidelity. The organization should not be the one dominating the conversation as to what the student's need. What the student's need is their voice to be heard and to have the stakeholders determine what is needed for their students to be successful. The attainment of knowledge should not just come from the teacher or in a classroom. The school, in partnership with the community, should determine the path forward through community engagement and service-learning opportunities.

The action plan and research provide a path to solve the problem of practice. For charter schools to survive, they are required to find other avenues to support students. The plan used the funds of knowledge framework to create an action plan consisting of community service and service-learning opportunities for students to enhance the learning that takes place in the classroom. While the practice created an additional resource for charter schools it does not completely solve the problem of the underfunding

and lack of resources that charter schools deal with. There are other questions that are related to the problem. For instance, what other resources or funding can a community provide, even in an area with a low socioeconomic status? How can charter schools leverage more opportunities for learning outside the classroom? What ways can charter schools create equitable opportunities for all their entire population?

Future research can look at other frameworks such as the Critical Theory of Love or other socioemotional frameworks which may be beneficial to students in charter schools that serve a lower socioeconomic area. Future researchers can also combine other frameworks with various leadership styles to find resources that will result in culturally responsive outcomes for students. Most importantly, future researchers need to reach out to local leaders, parents, and those who are affected by the success or failure of the students.

Conclusion

The study is a framework that The Charles School and other organizations can use to create culturally responsive community engagement opportunities resulting in positive outcomes for students. A common issue that charter schools face, is they do not receive equal funding and have limited resources which present challenges when creating opportunities for students. Often, charter schools' staff and faculty do not represent the identity or demographics of the student body. Students are faced with curriculum and learning that represents the dominant culture and they have issues relating to the material. To combat those challenges, organizations need to use the resources that exist in the community. Organizations should develop partnerships with external stakeholders, use their knowledge and resources, to design service-learning possibilities.

Future research needs to look at other ways to create culturally responsive community engagement in charter schools. Research should concentrate on various leadership styles and other frameworks to incorporate. Community engagement that provides opportunities for students who attend charter schools, particularly those in a low socioeconomic area, will persist if researchers do not continue to find ways to develop solutions for the problem of practice.

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Appendix A

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

Parental Consent for Minor/Child to Participate in a Research Project

Project Title: Community Engagement at The Charles School

Investigator(s): Eric Bowles

Description of Study: The study will examine community engagement at The Charles School with the hope of creating more opportunities of community engagement within the organization.

Adverse Effects and Risks: There is no adverse risk involved with the study

Duration of Study: 6 months

Confidentiality of Data: Data and names will remain confidential

Contact Person: Parents or guardians of participants may contact:

Eric Bowles, bowlese1@udayton.edu, 919-440-1167

Dr James Olive, jolive1@udayton.edu, 614-285-5466 (Study Adviser)

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may also contact the University of Dayton's Institutional Review Board at (937) 229-3515 or IRB@udayton.edu.

Student's Full Name (please print)

Parent's Full Name (please print)

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

University of Dayton - Participant Assent Form

Community Engagement at The Charles School:

Who is doing this research?

Eric Bowles

Dr James Olive, jolive1@udayton.edu, 614-285-5466 (Study Adviser)

Why should I do this?

The purpose of the project is to better inform The Charles School in creating quality community engagement opportunities for the students.

How long will it last?

You will complete a 20 minute survey.

What will happen?

You will be asked to fill out a form on community engagement.

How will you feel?

Excited to help inform the school on your thoughts.

Will anyone know I'm doing this?

Data and names will remain confidential.

What if I have questions or am worried about something?

If you have questions, you may talk to Eric Bowles

Consent to Participate

I agree to work with Eric Bowles and his team on this project. I understand all that is expected of me and promise to do my best. Eric Bowles has answered all my questions. I understand I may stop this activity at any time.

Participant's Name

DATE

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Name

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

Faculty and Staff Consent Form

Project Title: Community Engagement at The Charles School

Investigator(s): Eric Bowles

Description of Study: The study will examine community engagement at The Charles School with the hope of creating more opportunities of community engagement within the organization.

Adverse Effects and Risks: There is no adverse risk involved with the study

Duration of Study: 6 months

Confidentiality of Data: Data and names will remain confidential

Contact Person: Faculty and Staff may contact
Eric Bowles, bowlese1@udayton.edu, 919-440-1167
Dr James Olive, jolive1@udayton.edu, 614-285-5466 (Study Adviser)

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may also contact the University of Dayton's Institutional Review Board at (937) 229-3515 or IRB@udayton.edu.

Staff Members Full Name (please print)

Staff Members Signature

Date

Appendix B



WWW.NEXUSCP.ORG/NCEI

Contact: Avi Viswanathan, aviswanathan@nexuscp.org or Angie Brown, abrown@nexuscp.org

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL

You are free to share, copy and distribute this material. We ask that you give appropriate credit to Nexus Community Engagement Institute and/or its partners.

We encourage you to share your feedback with us and tell us how you are using the tool or resource. Nexus Community Engagement Institute and our partners intend these documents and tools to introduce practitioners, funders, evaluators, and community members to community engagement and that can rely on written materials alone; it takes a community of practitioners to support one another within each unique context. We encourage you to seek out experienced practitioners to support you in implementing these tools, principles, and concepts. Nexus Community Engagement Institute is available for consultation. Please contact us at www.nexuscp.org/ncei or email program director Avi Viswanathan at aviswanathan@nexuscp.org. Nexus

Community Engagement Institute is continuing the work of the Building the Field of de Esperanza, the Cultural Wellness Center, Hope Community, Lyndale Neighborhood Association, the Native American Community Development Institute, and Nexus Community Partners.

I

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL

EVERY ORGANIZATION HAS THE CAPACITY TO DO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT. Resource limitations can impact the ability to do this work, but commitment and creativity are the only real requirements. We encourage you to use

ourselves and our fellow practitioners grow in our understanding of community engagement and to be thoughtful about our own practice of engagement techniques.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS PRACTITIONERS AND ORGANIZATIONS CAN USE THIS TOOL:

- As an individual, to assess your strengths and areas for professional growth
- With board members to begin or deepen a conversation about community engagement within your organization. •
To assess where an external partnership could improve community engagement by closing a gap posed by the limitations of your organization. approaches are complementary.
- With community members, to assess how they see your work.

SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Under each question on pages 3-5 are a set of continua to rank your work from **“DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH”** through **“DOING CE”**.

2. Put a check mark in the box

You may want to consider 1-2 examples to demonstrate why you selected that box.

3. If you are having trouble deciding which applies, it **may be helpful to consider how you think the community would describe your work**, rather than how you internally describe the work.

4. **Below is a key** to help decipher which column to select in each row.

SELF-ASSESSMENT KEY: “CE” = COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

• **UNSURE WHICH WE ARE DOING:** Select this column if you don’t know whether you work is outreach, community engagement, or in a stage somewhere in between.

• **DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH:** Select this column if you believe your work is mostly outreach rather than mostly community engagement.

• **BEGINNING TO TALK ABOUT MOVING TO CE:** Select this column if you or others in your organization have begun seriously discussing an interest in or commitment

to incorporating community engagement practices and principles, but have yet to implement any strategies or policies to do so.

- **WORKING TOWARD CE:** Select this column if you or your organization have begun to implement some community engagement practices, but your organization/team has yet to formally adopt community engagement principles to be at the core and forefront of all the work you do.

- **DOING CE:** Select this column if the vast majority of the time you or your organization are doing community engagement and have formally created systems and practices to continually learn and adapt through community engagement.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL

Q: WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP DO YOU HAVE WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS?						
OUTREACH	UNSURE WHICH WE ARE DOING	DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH	BEGINNING TO TALK ABOUT MOVING TO CE	WORKING TOWARD CE	DOING CE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships are primarily TRANSACTIONAL, for the purpose of completing a project. 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships are FOUNDATIONAL, continually built between and among people and groups. Staff/institutions continually build the relationships they need to know their community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships are often NOT INCLUSIVE of all racial or cultural groups in the community. 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships reflect the DIVERSITY within the community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships can be LIMITED to a few community members, often giving influence to those with the loudest voices. 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships are built not just with current leaders, but also with people with an interest and/or POTENTIAL TO BE LEADERS.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships are SHORT-TERM, so staff have to rebuild them as other projects or issues come up. 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships are transformational and LONG-TERM, so community leaders/members can engage in projects and issues as they come up.

Q: WHY ARE YOU ENGAGING PEOPLE?						
OUTREACH	UNSURE WHICH WE ARE DOING	DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH	BEGINNING TO TALK ABOUT MOVING TO CE	WORKING TOWARD CE	DOING CE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To accomplish a project or a SPECIFIC GOAL defined by the organization. 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To create space for people to CONNECT, RAISE CONCERNS, BUILD POWER and ACT IN THEIR OWN INTERESTS.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To SEEK BUY-IN OR APPROVAL of something the organization has already planned. 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To CREATE SPACE for the community's assets to be recognized and utilized.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL

Q: HOW ARE YOU GETTING PEOPLE INVOLVED? WHEN?						
OUTREACH	UNSURE WHICH WE ARE DOING	DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH	BEGINNING TO TALK ABOUT MOVING TO CE	WORKING TOWARD CE	DOING CE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
• Primary activities with community include FLYERING, SURVEYS, FOCUS GROUPS, WORKSHOPS, etc.						• Primary activities with community include LISTENING SESSIONS, ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS, CELEBRATIONS, LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNITY-BUILDING PROJECTS, etc.
• Information is given or feedback is requested AFTER A PROJECT IS PLANNED.						• Planning is done WITH THE COMMUNITY from the beginning

Q: HOW DO IDEAS GET GENERATED?						
OUTREACH	UNSURE WHICH WE ARE DOING	DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH	BEGINNING TO TALK ABOUT MOVING TO CE	WORKING TOWARD CE	DOING CE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
• STAFF/ INSTITUTIONS GENERATE IDEAS they think the community will support.						• Staff/institutions SUPPORT COMMUNITY MEMBERS in generating their own ideas.
• Staff/institutions generate SOLUTIONS TO A PROBLEM they have defined.						• Staff/institutions engage in CONTINUAL SELF-REFLECTION to respond to and incorporate people's ideas, feedback, talents, and challenges into the work.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL

Q: HOW DO YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES AND STRUCTURES SUPPORT ENGAGEMENT?						
OUTREACH	UNSURE WHICH WE ARE DOING	DOING PRIMARILY OUTREACH	BEGINNING TO TALK ABOUT MOVING TO CE	WORKING TOWARD CE	DOING CE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
• The organizational culture is primarily focused on OBTAINING SPECIFIC OUTCOMES .						• The organizational culture is focused on learning and it values EMERGENT AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES .
• Board and staff may NOT REPRESENT the community.						• Board and staff REFLECT the community.
• The organization ADHERES TO WAYS OF OPERATING that reflect the DOMINANT CULTURE , such as using Robert's Rules for meetings, prioritizing staff to speak, etc.						• The organization CREATES SPACE FOR DIFFERENT CULTURAL WAYS , such as offering cultural foods and social spaces/ times, giving elders a special role, etc.
• Racism and power may not be discussed or may be DEALT WITH SUPERFICIALLY .						• The organizational culture supports discussions to UNDERSTAND AND DISMANTLE structural racism, to help heal historical trauma and to claim individual and community power.
• The organization adheres to ORGANIZATION-DRIVEN policies and structures.						• The organization demonstrates a willingness to revisit organizational policies and structures to RESPOND TO COMMUNITY NEEDS AND IDEAS .

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF OR DISCUSS AS A GROUP AFTER COMPLETING YOUR ASSESSMENT:

- Why did you rank yourself or your organization as you did?
- Do your responses align with your organization's mission? What changes could advance your mission? •
- Where does your organization need additional support?
- Where do you need to build the capacity of your organization?
- What are the opportunities for and challenges to doing community engagement?

Appendix C

Community Engagement at The Charles School

What is your relationship to The Charles School?

- ☐ Administration
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Parent
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Community Member

1. The school's racial and cultural diversity is recognized and open discussed in a constructive way at parent group and faculty meetings, school council meetings, and discussion groups that include staff and families.
2. The school's curriculum reflects cultures of families, and there are books and materials about families' cultures in classrooms.
3. Families' cultural traditions, values, and practices are discussed in class
4. School activities and events are planned with students and their families and respond to their interests.
5. Activities and events honor all the cultures in the school
6. School staff and families use books and stories about different groups' experiences, to stimulate discussions about their own backgrounds and values.
7. Teachers and other staff use "teachable moments" and stories from local media to comment on and discuss racially motivated incidents
8. All families get information about academic and after-school programs for students and how to apply for them.

9. Teachers and parents work with community organizers to research solutions to problems that families and students face.
10. If community organizers raise issues like class size, teacher qualifications, achievement gaps, and facilities, the school is willing to work with them to make improvements. If community organizers have not approached the school, the school reaches out to them.

Thank you for participating in completing a survey concerning The Charles School and community engagement. Your name and data will remain confidential. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach me by email at bowlese1@udayton.edu.

Do you have anything you would like to add about community engagement at The Charles School?

Appendix D

Interview

The interviews will be semi-structured to allow for follow up questions.

Questions:

1. Please tell me about your background in education.
2. What is your role at The Charles School?
3. How do you define community engagement?
4. Please tell me about your perceptions of community engagement at The Charles School?
5. How has community engagement evolved at The Charles School since you have been at TCS?
5. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current state of community engagement at The Charles School?
6. What improvements need to be made with community engagement at TCS?
7. What is your vision for community engagement at TCS?

