School Integration in Twin Cities Metro Area

Interdistrict Collaboratives:

Implementation and Interpretation of the Minnesota State

Desegregation/Integration Rule

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Abstract

Understanding issues of racial and socioeconomic segregation in schools is one way of examining equity in educational policy. This thesis elucidates and explains the social, legal and political context of the contemporary school desegregation debate in Minnesota by investigating access to and use of integration resources in the state's largest urban center. The relationship between policy design and policy implementation in the area of school integration in Minnesota is explored using a case study analysis approach which contrasts four models of interdistrict collaboration in terms of organization, management and resource distribution. The role of decision-makers, front-line service providers, students and families is examined by identifying particular cultural assumptions that place integration goals in the context of other educational priorities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This thesis set out to explore the disjunctions in policy and implementation in four voluntary school integration programs in the Twin Cities metro area in order to bring to light the complexity of the policy field and examine the translation of policy to practice. Understanding issues of racial and socioeconomic segregation in schools is one way of examining equity in educational policy, a topic of local and national concern. Although much attention has been paid to differences in academic achievement among students from different racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups in the state, little academic research has focused on the implementation of school integration policy in Minnesota. Addressing underlying patterns of inequality, such as the concentration of poverty in schools attended primarily by students of color and the dismantling of court-ordered desegregation programs is important at a time when such "achievement gaps" are substantial (Orfield and Lee 2005). One of the fundamental justifications used by desegregation proponents in the 1960s was the promise of improved academic performance for students of color suggested in the influential Coleman report (1967). The fact that these gaps still exist and that the targets of integration policy do not seem to address the academic failures of desegregation suggests the need for research in this area.

The word "desegregation" has itself gained a significant amount of baggage over the last fifty years in the United States. *Brown v. Board of Education* was seen as a landmark judicial victory in the Civil Rights movement that declared "separate but equal" illegal once and for all. The changes that resulted in the nation's public schools, however,

1

were mixed in effectiveness and impact, and the vision articulated in the Supreme Court's decision remains incomplete. Studies in fact show trends toward increasing segregation in schools, rather than increasing diversity. The concept itself has fallen out of favor even among those who would count themselves committed to educational equity. Initiatives designed to achieve "desegregation" bring images of students traveling long distances by bus to the minds of many, and such methods have fallen out of favor. Although government measures designed to deliberately segregate students by race or ethnicity are officially outlawed, policies geared toward achieving true desegregation are now weak and often counteracted or contradicted by other educational policies.

A growing need exists to see the problem of segregation as more than a black-white issue and rather as one that encompasses poverty and class differences as well as race, ethnicity and culture. Legislation from the original era of school desegregation addressed the need to dismantle discriminatory practices against African Americans but also helped create a binary notion of desegregation that involved creating learning spaces where black and white students would attend school together. Immigration and demographic shifts in subsequent years have drastically altered the racial and ethnic makeup of U.S. public schools. The population of Latino and Asian students has grown across the country, and the proportion of white students is steadily declining (Orfield and Lee 2005). The Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area population reflects these national trends, with this increasing diversity particularly evident in the region's public schools.

It is in this context that the state of Minnesota finds itself attempting to reframe the issue as one of "integration" rather than "desegregation." With the use of language

2

promoting "meaningful interracial contact" and "cultural competency," policymakers and educators are working to define and promote this concept within a policy arena complicated by school choice legislation, economic disparities among metro area cities and towns, and overall declining public school enrollment. By investigating access to and use of integration resources in the state's largest urban center, this thesis elucidates and explains the social, legal and political context of the contemporary school desegregation debate in Minnesota.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This investigation explores the relationship between policy design and policy implementation in the area of school integration in Minnesota. The increased attention placed on student achievement as measured by standardized test scores threatens to obscure other objectives of U.S. public schools, such as the development of citizens able to navigate multicultural environments. A narrow focus on the "achievement gap" between students of color and their white peers has diverted attention from the increasing segregation of different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups in schools across the country. In Minnesota, state funds are available to promote interracial contact and cultural awareness among students and staff in state public schools through the Integration Revenue Statute (124D.86). Understandings of the purpose and appropriate uses of this funding vary greatly among legislators, school leaders and families of students. Differences among districts as well as a tradition of local control in terms of educational policy implementation produce a diversity of programming and interpretation of the Statute across the state.

This thesis addresses the ways in which Twin Cities metro area integration districts function within a climate of contested educational priorities, both in terms of funding and desired outcomes. Specific areas to be investigated through document analysis and literature review include demographic shifts in Minnesota since the 1970s (when school desegregation lawsuits originally led to mandated educational practices to promote integration), changes in school funding formulas, construction of the concept of

the "achievement gap" and its development as an accountability mechanism, and the purpose of the state Desegregation/Integration Administrative Rule (3535). Using a case study analysis approach including interviews with local educational leaders, I will contrast four models of inter-district collaboration to examine issues of integration in the Twin Cities metro area in terms of organization, management and resource distribution. Throughout I will seek to include evidence of particular cultural assumptions on the part of decision-makers, front-line service providers, students and families, and how these assumptions are developed in order to examine the importance of integration goals in the context of other educational priorities. The ways in which local policy implementation aligns (or doesn't) with policy intention at the state level is a key focus of analysis.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- In an educational era of heightened focus on high-stakes testing, decreasing available public resources, changing demographics and increasing globalization, how is integration programming prioritized in public schools?

- How are integrated learning environments developed conceptually and practically as a public good in Minnesota?

- How are the notions of educational equity and educational excellence related in the implementation of Minnesota's school integration policy?

- In what ways are metro area integration efforts similar across districts and in what ways do they vary? How are differences related to the construction of meaning of integration in different communities?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this paper, I will investigate these research questions through the use of a sociocultural approach, informed and developed by anthropological concepts and perspectives. Cognitive aspects of local decision-making and examination of policy tools used in implementation are also included in the analytic framework used.

Sociocultural Approach

From a sociocultural perspective, policy can be viewed as both "a practice of power" and a "contested cultural resource" (Levinson and Sutton 2001). Levinson and Sutton describe practice as "the way individuals, and groups engage in situated behaviors that are both constrained and enabled by existing structures but which allow the person to exercise agency in the emerging situation" (2001 p. 3). By viewing policy in this manner, the unique and disparate ways in which local actors interpret and enact programs designed at the state level can be identified and analyzed.

Shore and Wright posit that anthropology offers a way to examine how government policies work (or don't) as instruments of governance, and how political discourse constructs meaning around particular subjects (1997, p. 3). They further relate policy studies and anthropology by connecting a focus in both areas on issues of "norms and institutions, ideology and consciousness, knowledge and power, rhetoric and discourse, meaning and interpretation, the global and the local" (Shore and Wright 1997 p. 4) and define policy as a concept or cultural phenomenon which can serve as an object of

anthropological study.   The authors' discussion of how policy works to categorize and classify individuals (1997 p. 4) is related to school integration policy, which addresses specific classifications of students based on race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. "Not only do policies codify social norms and values, and articulate fundamental organizing principles of society, they also contain implicit (and sometimes explicit) models of society" (Shore and Wright 1997 p. 7). A stated goal of integrated learning environments (such as the magnet schools organized by districts examined in this study) is to reflect the multicultural identity of larger communities. In this way, Minnesota's school desegregation/integration policy can be seen as guiding the creation of such a "model of society." Anthropology is "particularly suited to analyzing how ideologies infiltrate the institutions and practices of everyday life" due to its awareness of multiple points of view and capacity to problematize the "taken for granted" (Shore and Wright 1997 p 24). Analyzing policy implementation from a sociocultural perspective involves incorporating an anthropological lens in order to understand cultural assumptions inherent in educational policy design, and in identifying how problems are defined and addressed.

Educational policy research can explain the mechanisms by which power is distributed, wielded and maintained by using an anthropological approach to expose hidden cultural assumptions that drive the development of legislative mandates and their implementation. Understanding such power dynamics is essential to defining what policy *does* rather than merely what policy *is* (Levinson and Sutton 2001). Examining the construction of social solidarity is an important part of analyzing educational policy

(Levinson and Sutton 2001). A purported commitment to multiculturalism and tolerance of difference is arguably a point of idealized social solidarity in urban U.S. communities; the segregated state of our schools may provide contradictory evidence.

Policy Instruments and "Sense-Making"

The conditions under which educational policies are implemented and function must be investigated by those interested in improving education in diverse communities in order to understand the interactions between people, places and policies (Honig 2006). The relationships among problem definition, instrument choice, organizational context, implementation and effects can be specified and understood using a conceptual framework that shows how substantive goals are translated into action (McDonnell and Elmore 1987). Examining policy instruments as a mechanism for such efforts broadens the scope of policy analysis (McDonnell and Elmore 1987), while studying aspects of organizations operating within highly contextualized policy fields can provide insight into local successes and failures (Honig 2004). Variables in implementation, such as local interpretation of policy, can be included in a conceptual framework that moves beyond static description of implementation processes, and is particularly appropriate in education due to large differences among local settings and weak links between policy and action (McDonnell and Elmore 1987).

As a sociocultural approach to policy analysis involves identifying and examining contextual effects, policy instrument identification can help specify the structural framework within which a certain policy operates. "Problem definition for policymakers

occurs within an essentially political context in which decisions are tempered by a variety of feasibility considerations" (McDonnell and Elmore 1987). Policymakers operate with their own different causal theories about how social systems *actually* operate and how they believe they *should* work and therefore choose instruments most consistent with their own values (McDonnell and Elmore 1987). How implementing agents understand a policy message and apply it locally can be explained by the interaction of policy signals with their existing cognitive structures of knowledge, beliefs and attitudes (Spillane et al 2002). This approach explores the notion of discretion by exploring how individual cognition, situated cognition, and role of representations affects "sense-making" on the part of implementers of educational polices and reforms (Spillane et al 2002). Processes by which understandings of policy are develop and the consequences of these understandings should be included in analyses of implementation (Spillane et al 2002).

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The following section reviews historical information relevant to the contemporary context of school integration. Legal precedent and resulting legislation have been key to changes in public education nationally and on the state level. Supreme Court cases that have shaped the legal context are first summarized, followed by a discussion of events and legislation pertinent to school integration in the state of Minnesota.

National Events in School Desegregation

The Supreme Court case *Plessy v. Ferguson* was an important precursor to *Brown v. Board of Education* and subsequent school desegregation lawsuits. In the 1896 *Plessy* decision, the Court found that the establishment of "separate but equal" public facilities did not violate the rights of Black citizens under the law (Brown and Hunter 1996). In that it upheld the current state of (non)enforcement of Civil Rights laws, *Plessy* represented a prevailing sentiment at the time of the inferiority of African-Americans in the U.S. (Tate et al 1993). The Fourteenth Amendment, which guarantees equal protection under the law to all citizens, was key to this case and to the school desegregation lawsuits that followed. In *Brown I* (1954), the Court reversed its decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* and found that legally mandated segregation of schools was a violation of the equal protection clause (Brown and Hunter 2009). Chief Justice Warren's opinion found that children of minority groups could not receive equal educational opportunities if segregated solely on the basis on race (Bell 2004). The

subsequent *Brown II* (1955) decision called for actual implementation of the original

decision, and ordered the dismantling of segregated school systems (Brown and Hunter

2009). Efforts were directed to begin with "all deliberate speed" but were met with great

resistance in some parts of the country (such as Little Rock, Arkansas) and little urgency

in others (Bell 2004). Although the actual desegregation of schools by race following

Brown v. Board of Education was slow and incomplete, the Court decision was clearly

influential. In interpreting the law in the manner they did, the justices sought to "shape

the sociocultural conscience of the nation" (Tate et al 1993). Not unimportantly, the

decision addressed the fact that 40 percent of students in the U.S. attended *de jure*

segregated schools at the time of the case and declared such separation unconstitutional

(Clotfelter 2004).

The *Brown* ruling "redefined the fundamental principles of equal access to public

education for all Americans, as well as the responsibility of the state to protect equal

educational opportunity for all of its citizens" (Anderson 2005 p. 30).   The promise of

this landmark case to achieve true desegregation of public schools or promote racial

equality remains unfulfilled, yet its societal importance cannot be overlooked. Clotfelter

states that "while school desegregation has been an imperfect revolution...it has been a

revolution nonetheless" (2004 p.10). The impact of the case on public opinion and as

legal precedent has perhaps been much stronger than in effecting true and lasting change

in education. This conflict between the symbolic and substantive function of the ruling

has had far-reaching effects (McNeal 2009). Numerically, many school districts across

the country, particularly those in urban areas, are now equally as or more segregated than

they were before mandated desegregation programs in the 1960s and 1970s (Clotfelter 2004, Orfield 2007).

In 2007 the U.S. Supreme Court issued another decision that has significantly affected the climate of school desegregation policy across the country. In a split 5-4 vote, the majority found unconstitutional two race-based school assignment programs in the cities of Louisville, Kentucky and Seattle, Washington (*Parents Involved in Community Schools...* 2007). This decision overturned lower court opinions that had determined that the districts were not in violation of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Citing the *Grutter* case which had upheld the value of diversity in higher education, the circuit court that heard the *Parents Involved...*case found educational benefits to be gained from diverse learning environments at lower grade levels as well (Frankenburg and Orfield 2007). The Supreme Court, however, found the goals of the Seattle and Louisville programs to be insufficiently narrow in focus. In particular, the majority objected to the racial classification systems used in both districts; in Seattle students were labeled as "white" or "nonwhite" and in Jefferson County as "black" or "other" (*Parents Involved...*2007). Both districts had adopted voluntary school assignment programs that used racial considerations in determining enrollment, but Jefferson County's plan was an outgrowth of a court-ordered desegregation plan in the 1970s, while Seattle's schools had never been subject to *de jure* segregation (*Parents Involved...* 2007). The *Meredith* case also primarily involved secondary school assignment, while *Parents Involved* focused on elementary schools.

Significantly, Justice Roberts declared in writing the majority opinion that although legally mandated racial segregation of schools is unconstitutional, the Constitution is not violated by racial imbalance (*Parents Involved*…2007). Therefore, once Jefferson County schools had been found to be no longer intentionally segregated, the use of race in school assignment decisions had to be justified on different grounds. The majority found the definition of diversity used in the two school districts as overly limited and not sufficiently proven as essential to providing equal education in the districts (*Parents Involved* 2007). Justice Breyer's dissent, however, described the local efforts in Louisville and Seattle as similar to many across the nation, designed to "bring about the kind of racially integrated education that *Brown v. Board of Education* long ago promised" and of the type that the court had repeatedly "required, permitted and encouraged" local authorities to undertake (*Parents Involved*…2007 p. 109). Justice Breyer went on to describe many districts as stepping up integration efforts in response to increasingly racially isolated schools, noting for example that one in six black children attending public school in the U.S. in 2007 went to schools that were 99-100 percent minority (*Parents Involved*…2007). Ultimately, the majority opinion allowed for the option of districts to establish school assignment decisions based on socioeconomic status rather than race, with goals that this would ultimately result in racially balanced schools.

School Desegregation in the State of Minnesota

From the time of its founding, the young state of Minnesota established somewhat contradictory policies regarding racial equality and access to resources. After receiving territorial status, the legislature began to institute measures to restrict civic participation

13

to white males in 1849 (Green 1996). Importantly, however, these same decision-makers passed an act designed to fund (through taxes) and guarantee education for "all children and youth of the Territory" in 1849 (Green 1996). This act was written at a time when the black population of Minnesota was very small and the territory's Native American population was already being increasingly isolated on reservations. When the population of black residents began to increase, so did discriminatory policies. By 1857, the St. Paul Board of Education passed a resolution to formally segregate black children in separate school facilities (Green 1996). The all-black schools that were established were clearly inadequate and did not provide an educational experience equivalent to white students in other schools. In response to public pressure, the St. Paul schools were officially desegregated (again) in 1869 by state legislative action (Green 1996).

By the middle of the twentieth century, Minnesota's Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis had *de facto* segregated schools, as did many northern cities, despite a legislative history of racial integration. Although *Brown v. Board of Education* had established a call for desegregation on the national level, action to implement the ruling lagged behind in most parts of the country. The school boards of both St. Paul and Minneapolis adopted desegregation policies in 1964 and 1967 respectively (OLA Report 2005). These programs focused on voluntary busing of students and were unsuccessful in substantively changing the racial isolation of students in city schools. In the 1971 U.S. District Court Case *Booker v. Special School District No. 1, Minneapolis, Minnesota*, the Minneapolis Public Schools district was sued by students alleging violation of their Fourteenth Amendment rights to Equal Protection and Due Process because of efforts on

14

the part of the school district to maintain segregated schools. Key to the plaintiffs' case

was a school assignment system by neighborhoods, which in a city with widespread

housing discrimination due to race would only serve to also create racially segregated

schools (Forbes and Cunningham 1996). The court found that the Minneapolis Public

Schools were indeed segregated and mandated the creation of a desegregation plan which

established two goals for elementary schools (to eliminate racially isolated schools and

replace obsolete school buildings) and three for secondary schools which emphasized

learning opportunities for junior high students and extending boundaries of junior high

schools to obtain better racial and economic balance (Forbes and Cunningham 1996).

Other goals included increasing the number of minority faculty in all schools.

The Minnesota State Board of Education adopted a "15-percent rule" for *all*

districts in 1973, which prohibited schools from having minority enrollments different

from district-wide averages per grade level by more than 15 percentage points (OLA

Report 2005 p. 4). At the time Minneapolis' new plan was developed in 1973, the

student body of Minneapolis Public Schools was calculated to be 15.8 percent minority

(Forbes and Cunningham 1996). By 1977 this percentage had grown to 24.4 percent,

according to district reports filed in compliance with the court order. This number

reflected demographic changes in the metro area and continued to rise in subsequent

years. After the *Booker* case mandated desegregation efforts, white students began to

leave the district, a trend that continued for the next several decades (Green 2005). The

district petitioned the court several times to change the desegregation plan, arguing that

the 35% limit of minority students in any one school was no longer obtainable and requesting an increase in the allowable percentage.

The original *Booker* lawsuit was dismissed by the Court in June of 1983, partly due to the fact that the Minnesota Department of Education had by this time established policies targeted to ensure equal educational opportunities and eliminate racial segregation (Forbes and Cunningham 1996). This included granting oversight responsibility on the part of the MDE to monitor desegregation efforts in Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth public schools (OLA Report 2005). The Court additionally opined that the Minneapolis School Board and Superintendent were now strong supporters of desegregation efforts, a change from the early 1970s. Subsequent long-term planning for desegregation/integration efforts in the Minneapolis Public Schools in the late 1980s and 1990s included the creation of magnet schools within the district as a way to encourage integrated learning opportunities through family choice rather than forced busing or district assignment. Similarly, one expressed purpose of the first six magnet schools opened in St. Paul in 1985 was to achieve racial balance (OLA Report 2005).

In that 35 percent of the student body of any one school in Minneapolis could not consist of minority students (Forbes and Cunningham1996) the district's original desegregation plan in many ways resembled those recently overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Parents Involved*. Despite this guideline and the statewide 15 percent rule, however, demographic shifts that resulted in increased concentrations of low-income students in Minneapolis, and in particular areas of the city, led once again to clear racial segregation in the district (Kraus 2008). A 1993 district plan acknowledged the

growing disparities in academic performance between students of color and white

students in spite of previous desegregation efforts (Forbes and Cunningham 1996). In

September of 1995, the NAACP filed a class action lawsuit against the State of

Minnesota and various officials and agencies on behalf of Minneapolis residents claiming

that the segregated nature of education in Minneapolis resulted in inherently inadequate

and unequal learning opportunities as compared to suburban children (Forbes and

Cunningham 1996).

This lawsuit came soon after the district's decision to return to a policy of

neighborhood school assignment of students, which at the time was supported by many

community constituents. Although the board attempted to limit the population of any one

to school to no more than 70 percent one racial or ethnic group, this ultimately proved

impossible and schools became increasingly segregated (Kraus 2008). The NAACP

lawsuit included condemnation of not only racial segregation, but socioeconomic

segregation as well. Central to the plaintiffs' argument was Article XIII of the Minnesota

State Constitution, which calls for the establishment of "a general and uniform system of

public schools" (Kraus 2008). Because neighboring communities did not have the same

racial and socioeconomic concentrations as Minneapolis, the lawsuit claimed the broader

school system did not meet this guideline (Kraus 2008). The NAACP court case was

unique among similar cases in other parts of the country in that it specifically noted

socioeconomic concentration in addition to racial isolation (Kraus 2008). The case in

some ways foreshadowed issues highlighted in the 2007 national court cases to come,

although it clearly condemned the school district in question for not doing enough to limit

segregation, rather than criticizing a program in place to address such issues as in the *Parents Involved* and *Meredith* cases.

As a result of the NAACP lawsuit, "the Choice is Yours" program was established. In this program, Minneapolis students who qualify for free or reduced lunch are given priority to attend suburban choice schools or choice magnet schools (ASPEN Associates Evaluation Report, 2007). Significantly, although the original lawsuit was filed primarily on behalf of African-American students in Minneapolis public schools district, student assignment in the Choice is Yours program is determined by socioeconomic status, not by race. This agreement, along with the new language of the state Desegregation/Integration Rule adopted in 2000, emphasize voluntary efforts to integrate schools rather than mandated numerical targets (Hawkins and Boyd 2008).

Across the United States, legal school segregation by race was ended by the mid-1970's, but subtler forms of segregation continued (Brown and Hunter 2009). Minnesota's history reflects this trend, which has in fact resulted in a return to greater segregation in many areas than existed at the time of implementation of the first court-ordered desegregation efforts. Although currently only about 60 percent of students nation-wide are white, as opposed to almost 80 percent at the time of the *Brown* decision, White students remain the most racially isolated of all racial groups in the United States (Frankenburg and Orfield 2007). Demographic trends have led to increased diversity across the country, but schools are increasingly more segregated by race. If existing patterns of re-segregation are not heeded as suburban areas across the country become

more diverse, schools that have become integrated for the first time may not remain so for long (Frankenburg and Orfield 2007).

The "Rule" and the "Statute"

Under Minnesota state law, school desegregation/integration programs are guided by Minnesota Administrative Rule 3535, parts 0100 to 0180 (hereafter "the Rule"), and Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.86 (hereafter "the Statute"). The Rule falls under Chapter 3535, Equal Opportunity in Schools, and has a stated purpose that addresses nine areas, the first of which is to "recognize the primary goal of public education is to enable all students to have opportunities to achieve academic success" (Minnesota Administrative Rules, 3535.0100). The purpose of the Rule further seeks to commit Minnesota's public schools to support ideals of integration, prevent segregation, promote school choice, and provide equitable access to resources with the goal of addressing academic achievement (Minnesota Administrative Rules, 3535.0100). Section 3535.0120 of the Rule requires school districts to collect and submit to the state data regarding the racial composition of each school and grade level.

The Integration Revenue Statute deals with the distribution of funds from the state legislature to school districts and establishes oversight responsibilities with the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). Districts identified through the requirements of the Rule develop proposed integration revenue budgets and submit them to MDE for review. The Statute also describes the necessary components of each program plan that funds will be used to implement (Minnesota Statute 124D.86). According to the MDE, districts that receive integration revenue must establish a community collaborative process to develop

a desegregation plan that reflects diversity of the district. Such plans typically include classroom and staff development activities designed to promote cultural awareness, and opportunities for increased interracial contact and experiences (MDE Integration-Desegregation 2008). The current Rule was adopted in the late 1990s and was accompanied by a significant increase in state spending on integration efforts (OLA Report 2005).

Minnesota's reputation as an early adopter of the ideals of the charter school movement and its state-wide open enrollment school choice regulations complicate integration efforts. Charter schools are not subject to the requirements of the Rule per the definition of "School" in the Rule (part 3535.0110), and therefore may be located in districts where the public schools are required to establish desegregation programs. Since the passage of the Open Enrollment Rule in 1991 (Hawkins and Boyd 2008), families may elect to send their children to any school, including those outside students' home districts, with an open seat. The voluntary nature of participation in integration activities therefore reflects a prevailing climate of "choice" in Minnesota's education system, yet makes achieving true desegregation through legislative action extremely difficult.

The major findings and key recommendations of an evaluation of the Integration Revenue program conducted by the Office of the Legislative Auditor in 2005 were summarized as "the Integration Revenue program needs more focus and oversight" (OLA Report 2005). More specifically, the report called for greater approval authority, evaluation efforts, and funding control from the Minnesota Department of Education, and for the state Legislature to clarify the purpose of the Rule (OLA Report 2005). Growing

concern over racial achievement gaps have further expanded the debate over integration

revenue, as many legislators now call for the revenue to show impact on student

performance.

RELATED LITERATURE

This section reviews relevant commentary on issues related to school integration, including connections between race, education and the U.S. economy, Critical Race Theory analyses of the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, and the growing call for "accountability" in public schools. Connections between these issues and educational policy implementation are then made through a review of work in this area.

Reflections on *Brown* and Related Cases

"The history of public school segregation, desegregation, and re-segregation from the antebellum period to the present constitutes an American story of contradictory legal and social reforms- reforms that are liberal regarding standards of constitutional equality and conservative with respect to the subtle and institutionalized arrangements designed to sustain racial inequality and school segregation in day to day life" (Anderson 2005 p. 30).

The significance of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision may be most important for reasons other than its impact on creating integrated schools in the United States. Despite its inclusion in discussions of the Civil Rights movement, many contemporary scholars now debate the motivation of those involved in the lawsuit and the Supreme Court's decision. As Ladson-Billings describes: "*Brown* has taken on a mythic quality that actually distorts the way many Americans have come to understand its genesis and function in society" (2004, p. 3) and argues that rather than serving as evidence of altruism and goodness in the United States, it is a product of a particular political and

social period in the country's history. Derrick Bell's critique of the true meaning of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision is a classic example of the use of Critical Race Theory in examining legal aspects of educational policy (Dixson and Rousseau 2005). In his analysis, the elimination of state-sponsored racial segregation was strongly motivated by the government's desire to promote its democratic government as superior to communism (Bell 2004). Tate et al. attribute the failure of the *Brown* decisions to effectively combat segregation due to the attempt to apply "an essentially mathematical solution to a sociocultural problem" (1993 p. 260).

Since *Brown*, the fundamental question in many school desegregation lawsuits and other court cases related to affirmative action for members of historically disadvantaged groups has been whether or not diversity is a compelling state interest. Even in situations where diversity *has* been considered as such, defendants must prove that their plans have been "sufficiently narrow" to further such goals if racial information is used in, for example, school admissions policies. The Supreme Court's ruling in *Parents Involved* centered around the majority opinion that the school admissions systems in place in Louisville, Kentucky and Seattle, Washington were not narrowly tailored toward this goal (Thro and Russo 2009).

The *Gratz* and *Grutter* Supreme Court cases were seen as tests of the constitutionality of affirmative action in higher education. In *Gratz* the Court found that the University of Michigan could not use race as a factor in the point system that determined undergraduate admissions, but in *Grutter* the Court found that the University of Michigan's Law School had shown that diversity was a compelling factor for the

quality of education offered in the school and could be considered. Derrick Bell feels

that the *Grutter* decision and Justice O'Connor's support of the University of Michigan's

admissions policy was due to the fact that it was "an affirmative action plan that

minimizes the importance of race while offering maximum protection to whites" (2004 p.

151). Perhaps foreshadowing Justice Roberts' statement in the *Parents Involved* opinion

that "the way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the

basis of race" (*Parents Involved* p. 41), in reflecting on the *Gratz* and *Grutter* decisions

Moses and Marin describe the political debate surrounding affirmative action as one

stemming from varied interpretations of the meaning of fairness and racism, as well as

"from profound theoretical disagreements between those who believe that democratic

ideals require affirmative action policy and those who believe that the same ideals require

abolishing it" (2005 p.4). The school desegregation plans currently being implemented

following the *Parents Involved* decision may represent a new form of affirmative action;

one based on socioeconomic status rather than race, and therefore perhaps more palatable

to a white power base.

    In her book *Colormute,* Mica Pollock discusses how the removal of race from

conversations about inequality in education can have a direct negative impact on efforts

designed to improve opportunities for minority students. Her ethnographic study on how

students and educators spoke (and didn't speak) about race in a California school took

place in the context of the passage of Proposition 209, a statewide anti-affirmative action

referendum. She notes that following the referendum's passage all University of

California recruitment materials replaced race terms with the word "disadvantaged," and

that subsequent enrollment statistics showed a drastic decline in the number of already underrepresented groups in the student body (Pollock 2004). In her words, "the erasure of race words had not erased racially patterned disadvantage itself" (Pollock 2004 p. 145).

Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Education

Critical Race Theory emphasizes that although racial differences among groups of people are socially constructed and have no biological basis, they still determine an important element of human interaction in contemporary American society. As summarized by Ladson-Billings and Tate: "Thinking of race strictly as an ideological construct denies the reality of a racialized society and its impact on 'raced' people in their everyday lives. On the other hand, thinking of race solely as an objective condition denies the problematic aspects of race: How do we decide who fits into which racial classifications? How do we categorize racial mixtures? Indeed, the world of biology has found the concept of race virtually useless" (1995, in Dixson and Rousseau 2006 p. 12). The relationship between Critical Race Theory and public educational policy in the United States is evident in an increased focus on disparities in academic performance among different groups of students categorized by race. Critical Race Theory began as a legal studies movement but has been applied by educational researchers to investigate issues of achievement testing, curricular controversy, school discipline and hierarchy (Delgado and Stefancic 2001). The role played by rhetoric and discourse surrounding racial power issues is illuminated by Critical Race Theory analyses of social policy

(Dumas and Anyon 2006). This academic approach offers a valuable perspective when analyzing school integration policy because of the centrality of race in any discussion of desegregation, and the importance of state and federal Supreme Court cases in the development of the field.

Dixson summarizes Matsuda et al. in describing Critical Race Theory as generally reflective of six common themes:

> 1) CRT recognizes that racism is a pervasive and permanent part of American society; 2) CRT challenges dominant claims of objectivity, neutrality, colorblindness, and merit; 3) CRT challenges ahistoricism and insists on recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color in analyzing law and society 5) CRT is interdisciplinary; and 6) CRT works toward eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression   (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado, Crenshaw 1993, in Dixson and Rousseau 2006)

The activist aspect of Critical Race Theory as an academic discipline (Delgado and Stefancic 2001) is one element of why this framework can help illuminate aspects of school integration efforts, particularly policy aspects. CRT seeks to examine how racial lines and hierarchies are organized in society as well as how to change them (Delgado and Stefancic 2001). The attention paid to history and its impact on the development on current contexts is additionally an important feature of CRT: an attempt to introduce complexity into overly simplified historical accounts that often eliminate the stories of people of color (Taylor 2009). Ladson-Billings and Tate specifically relate Critical Race Theory to issues of school desegregation by citing evidence that policies enacted as a results of "ineffective Civil Rights Law" (specifically *Brown v. Board of Education*) have

in fact stimulated white flight, and that highly segregated schools now exist in many urban areas, particularly for African American students (2006, p. 19). They further explore the ways in which many desegregation efforts have focused resources on stemming white flight rather than reducing inequitable resource access for students of color and conclude: "...a model desegregation program becomes defined as one which ensures that whites are happy (and do not leave the system altogether), regardless of whether African American and other students of color achieve and remain" (Ladson-Billings and Tate 2006 p. 20). Delgado and Stefancic also describe how CRT has incorporated critiques of "triumphalist history" by showing how "…favorable precedent, like *Brown v. Board of Education,* tends to deteriorate over time, cut back by narrow lower-court interpretation and administrative foot dragging and delay" (2001, p. 5).

Although Critical Race Theorists see racism and prejudice as subject to deconstruction in part because race is "not real or objective" (Delgado and Stefancic 2001 p. 43), it is important in an analysis of school integration to identify the ways in which race categories are used in the field of education. The social construction of race in schools is significant in that "categories and subgroups are not just matters of theoretical interest. How we frame them determines who has power, voice and representation and who does not" (Delgado and Stefancic 2001 p. 55). In 1998 the American Anthropological Association issued a statement on race designed to represent generally accepted scholarly opinion on the topic. Important points in the document included the greater degree of genetic variation among people within the same "race" as between people of different "races," and the subjective nature of categorizing people

based on physical differences (American Anthropological Association 1998). Historical patterns of discrimination are cited as having created current patterns of inequality which assign members of certain groups to perpetual low status based on a racial worldview (American Anthropological Association 1998). The statement concludes that "inequalities between so-called "racial" groups are not consequences of their biological inheritance but products of historical and contemporary social, economic, educational, and political circumstances" (American Anthropological Association 1998).

A demographic report from the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Council also describes the anthropological position that race exists only as a racial construct with no biological base, and the fact that racial identity assumptions have been "vigorously disputed" in recent decades (McMurry 2001 p. 1). Gibson and Jung describe how racial categorization and survey strategies used by the Census have changed in reflection of "social attitudes and political considerations," but that they do not attempt to define race "biologically or genetically" (2002). In Minnesota, most respondents who identified as more than one race on the 2000 Census (the first year such a choice was available) chose combinations of white and American Indian and white and African American (McMurry 2001). These same documents also refer repeatedly to "nonwhite" populations (McMurry 2001) indicating a continued assumption that "white" identity is the standard against which others are compared. Bell and others have criticized this "binary system" through which Americans tend to view race, as "black" or "white" (2004 p. 82). Other reports categorize respondents by ancestry, which provides a deeper image of the ethnic identities of people classified into broader race categories. The "Profile of Selected

Social Characteristics" for the metro area from 2000 Census data includes 28 categories, including "other ancestries," generally organized by nationality (2000). The expansion of identification options shows that although society's understanding of racial classification may be becoming more nuanced and complex, assumptions remain that race exists and is significant.

Race, Class and Educational Achievement

Recent court decisions (*Parents Involved*) may indicate a shift in focus away from academic performance based on racial/ethnic categories in schools and rather on socioeconomic status. Students are already categorized in reference to whether or not they qualify for free and reduced lunch, a program tied to the federal poverty line. The disproportionate number of children of color living in poverty in the United States and the fact that as a measure of social class, socioeconomic status has long been tied to measures of educational achievement (Anyon 2005) underline the fact that the issues of race and economic advantage remain intertwined. Studies that have examined differences in academic performance consistently point to the impact of poverty in creating cognitive deficits, and the absence of racial or ethnic effects if socioeconomic conditions are accounted for (Anyon 2005). Evidence clearly points to a valid focus on the part of educators in eradicating the effects of poverty on the education of children in public school. A concern remains on the part of many dedicated to addressing racial inequalities, however, that these issues will be overshadowed by a new focus on socioeconomic status. Anderson describes poverty as "the most critical factor affecting

the school achievement of African American, Latino, and Native American schoolchildren (as well as Asian American groups such as Laotians, Vietnamese, and Cambodians)" and that "…the resolution of this form of inequality has little to do with whether schools are segregated or desegregated and much to do with the continued subordination of racial minorities" (2005 p. 32).

Ladson-Billings and Tate identify the prominence of property rights in U.S. social and legal history as significant and state that "The intersection of race and property creates an analytic tool through which we can understand social (and, consequently, school) inequity" (2006, p. 12). As local property taxes are a significant source of funding for public education in most parts of the United States, this connection is clear. Disparities in local wealth and segregated housing patterns are both elemental issues to be considered in addressing school segregation. The idea of a "public good" also relates to concepts of property and local values, and in examining the idea of integration in this manner it is essential to address issues of institutionalized power structures, educational assumptions and measures of academic success as they relate to distribution of resources.

Jean Anyon echoes these connections between the economy of the United States and its public education system. She believes that a macroeconomic system that "chases profits and casts people aside (especially people of color) is culpable" (Anyon 2005 p. 3). In this sense, no amount of educational policy designed to improve academic opportunities for students of color will ever be fully realized in the absence of greater societal reforms to solve problems of unemployment, joblessness, and poverty (Anyon 2005). Brown and Hunter further discuss how public education does not respond to true

market conditions, because consumer demands do not result in changes. Assuming all parents want the best for their children all the time, changes in educational quality are linked to state funding levels, not consumer demands (Brown and Hunter 2009).

One outcome of the *Brown* decision that should not be overlooked was the growth in academic research designed to document the benefits of interracial contact for students in public schools. The Coleman Report in 1966 is frequently cited as the first of several to quantify gains in academic achievement for minority students in integrated learning environments (Clotfelter 2004). Measuring academic achievement and school performance has continued as a constant theme, but the passage in 2002 of the No Child Left Behind Act (hereafter, "NCLB") highlighted the issue as never before. NCLB has, among other things, mandated that each state establish standardized testing and data collection of student performance, disaggregated by subcategories, to be submitted annually to the U.S. Department of Education. Gloria Ladson-Billings has critiqued accountability metrics, and has suggested completely restructuring the debate over "achievement gaps" to one focused, rather, on what she terms "education debt" (2006, 2007). Her discussion includes socioeconomic factors related to education such as school funding formulas, income disparities between Black and White families, a "health gap" and housing access among others (Ladson-Billings 2007). The language of the "achievement gap" places the burden of underachievement "on the students, their families, and in some cases individual teachers" and "constructs students as defective and lacking" and in need of "catching up" (Ladson-Billings 2007 p. 322).

The influence of NCLB and other calls for measurable accountability on Minnesota's integration policy can be seen in a greater desire to link school desegregation goals to achievement, and a debate in the legislature over how the two issues are related. Critical Race Theory has also been used to critique standardized testing in public education, by demonstrating how the standard of "merit" supposedly evidenced by such exams is by no means neutral when the context in which the tests are developed and conducted is considered (Delgado and Stefancic 2001).

Pauline Lipman further believes that educational accountability "is part of a process of undermining social solidarities" because it is contrary to an ethic of collective action and social responsibility (2005 p. 321). In her discussion of the politics of globalization and supremacy, Lipman describes how schools can be used as elements of coercive governmental attempts to produce compliant behavior and in particular intensify "...the incarceration, policing, and containment of people of color" (2005 p. 317-8). The increasing racial, ethnic and socioeconomic segregation of schools is a social practice that reinforces systematic repression. Lipman argues that politically engaged ethnography can be used to link "micro with macro from an anti-imperialist, anti-neoliberal position" by studying relationships between cultural and social processes and policies in schools (2005 p.319). By linking local issues to shifts on a global scale, such research can look at ways to challenge the economic and social inequality in schools and examine democratic alternatives (Lipman 2005).

Some Critical Race Scholars have also identified as important the fundamental link between the form of democracy practiced in U.S. society and capitalism. Because

the country's governmental and legal structures were largely developed by successful

capitalists, individual and civil rights have been disproportionately distributed to property

owners (Ladson-Billings and Tate 2006). This history has led to both explicit and

implicit relationships between property and education (Ladson-Billings and Tate 2006).

Property tax debates, for example, indicate resentment from more affluent community

members whose high property values help pay for a public school system "whose

clientele is largely nonwhite and poor" (Ladson-Billings and Tate 2006 p. 17). In

Minnesota, the state educational funding formula generally receives high marks for its

attempts at addressing socio-economic inequalities, by taking into account the additional

costs of educating students in poverty and that speak native languages other than English.

Minneapolis and St. Paul therefore receive more per-pupil dollars than surrounding

suburban districts, yet these districts continue to show lower graduation rates and test

scores. This race-based "achievement gap" exists between Minneapolis and its suburbs

as well as among schools within the district (Green 2005).

Addressing the causes of this gap are complex and debated. The original

proposed wording of the state Desegregation/Integration Rule's purpose began with a

recognition that while "there are societal benefits from schools that are racially balanced,

there are many factors which can impact the ability of school districts to provide racially

balanced schools, including housing, jobs and transportation" (Minnesota Administrative

Rules, 3535.0100). Subsequent changes, however, emphasize school and district

responsibilities more than community context. Anyon describes the effect of such factors

on urban educational policy, but further cites trends toward areas of concentrated poverty

in suburban neighborhoods and an increase in racial minorities living beyond the center

cities in large metropolitan areas. Although identifying the failure of policies that

"…sustain urban minority poverty and metropolitan arrangements that spread resources

unequally through regions" (Anyon 2005, p. 9) as formative of problems in urban

neighborhoods and schools, she also describes a potential opportunity for communities to

work together in order to address common challenges: "the spread of concentrated

poverty outside the central core also suggests that coalitions between inner cities and

urbanized, segregated suburbs would produce powerful political constituencies for

education and other reform" (Anyon 2005 p. 9). Minnesota's school Desegregation/

Integration Rule does, in fact, attempt to encourage the creation of collaboratives

representative of the community. The extent to which those working within these

structures feel empowered on a political level to effect change in addressing issues of

school segregation is explored in greater detail later in this paper.

Education as a Public Good

Theorists have debated whether or not free and publicly funded education can be

described as a public good; in pure economic terms it does not meet strict standards as

non-rivaled and non-excludable (Menashy 2009). Several writers have, however,

proposed particular frameworks within which education can be seen as a public good, in

order to highlight issues of access and to discuss points of contention in increasing

privatization of schooling or educational services. Although critics present such

arguments as distortion of classical theory, others have suggested that basic education

could be considered an *impure* public good as it is "widely consumed as non-exclusive" (Menashy 2009, 310)

Discussion of whether education functions as a public good in American society is relevant to school desegregation efforts in Minnesota because this policy area functions within the realm of school choice, which is clearly impacted by the application of economic theory to education. In purely economic terms, a public good is must be available to all and use by one does not limit use by another. Such goods are provided by public institutions and seen to operate differently than private good or commodities, which are affected by market shifts. Although education may not meet all the technical aspects of public good definition in the view of some political economists, (Grace 1994), as a publicly-funded and provided service available to all children defined as school-age, education has functioned as a public good (Grace 1989). In order to combat what he sees as the "dehumanizing and mechanizing effect" of operating educational systems under input-output production functions (Grace 1994, 132) Grace has proposed an expanded definition of public good as:

> That which potentially enhances the person (regardless of the social status of that person) for the full realization of all their abilities and competencies;
>
> That which potentially develops in that person a sense of moral, social, economic and political responsibility as a citizen;
>
> That which potentially assists the effective operation of democratic government and the emergence of more equitable conditions in society and which, in its operation, is not affected by the differential market capacity of individuals and of families to pay for a privileged share of these benefits (Grace 1989, 214-215).

Grace's definition focuses on benefits as well as access, as does an alternative definition with a more global focus proposed by Kaul and Mendoza and applied by Menashy to education:

> Goods have a potential for being public if they have nonexcludable benefits, nonrival benefits, or both.
>
> Goods are de facto public if they are nonexclusive and available for all to consume.
>
> Global public goods are goods whose benefits extend to all countries, people and generations (Kaul and Mendoza 2003, in Menashy 2009).

Labaree also argues that educational goals of democratic equality and social efficiency view education as a public good (1997). School objectives that follow these goals are those that relate to prepare citizens and train workers, and support citizen and taxpayer priorities (Labaree 1997).

The commodification of educational services, however, represent a shift in perspective and potentially limit the social justice objectives of education (Grace 1989). Efforts to privatize aspects of public education seek to create a "market" for education and introduce competition. Voucher systems and charter schools established by business enterprises are examples of such efforts (McNeil 2002), and in Minnesota, expanded school choice legislation potentially functions as an example of such activities. Governance structures in schools and districts can be examined to elicit information regarding assumptions of democratic decision-making and what elements of education are constructed as public goods (McNeil 2002). I posit that by suggesting that students benefit from interracial learning opportunities and providing funding to address racial, ethnic and socioeconomic segregation in schools, integration policy directives embody an

assumption of integration as a public good. The confusion and debate in the field,

however, demonstrate that this is not a unanimous interpretation, and Menashy warns that

consideration of education in economic terms may distract from concerns over education

as a basic right (2009). This aspect of analysis is therefore considered as one among

many, in an attempt to frame discussion of growing attention of education reform efforts

described in terms of economic imperative.

Policy Implementation Analysis in Educational Contexts

Implementation studies that analyzed local responses to educational policy began in

earnest in the 1960s and 70s, when increased government spending on education led to

subsequent demands on the part of policymakers to determine effectiveness of the

programs that were funded (Odden 1991). Although these early studies revealed many

examples of failed implementation efforts (Odden 1991), true understandings of why

such failures occurred were limited. As policy implementation as a field of study

evolved, the inclusion of local stakeholder interpretation expanded studies past "top-

down" analyses, and revealed how most educational policy was made with little input

from front-line implementers (Odden 1991). Initial studies of front-line implementation

were also incomplete, however, and frequently assumed that individual self-interest may

conflict with and lead to subversion of policymakers' original designs (Honig 2006).

These studies showed that local context mattered, but did little to explain *how* (Honig

2006).

How implementation unfolds in the context of place, participants' starting beliefs

and knowledge, and the specific demands of particular policies should be the aim of contemporary implementation research (Honig 2006). An emphasis on tailoring goals and strategies to local needs and resources requires greater site knowledge and understanding (Honig 2004), while non-normative aspects of policy may lead to inconsistent behaviors (Spillane et al 2002). Identifying the policy tools or instruments used in the implementation of particular policies can provide additional insight into local interpretation. McDonnell and Elmore exhort researchers addressing educational reform efforts to study both *why* different instruments are selected by policymakers and *how* they operate locally (1987). They define four general classes of instruments as mandates, inducements, capacity-building and system-changing efforts and summarize the actions required by each instrument as rule-setting, conditional transfer of money, investment in future capacity, and granting or withdrawing authority to individuals or agencies (McDonnell and Elmore 1987).

Minnesota's Desegregation/Integration Rule and Integration Revenue Statute involve elements of all four tools listed above, a situation which may in itself present a view of the complicated nature of implementation of such policy. Mandates require enforcement in order to effectively govern the actions of implementers, but assume that the required action is something that these actors should be expected to do (McDonnell and Elmore 1987). Original court-ordered school desegregation programs are classic examples of educational policy mandates, particularly in light of the fact that without enforcement many districts would have refused to desegregate their schools. In Minnesota, the inclusion of the Rule under chapter 3535, Equal Educational Opportunity,

implies that school integration is part of a larger set of expected behaviors on the part of local education agencies. Additionally, the mandates imposed by the NCLB Act requiring narrowing of the "achievement gap" affect other aspects of education and influence local implementation by creating a high-stakes context. Requiring schools and students to reach state-set levels of performance can both create unrealistic timelines for implementers and create disincentives to exceed minimum standards for compliance (McDonnell and Elmore 1987). Local voluntary integration plans must be developed in Minnesota school districts as defined by the Rule; this mandate therefore defines the context in which implementation occurs.

Rather than evoke compliance, inducements are expected to produce value (as measured by performance) by transferring money to agencies; this tool is often chosen when local capacity is assumed to vary and coercion is seen as less effective in affecting performance (McDonnell and Elmore 1987). The voluntary nature of the use of much integration revenue and problems with clarity in the purpose of the Rule demonstrate a possible weakness of inducements in this policy area. Policymakers must determine how much variation they are willing to tolerate in the use of inducement money and how narrowly to prescribe how the money will be used (McDonnell and Elmore 1987). Inducements are most successful when a problem exists primarily due to a lack of money (McDonnell and Elmore 1987). Integrated education is clearly a much more complicated issue, and revenue alone is unlikely to fully address the underlying causes of segregation. The presence of local capacity to implement and understand policymakers' objectives is also key to the success of such instruments (McDonnell and Elmore 1987), and

inconsistencies in this area among integration collaboratives point to the need for additional policy tools.

By investing in material and human capital, capacity-building efforts are imbued with expectation of future returns (McDonnell and Elmore 1987). The benefits of investments in capacity-building must often be measured in the short-term, however, often leading policymakers to use "immediate measures as proxies for their long-term effects" (McDonnell and Elmore 1987 p. 139). In this way, the distant goals of capacity-building are often tied to the "proximate and tangible" effects of mandates and inducements (McDonnell and Elmore 1987 p. 139). In the local field of integration policy implementation, the ability of revenue receiving districts to deliver culturally responsive, relevant and competent instruction that increases academic achievement for all students requires building the capacity of educators. In order to achieve this goal, however, policy makers may require short-term evidence that funding is being used to organize professional development workshops and classes with these goals, or show adoption of research-based, data-driven practices.

Capacity building is related to broader themes of democratic decision-making and educational systems as part of public good provision because as an instrument it assumes that "(a) in the absence of immediate investment, future materials, intellectual or human benefits will not be realized by society; and (b) that these longer term benefits are either worth having in their own right, or are instrumental to other purposes that policymakers regard as important" (McDonnell and Elmore 1987). Increasingly, however, the traditional capacity of school administrators and other education leaders is too limited to

meet the demands of contemporary policy, and many districts are calling on what Honig

calls "intermediary organizations" (2004 p. 65). Professional development providers,

collaborative community councils and a new professional organization for integration

leaders function as such intermediaries in the context of school desegregation/integration

in Minnesota. In addition, following Honig's definition of intermediary organizations as

those which function independently in a space between policymakers and policy

implementers and enable changes in roles and practices for both parties (Spring 2004),

interdistrict collaborative offices themselves serve intermediary functions between

member districts and the Minnesota Department of Education, as they manage revenue

and establish practices from MDE on the local level, but also lobby the State legislature

to redefine the Rule.

A contradiction in many educational policies exists due to the conflicting time lines

necessary to implement capacity-building measures and mandates. Many seemingly

straightforward mandates may in reality require a great deal of capacity building to be

achieved; McDonnell and Elmore cite state graduation standards as an example of such a

superficial mandate (1987). Similarly, mandates to close the "achievement gap" require

broader changes to teaching and structural capacity-building.

System-changing efforts are a fourth instrument described by McDonnell and

Elmore; such policy instruments involve the transfer of official authority among

individuals and agencies and can have either narrowing or broadening effects (1987). In

the local field of school choice, transferring increasing amounts of federal and state

education aid to charter schools is an example of this tool. By publicly funding such

institutions outside the traditional education system, increased competition has arisen among service-providers. In addition, such schools are provided with levels of autonomy that grant authority. The exclusion of such schools from the state Desegregation/Integration Rule directly affects the local field of integration. System-changing instruments "significantly change the nature of what is produced or the efficiency with which it is produced" (McDonnell and Elmore 1987, 143). Actions geared primarily to increasing efficiency focus on market forces, such as competition, while other methods of changing decision-making power may operate within established democratic processes. Redistributing or granting new levels of authority to institutions can create new problems for policymakers, however, as existing organizations may "blunt or co-opt system-broadening policies" McDonnell and Elmore 1987, 144. As study findings will show later in this paper, the required collaborative nature of integration programming in the Twin Cities Metro Area may be interpreted quite differently by implementers than policy-makers intended, particularly in the ability of districts to voluntarily leave multi-district collaboratives if they choose. As Honig states, "collaborative education policies traditionally pose significant implementation challenges for school systems" (Spring 2004, 70).

 Decision-makers at multiple levels would do well to pay attention to the tendency of system-changing policies to "devolve or degrade into incremental modifications of existing institutions and into more traditional mandates and inducements" (McDonnell and Elmore 1987, 144).

   How policy instruments are selected and implemented is dependent on the

availability of resources and the presence of constraints in the policy environment. McDonnell and Elmore define six such resources and constraints as: institutional context, governmental capacity, fiscal resources, political support and opposition, information, and past policy choices (1987). These aspects of implementation should be analyzed in order to answer questions relative to the motivations of policymakers in choosing particular instruments, as well as those regarding implementation successes and challenges. Although weaknesses in policy design may contribute to implementation failures, differing expressions of policy may be due to more than a policy's ambiguity (Spillane et al 2002). Rather than misunderstanding the purpose, implementers may in fact be purposefully adjusting what they view as locally appropriate responses. Due to the tendency of many agents to overlook or ignore novel ideas that contradict previously held beliefs or that fall outside of an individual's existing framework of understanding (Spillane et al 2002), both capacity-building and system-changing policy instruments require addressing cognitive aspects of policy implementation. The activities of interdistrict collaboratives also contribute to the situated cognition of implementing agents within these organizations, as the social sense-making process takes place within a particular context (Spillane et al 2002). The interpretive aspect of this process is evident in the differing ways integration policy is applied in districts in Minnesota. Convincing policymakers and implementers to adjust their interpretation or adopt new strategies related to school desegregation and integration necessitates an understanding of historical and contemporary influences on general assumptions in the field.

STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS

A qualitative analysis approach was used to explore ways in which legal precedent and related state legislation have shaped current implementation of integration policy and to examine the activities of leaders in the field. I chose to focus on efforts in the Twin Cities Metro Area in order to limit the scope of the study. Using a case study approach, I sought to examine and illuminate decision-making processes, organizational structures, and programming implementation in four local integration districts and collaboratives. I conducted document analyses of materials obtained from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and the districts studied, and interviewed MDE integration specialists and superintendents and directors of: WMEP (West Metro Educational Program), EMID (East Metro Integration District), Northwestern Suburban Integration Program, and the newly formed multi-district collaborative of North St. Paul-Maplewood and Mahtomedi districts.

Document review

A variety of district materials, state documents and evaluation reports were used to construct an understanding of the programs studied. Primary policy documents were the state Desegregation/Integration Administrative Rule (3535) and the Integration Revenue Statute (124D.86). Evaluation reports of the Choice is Yours program from years 2006, 2007, and 2009 were accessed from the School Choice department at the Minnesota Department of Education. Program specialists provided template documents used by districts to design plans and apply for integration revenue, as well as statewide

information about a variety of integration models and efforts. Three of the local multi-district collaboratives (EMID, WMEP and Northwestern Suburban) provided additional printed materials such as budget documents, promotional items, and district correspondence and all three maintain extensive websites. The integration plans submitted to the state for each of the three were also reviewed.

Historical analysis/synthesis

In order to provide context and establish a timeline of integration efforts in the metro area, important events and court cases related to desegregation efforts in the central cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul were reviewed. Area demographics and population statistics were examined, and school district student data collected.

Interviews

An initial two-hour fact-gathering interview was conducted with two integration program specialists at the Minnesota Department of Education in March. Information cited from this interview was pulled from field notes. Based on a review of data from this meeting and initial document review, an interview protocol was developed for multi-district collaborative superintendents and directors. This initial protocol was piloted in an informational meeting with the director of interdistrict magnet schools in New Haven, Connecticut. Interviews were then conducted with the leaders of the local interdistrict collaboratives, which were digitally recorded and transcribed; quotations from these interviews are taken directly from these transcripts. Of these superintendents and directors, one was a biracial (African-American/white) woman, one was an African-American woman, and two were white men. The interviews lasted between 45 and 90

45

minutes and took place at various locations in the metro area. Pseudonyms are used in place of names of the interviewees in accordance with IRB guidelines. Additional informational meetings occurred spontaneously with a magnet schools enrollment specialist in Northwestern Suburban Integration District and with the director of Educational Services at EMID. Field notes were used to record data from these conversations and were used to build a broader understanding of the efforts in those two districts, but no quotations were used as these employees were not included in my application to the IRB for Exempt research status.

Data Analysis

Inductive analysis of the interviews with the four integration leaders was done using a constant comparative process (Merriam 1998) which resulted in the coding schema found in Appendix A. Main themes were organized into seven categories and further divided into subnodes. Arranging data in this manner allowed for the identification of "key linkages" which clarified general patterns (Erickson 1986). In the following sections I will elaborate on findings in the areas highlighted by the seven main codes, synthesizing information from literature review, document and historical analysis, and data gained from interviews. The remainder of the paper will discuss implications for the future, the academic significance of the study, and possible areas for further study.

STUDY FINDINGS

Community Context

Understanding the state and local context within which public education policy is developed is essential to appropriately analyzing its implementation. This section will review population shifts in the metro area in general and in local school districts in particular. A discussion of the significance of demographics and school choice policy on integration efforts follows.

Metro Area Demographics, from the era of Brown v. Board to Education to present

The metropolitan area of Minneapolis-St. Paul has experienced significant demographic changes and shifts since the middle of the twentieth century. Although the overall population has grown, Census data show a distinct move away from the central cities and changes in the racial and ethnic makeup of metro area communities. In 1950, the estimated total populations of Minneapolis and St. Paul were 521,718 and 311,349 respectively, and 98 percent of residents of both cities were classified as white (Gibson and Jung 2005). By 1990, Minneapolis' population had dropped to 368,383 and St. Paul to 272,235, and the percent of the population identified as white had also declined to 78.4 percent in Minneapolis and 82.3 percent in St. Paul (Gibson and Jung, 2005). In 2002, the metro area as a whole was ranked 15th largest in the nation in terms of population size, and showed an increase of 16.9 percent from 1990 to 2000 according to Census data, with an overall population of almost 3,000,000 people (Minnesota Planning Agency 2002). While growth in central Hennepin and Ramsey counties was stable or slightly in

decline, suburban counties in the metro area (Anoka, Carver, Scott, Dakota and Washington) saw population growth rates between 8 and 39 percent between 2000 and 2007 (Twin Cities Compass 2009).

The state of Minnesota serves as a destination for refugees and asylum seekers, and immigration to Minnesota is more strongly affected by international political events than national immigration in general (Minnesota Planning 1998). Refugees from Africa, Eastern Europe, and Southeast Asia made up 42.2 percent of all immigrants to Minnesota in 1996 (Minnesota Planning 1998). In addition, immigrant families in the area tend to be younger and have more children. From 1990 to 2000, the number of Hispanic/Latino, Asian and Black African residents increased "dramatically" (McMurry 2001 p. 3). Although more rural parts of the state are also experiencing demographic changes, the majority of these immigrants settle in the Twin Cities metro area. From 1990 to 2000, the suburban areas of the metro area became increasingly racially and ethnically diverse (McMurry 2001) and the under-18 population was more diverse than the adult population of the state as a whole and the metro area in particular, where diversity is highest (Ronningen 2004).

The 2000 Census recorded a snapshot of the area at the beginning of the 21st century. By race, the metro area population was predominantly white, with 86 percent of those surveyed for the Census falling into this category. About 26 percent of the population was under age 18 (Profile of General… 2000). Just over 4.3 percent of the total metro area population was living at or below the federal poverty level (Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics 2000). In contrast, data for the cities of Minneapolis

and St. Paul show a much different picture. In Minneapolis, almost 40 percent of the

population was identified as minority and 22 percent was under 18 (Minneapolis-2000

Census Data). Numbers for St. Paul were very similar, with a 40 percent minority

population and 27 percent children under age 18 (St. Paul- 2000 Census Data). Poverty

was also concentrated in these central cities: 16.9 percent of Minneapolis' (Minneapolis

2000 Census Data) and 15.6 percent of St. Paul's residents (St. Paul 2000 Census Data)

were living below the poverty level. Importantly, the manner in which racial data was

collected during the 2000 Census changed, with the addition of an option for respondents

to select more than one "race" category to classify themselves. State demographers noted

that this significantly affected the identification of minority respondents- those who

identified as members of one minority group were much more likely to identify

themselves as multiracial, and minority children were more likely to do so than adults

(McMurry 2001).

The Metropolitan Council conducted an analysis of the data collected from the

U.S. Census Bureau's annual collection of demographic and housing characteristics in

the American Community Survey for the years 2005-2007[1]. In addition to looking for

overall trends in the metro area, this report disaggregated the data by Central Cities,

Developed Suburbs, and Developing Suburbs (Metropolitan Council 2008). Population

shifts identified in this analysis significant to integration efforts include the fact that

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[1] The data released by the U.S. Census bureau covers communities with populations of at least 20,000. For this report, 41 cities in the Twin Cities metro area were included, covering about 78% of the region's total population (Metropolitan Council 2008). Some of the smaller school districts included in the analysis of integration efforts in this thesis are therefore not included in this data set.

developing suburban communities had, on average, the youngest populations as measured by number of residents under age 18 and the smallest populations of those over age 65 (Metropolitan Council 2008). Diversity of communities was measured in the report as the percent of the population comprised of people of color. A distinct difference was noted among central cities and suburbs, with 37 percent of Minneapolis and St. Paul identified as people of color, developing cities as a group averaging 15 percent and developed cities 18 percent (Metropolitan Council 2008). Some communities did not fit these general patterns; in particular Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park's minority populations were actually higher than the central cities' average, at 45 percent and 42 percent respectively, and 32 percent of Richfield's residents were people of color. Other communities were much less diverse than average with minority populations of less than 10 percent (Metropolitan Council 2008). Two of these, Edina and White Bear Lake, are members of metro area integration districts. The others, Minnetonka, Prior Lake, Andover, Ramsey and Chanhassen, do not neighbor communities with racially isolated schools and therefore are not yet required to prepare school desegregation plans. Concentration of poverty remains in the central cities, with median household incomes about $20,000 to almost $45,000 dollars higher in suburban communities than in Minneapolis and St. Paul (Metropolitan Council 2008).

School District Demographics in the Twin Cities Metro Area

The three largest school districts in the state are located in the Twin Cities metro area. Anoka-Hennepin school district, which draws students from thirteen suburban communities north of Minneapolis and St. Paul, is now the largest district in the state

with about 40,500 students (www.anoka.k12.mn.us). St. Paul's current enrollment is

about 38,000 students (www.spps.org) and Minneapolis has about 34,500 students

(www.mpls.k12.mn.us). Measures of diversity show that although Anoka-Hennepin has

increasing numbers of minority students, it currently enrolls only about 20 percent non-

white[2] students (Enrollment Report 2008), while just over 74 percent of St. Paul's

students are non-white[3] (www.spps.org) and about 70 percent of Minneapolis' student

body is students of color[4] (2008-2009 Fact Sheet). About 27 percent of Anoka-

Hennepin's students qualify for free and reduced price lunches (Enrollment Report 2008)

compared to almost 70% for St. Paul (www.spps.org) and Minneapolis (2008-2009 Fact

Sheet).

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[2] Terminology reflects that used in language of reports from school district.
[3] Listing shows percentage of each racial group counted in order from least to greatest.
"White American" students compose 25.9 percent of the student body.
[4] Terminology reflects that used in language of reports from school district.

For comparison's sake, the following chart shows demographic data for selected suburban districts participating in the integration collaboratives studied. Information was accessed from the "School Report Card" demographic information on the Minnesota Department of Education. All data is from the 2008-2009 school year.

District	Total Student Population	Non-white student population (percent of total population)	Percent of student population qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch
Brooklyn Center	2,001	67%	63%
Eden Prairie	9,702	23%	13%
Edina	7,871	15%	6%
Fridley	2,693	40%	51%
Hopkins	7,220	31%	26%
Inver Grove Heights	3.691	25%	26%
Mahtomedi	3,199	8%	8%
North St. Paul-Maplewood	10,733	34%	35%
Osseo	20,638	43%	33%
Robbinsdale	12,349	46%	41%
Rockford	1,533	8%	23%
Roseville	6,457	36%	36%
South Washington County	16,396	22%	15%
Stillwater Area	8,343	8%	12%
Wayzata	10,100	20%	13%
White Bear Lake	8,222	16%	25%

Significance of Demographics for Metro Area School Integration

Demographic data for communities and school districts in the metro area show a clear contrast in the diversity and socioeconomic status of residents and students in the central cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul as compared to the surrounding suburban cities and towns. These trends, supported by the data presented above, were mentioned by those interviewed as well:

> Philips: There is a seemingly natural evolution taking place country-wide in which Minnesota's participating, albeit at a slower rate, but nonetheless participating, in terms of the racial makeup of our communities. (personal communication 05-28-09).
>
> Naomi Kelly: I was always interested to, to try to understand what was happening in the suburbs in terms of the white flight. Because we're coming, and they're leaving (personal communication 06-01-09).

Community-wide demographic changes have led to an increased number of suburban districts qualifying for integration revenue, as racially isolated and identifiable schools now exist outside the central cities. The superintendent of WMEP described some of the member district communities, including Columbia Heights, Brooklyn Center and Robbinsdale as "looking more and more like Minneapolis" while other districts like Edina, Eden Prairie and Wayzata remain less than 15 percent students of color (personal communication 05-28-09). Naomi Kelly also described rapid demographic changes in the east metro in the last four years, with a doubling in the number of students of color in North St. Paul schools to about 34 percent of the total (personal communication 06-01-09), a trend which John Waltz also described occurring in other inner ring suburbs (personal communication 06-10-09).

Socioeconomic status was addressed by interviewees as a topic separate from race yet closely related. As Naomi Kelly put it:

Kelly: Well, you can't separate them in this country- your socioeconomic status without your race. No matter how you do it. If you look at middle class? There's still a gap between people of color and white folks. If you look at poor folks there's still a gap. No matter how you disaggregate information, race is irrefutable (personal communication 06-01-09).

Although she saw racial issues and socioeconomic status as interconnected, Kelly went on to say that staff in the two districts she works with were not as "ready to talk about race as much as they're ready to talk about income" (personal communication 06-01-09).

Perhaps due to the focus of desegregation plans on the goal of interracial contact, and a new push toward greater accountability for academic achievement, the issue of socioeconomic disparity was not central to many of my conversations regarding integration in the metro area, yet it was alluded to in many cases. The concentration of poverty in the central cities is evident in the community data presented earlier, however, and anecdotally I find Naomi Kelly's statement to be true- many educators in suburban communities appear more open to conversations about how the number of students in their districts qualifying for free and reduced lunch has changed, rather than how the racial diversity of students is also changing.

Speaking of education as part of the healthy business community did lead to some references to socioeconomic status. In relating the value of quality education systems to the larger community, one organization describes the connection this way: "Having well-educated residents in our region helps to strengthen the economy and workforce and increases civic engagement. In addition, when more people participate in work and civic

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life, public safety increases" (Twin Cities Compass, 2009). Ted Philips praised Geoffrey

Canada's Harlem Children's Zone project as an example of how improving educational

opportunities can improve an entire community if returning college graduates bring jobs

and money into neighborhoods and then improve real estate values (personal

communication 05-28-09). He described the goal of improving communities as more

than just "getting kids educated;" but rather part of a larger plan to "take America and

make it better" (personal communication 05-28-09). Additionally, he described the

Minnesota Chamber of Commerce as an organization that wants to support education in

order to have highly skilled, locally trained workers, yet described the "eyes of white

businessmen" at a Rotary Club meeting as glazing over if he focused the conversation of

school integration around social justice issues (personal communication 05-28-09).

John Waltz also referenced the need to strengthen entire communities and not just

schools in order to create better outcomes (personal communication 06-10-09).

Wealthier parents tend to raise children that are more successful in school as they

"develop the capacities and cultural capital of their children" (Anyon 2005 p.70).

Continued residential segregation in the metro area contributes greatly to the

concentration of such cultural capital in specific communities and neighborhoods. As the

superintendents noted, improving the economic conditions of the poor is supported as a

strategy for improving urban education (Anyon 2005). Like educational inequalities,

however, residential segregation that results in high-poverty, high-minority school

districts is also related to inadequate responses to past discrimination (McNeal 2009) and

therefore requires systemic change. Low-income students in central cities and urbanized

suburbs are concentrated in metropolitan areas across the country and this is one cause of educational segregation of Black and Latino students (Anyon 2005). School integration plans that focus on busing students and creating magnet programs may never truly succeed if housing policy reform is not also achieved (Anyon 2005) and in this way the two issues of educational and residential segregation are intertwined. John Waltz summarized the connections in this way:

> Waltz: …it's *very* complex. It's not as simple as "let the schools solve it." Just balancing…the proportion of students of color…I think it is about housing patterns. I think it's about transportation, it's about enrollment, it's about a larger societal set of issues and problems that have to be addressed, that the schools cannot do all on their own. Unfortunately! Sort of this, this, "put them together and rub elbows and everything's going to be fine." It's not that, it's *more* than that. It is about providing true opportunity for families, true opportunity for housing, transportation for employment *and* education. *All* those pieces have to come together. And that's the challenge to policy makers I think. (personal communication 06-10-09).

Complicating Effects of School Choice on Metro Area School Integration

Minnesota's liberal school choice climate has for years created a unique situation, one which ideally breeds innovation and sharing of ideas, but perhaps as a negative side effect leads to competition rooted in the distribution of limited financial resources. In terms of school integration, an emphasis on choice can be an undermining influence (Anderson 2005), yet a commitment to school choice is defined in the Rule itself, which in Part D recognizes that "…providing parents a choice regarding where their children

should attend school is an important component of Minnesota's education policy" (3535). A negative association between school choice and desegregation, however, has existed since the *Brown* era, when resistance of white parents was witnessed in the establishment of private "academies" to avoid sending their children to integrated public schools (Brown and Hunter 2009). Gloria Ladson-Billings has referred to such schools as "segregation academies" and notes that they only drew attention from the courts when they received public donations of goods or services (Ladson-Billings 2004). Today, hundreds of private, parochial and charter schools in the Twin Cities metro area compete for students but are not subject to the state Desegregation/Integration Rule.

Declining enrollment has also been a statewide trend in public school districts since 2001, with a direct impact on the amount of state funding received by schools. Although a significant point of concern in the metro area, the rate of decline in the Twin Cities metropolitan area has been about 60 percent compared with a 79 percent state average (Crowe 2005). Enrollment levels have begun to stabilize statewide and are expected to show increases in grades 1 through 6 in coming years (Crowe 2006). Enrollment in grades 7-12 is expected to continue to decline until 2013 and then begin to rise slowly (McMurry 2009). As Ted Philips put it, "I wouldn't want to be a high school teacher!" (personal communication 05-28-09). In the current political climate, however, in which funding levels have been frozen without adjusting for inflation, declining enrollment raises issues of competition for students in areas where it was not previously an issue. In EMID, John Waltz describes the effect of declining enrollment in member districts as stressing finances and as a result, participation in the multi-district

collaborative becomes "as much about the money as it is about the cause" (personal communication 06-10-09).

The establishment of magnet schools as a tool to create integrated learning environments is used by three of the four multi-district collaboratives in the metro area. Developed around particular themes (commonly STEM- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics; Visual and Performing Arts, or an International Baccalaureate diploma program), magnet schools typically have attendance boundaries outside of neighborhood designations. Many larger school districts operate their own *intra*-district magnets within district lines, while the *inter*-district magnets coordinated by WMEP, EMID and Northwest Suburban seek to enroll students from different school districts. Integration leaders feel that the draw of magnet school themes is an additional attractor for parents considering integration choice schools for their children. Among other factors noted, Ted Philips also cited the small size of WMEP's two magnet schools and the location of one of its schools in downtown Minneapolis (personal communication 05-28-09) while John Waltz described the alternative school year schedule at EMID's schools and high quality facilities as important elements (personal communication 06-10-09). Transportation and all-day Kindergarten were also mentioned as important attractors for parents enrolling their students.

Northwestern Suburban's magnet program operates uniquely from WMEP and EMID, as a network of schools operated by local districts but with transportation and out-of-district enrollment partially coordinated by the integration office. The network has developed themed magnets in different communities to encourage movement across

boundaries; for example, a student might begin elementary education in an Arts-themed school in one district, then attend the Arts-themed middle school operated in another town, and go to an Arts-themed high school in yet another (personal communication with Sandra Thomas 06-22-09). Transportation funding is particularly important, as Minnesota's open-enrollment law allows for out-of-district registration of students, but does not pay for transportation. The integration school leaders also hope to address attendance issues of highly mobile families by providing transportation to their schools as long as the students remain within any of the communities participating in their multi-district collaboratives.

The Choice is Yours program, described earlier in this paper, is coordinated by WMEP, creating an additional programming option run by that integration district. It may also skew the data reflecting diversity of students attending WMEP programs, as students participating in CIY are predominantly African-American students from North Minneapolis. Few CIY students choose to attend the choice magnets, however. Because the program results mainly in Minneapolis residents attending traditional suburban schools, Ted Philips described the program as "looking like Open Enrollment" (personal communication 05-28-09). Some criticism has arisen regarding the differences in racial composition of the WMEP's two magnets, as FAIR school, located in the suburban community of Crystal and IDDS have very different student bodies[5].

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[5] FAIR school demographics: 64% White, 24% Black 6% Asian, 5% Hispanic, 1% American Indian, 21% Free and Reduced Lunch, 9% Sped., 0% LEP
IDDS demographics: 57% Black, 29% White, 7% Hispanic, 4% Asian, 2% American Indian, 55% FRL, 12% SpEd, 0% LEP (Data from School Report Cards 2008-2009, MDE website)

The Minnesota K-12 Education funding formula generally receives higher rankings for equity when compared to other states, as districts with greater numbers of minority and low income students receive more per-pupil dollars. In 2005-2006, high poverty districts received almost $1,900 more per student than lower poverty districts, contrary to national trends where this formula is reversed (Education Trust 2009). In the Twin Cities Metro Area, this results in the central cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul receiving more per-pupil revenue than most of the surrounding suburban school districts. Minnesota's Open Enrollment Statute allows for students to attend schools in whatever district they choose, subject to availability of seats. Families must apply before Jan. 15 of the previous school year in order to be eligible for out of district attendance, but this rule is exempted for families wishing to enroll their students in districts receiving integration revenue (MDE website, Open Enrollment 2009). When a student attends an out of district school, his or her home district pays tuition to the nonresident district. The exact amount of revenue received per student is subject to guidelines described in State Statute 127A.47, Subp. 7[6], but in general funding follows a student. Therefore a student participating in the Choice is Yours program, for example, would bring additional revenue to a suburban school as Minneapolis students receive higher levels of per-pupil funding. Open Enrollment does not require home districts to pay for transportation to the nonresident districts. The Choice is Yours program is significant in limiting the potential use of "choice" to allow middle class parents to maintain segregated schools because as

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[6] Statute 127A.47 is entitled "Payments to Resident and NonResident Districts." The exact language of the Open Enrollment law is included in Statute 124D.03, "Enrollment Options Program."

described by Ladson-Billings "the best schools and school districts rarely have space for any students outside their neighborhood boundaries" (2004 p. 10). Under this program, suburban schools reserve a number of enrollment seats specifically for low-income students from Minneapolis.

Charter schools also introduce complexity into school choice and attendance, and especially the issue of integrated learning environments. By 2008, over 22,000 students in the Twin Cities metro area were attending over 116 charter schools (Institute on Race and Poverty 2008). The presence of a large charter school or many charter schools in a community has been noted as a direct contributor to declining enrollment in some districts in Minnesota (Crowe 2006). This is particularly true in the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, which have seen rapid growth in the number of charter schools in the last decade. The state Desegregation/Integration Rule is not applied to charter schools (Chapter 3535.0110, Subp. 8, part A clarifies that the word "school" in the Rule does not mean "charter schools") and several examples of single race or ethnicity charters exist in the metro area (Rimer 2009). In some instances, this has led local school districts to create similarly focused schools within their own programming options in an attempt to draw students back. A report by the Institute on Race and Poverty found that charter schools in the Twin Cities metro area to be equally as or more segregated than local school districts and to contribute to increased segregation of neighborhood schools in otherwise diverse areas (Institute on Race and Poverty 2008). The report's conclusions emphasized the weakness of policy in contributing to ongoing segregation of both traditional public and charter schools, and recommended a strengthening of the Rule in

general, inclusion of charter schools in its mandates, and changes in funding through the Integration Revenue Statute (Institute on Race and Poverty 2008). Ted Philips described critiques of charters as not "hooking <students> into the educational and social networks of the majority society" and defended the idea of magnet schools as important tools in competition for enrollment of students among traditional public, private, and charter schools (personal communication 05-28-09).

In addition to the charter school movement, a returning trend of support for neighborhood schools in large urban districts has contributed to increased school segregation. John Waltz even described this move as a return to something he saw as "so much a part of our heritage in this country" (personal communication 06-10-09). Partly in response to funding concerns, Minneapolis began to dismantle a district-wide system of intra-district magnet programs in the late 1990s and sought to create smaller, neighborhood schools. Due to concentrations of poverty in the city, this contributed to increasing isolation of both students of color and white students in community schools. St. Paul has maintained a more extensive offering of intra-district magnet programs but is now facing its own budget crisis and responding in part by closing some of these programs. From 2000 to 2005, some school districts receiving Integration Revenue actually saw an increase in racial concentration (OLA 2005) due to these and other factors. Brown and Hunter link the issue of school assignment to broader issues of desegregation and globalization by questioning "how will a return to 'neighborhood schools' advance the country's goals of equality of opportunity for all children and higher quality educational outputs to compete effectively in a global economy?" (2009 p. 596).

The relationship between broader community factors that include housing, socioeconomic status, and access to resources such as transportation and employment options and education is undeniable. In the Twin Cities metro area, changes in social demographics have been reflected in local schools. Integration policy must take into account these varied conditions when developing program options if implementation is to be successful. All those interviewed described the ways in which *community* improvement is an essential component of *educational* improvement, and the ways in which existing opportunity leads to continued opportunity.

Organizational Identity and Local Program Implementation

The four integration multi-district collaboratives studied here were formed due to their identification as racially isolated or the presence of racially identifiable schools within their district boundaries, but all have developed in distinct ways. Chapter 3535.0110 of the Rule defines and distinguishes between the terms "racially identifiable" and "racially isolated" as follows:

> **Subp. 6. Racially identifiable school within a district.**
>
> "Racially identifiable school within a district" means a school where the enrollment of protected students at the school within a district is more than 20 percentage points above the enrollment of protected students in the entire district for the grade levels served by that school.
>
> **Subp. 7. Racially isolated school district.**
>
> "Racially isolated school district" means a district where the districtwide enrollment of protected students exceeds the enrollment of protected students of any adjoining district by more than 20 percentage points. (Minnesota Administrative Rule 3535).

"Protected students" are further defined as:

> **A.** students who self-identify or are identified in the general racial categories of African/Black Americans, Asian/Pacific Americans, Chicano/Latino Americans, and American Indian/Alaskan Native; and
>
> **B.** multiracial students who self-identify or are identified as having origins in more than one of the categories described in item A or as having origins in one of the categories described in item A and in the category of Caucasian. (Minnesota Administrative Rule 3535.0110 Subp. 4).

Following these guidelines, WMEP and EMID were first established in response to the concentration of protected students in the districts of Minneapolis and St. Paul. WMEP was established in 1989 and currently has ten suburban member districts (Brooklyn Center, Columbia Heights, Eden Prairie, Edina, Hopkins, Richfield, Robbinsdale, St. Anthony/New Brighton, St. Louis Park, Wayzata) along with Minneapolis (Welcome to WMEP 2009). The nine suburban districts that partner with St. Paul Public Schools in EMID are Inver Grove Heights, Mahtomedi, Roseville, South St. Paul, South Washington County, Spring Lake Park, Stillwater, West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan, and White Bear Lake (www.emid6067.net). Northwestern Suburban was formed in 2001 after Brooklyn Center and Osseo were identified as racially isolated (Northwestern Suburban 2009). The other five member districts (Anoka-Hennepin, Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose, Elk River, Fridley and Rockford) were included because they have borders that touch one of the two racially isolated communities[7] (personal communication with Sandra Thomas 06-22-09).

The North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale school district has been able to develop its own integration collaborative with surrounding districts (Mahtomedi will be a member, Mounds View was involved in planning talks and may be in the future) because of demographic changes. The district is now considered racially isolated from neighboring districts. The voluntary nature of participation is significant in member selection, as no district is forced to join with a collaborative. Despite Mounds View's

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[7] some school districts that border Brooklyn Center and/or Osseo were already members of WMEP and were therefore not required to join Northwestern Suburban, although Brooklyn Center itself is currently a member of both collaboratives

desire to be a part of the new collaborative with North St. Paul and Mahtomedi, Naomi

Kelly ultimately decided that they should not be a part of it at this time because they do

receive integration revenue and she worried that they would not be held to the same

evaluative standards by MDE (personal communication 06-01-09). Bloomington has

similarly never participated in WMEP despite its proximity to Richfield and Minneapolis

and an increasingly diverse population. They have been invited to join several times but

choose instead to implement programming within their local boundaries; Ted Philips

believes this is because the district does not want to lose students to WMEP's magnet

schools (personal communication 05-28-09).

A list of collaboratives for the 2009-2010 school year obtained from MDE program
specialists categorizes districts by their qualifying status as follows:

RI= racially isolated
A= adjoining
V= voluntary

A shortened chart including only metro area districts is recreated below:

MINNEAPOLIS- RI	WEST METRO	NORTHWEST SUBURBAN
	Brooklyn Center- V Columbia Heights- V Eden Prairie- V Edina- A Hopkins- A Richfield- RI Robbinsdale- RI St. Anthony- A St. Louis Park- A Wayzata-V	Anoka-Hennepin- A Buffalo- A Elk River- A Fridley- V Osseo- RI Rockford- V
ST. PAUL- RI	EAST METRO	NORTH ST. PAUL- RI
	Inver Grove Hts.- V Mahtomedi- A Spring Lake Park- V Roseville- A South St. Paul- A So. Wash. Co.- A Stillwater- V West St. Paul- A White Bear Lake- V	

(Collaboratives 2009-2010)

Purpose of Metro Area Multi-district Collaboratives and Integration Districts

The language used to describe purpose is distinct in each collaborative. This may
reflect different philosophies on the part of district leaders, or possibly attempts to appeal
to varied local political or social climates. District materials from Northwestern
Suburban, for instance, state that the identified districts are required to work together to
"create solutions to intentional or unintentional segregation" and that the Rule as

rewritten in 1999 "replaced an outdated law passed in the 1970s that utilized quotas and busing to address issues of racial imbalance" (Northwestern Suburban 2008). EMID describes its development more strongly in terms of social justice, in stating that "East Metro Integration District #6067 is a collaborative of 10 area school districts that have united to address the educational issues resulting from dramatic demographic changes and inequities" (Harambee 2008). WMEP describes its development as "a regional commitment to voluntarily work together on implementing anti-racism initiatives" (Welcome to WMEP 2009).

The mission and vision statements developed in each collaborative are also distinct. I sought to identify how each district's leader described the mission of each collaborative and compared their statements to the officially published mission and vision statements available[8]. The superintendent of WMEP described a change in mission statement in 2006 when the Joint Powers board sought to "sharpen" its focus. The original mission was "to have staff and students from different backgrounds learn from and with each other," while the new focus seeks to include goals of capacity building and student achievement: "WMEP is for its member districts a convener, an organizer, a researcher, a planner, a leader, a spokesperson, a trainer and a resource" (personal communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09). The full mission statement for WMEP reads: "The mission of WMEP is to build the collective capacity of its members; to raise the achievement of all students; to eliminate the racial achievement gap; and to prepare

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[8] excluding the case of the North St. Paul-Mahtomedi collaborative, which does not yet have a website or any printed materials.

all learners to thrive in a diverse world through regional leadership, integrated learning opportunities, shared resources, and mutual support" (www.wmep.k12.mn.us).

When asked about EMID's mission, John Waltz similarly discussed goals of "student achievement, integration and leadership" and described those points as part of the district's strategic plan. He further focused on providing interracial student contact in a variety of ways as key to the mission, and stated: "I don't know…that our mission is any more unique or different than WMEP's or Northwest Metro <sic> for that matter" (personal communication 06-10-09). EMID's official mission statement reads: "EMID's mission is to provide and promote integrated opportunities for students, families, and staff that expand cultural understanding and support academic achievement" (www.emid6067.net).

Sandra Thomas also referenced other districts in her response to this question, but contrasted rather than related Northwestern Suburban's programs to WMEP and EMID. Although John Waltz appeared to believe that part of Northwestern Suburban's mission was specific to the operation of magnet schools (personal communication 06-10-09), Sandra Thomas described their mission as "to give opportunities for…positive interracial interactions, and to teach the community and families about culture and culture differences" (personal communication 06-22-09). The official vision of Northwestern Suburban is succinctly: "A Global Community Learning and Growing Together" while its mission contains four longer statements, declaring that the District: "Respects the diversity of our community and celebrates multiple cultures, values diversity and promotes harmony among students, staff & community, provides visionary, innovative

and sustainable educational opportunities, and supports and enables all learners to achieve their full potential throughout life" (Northwestern Suburban 2008). This incredibly long vision statement is quite ambitious but perhaps overreaching, particularly considering the more facilitative role performed by Northwestern Suburban. As a collaborative effort between many districts and communities, it would be difficult to assess the implementation of this vision across several schools, let alone all those involved in the integration district.

The North St. Paul-Mahtomedi collaborative had just finalized their new mission statement the night before my interview with its director: "Empowering diverse learners by providing equitable educational opportunities in a culturally competent environment" (personal communication with Naomi Kelly 06-01-09). Although the four integration collaboratives reference several similar themes, the way in which they have focused their mission statements reflect a great deal of variety in organizational identity.

The four efforts studied also have similar multi-district compositions, yet the programs they coordinate and experiences they offer their member districts vary. Activities in North St. Paul-Mahtomedi fall into two main categories described by Naomi Kelly as "kid-focused" or "adult-focused" (personal communication 06-01-09). A review of programming options revealed a similar distinction in the other districts, but with the addition of "technical assistance" as a service provided to members. As described earlier, WMEP and EMID both operate two integration magnet schools each. WMEP operates the Fine Arts Interdisciplinary Resource School (FAIR) in Crystal for grades 4-8, and the InterDistrict Downtown School (IDDS) which is located in Minneapolis and serves

grades K-12 (Welcome to WMEP 2009). WMEP additionally coordinates the Choice is Yours program, whereby low-income Minneapolis students may attend suburban schools. In EMID, Harambee Community Cultures/Environmental Science School (located in Maplewood) enrolls students in grades K-5, and Crosswinds Arts and Science school enrolls 6th through 10th graders[9] in Woodbury (Learning Together 2009). By 2008, Northwestern Suburban's seven member districts had established fifteen magnet programs focused on three themes: the International Baccalaureate Primary Years, Middle Years and Diploma Programmes; Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM); and Visual, Performing, Literary and New Media Arts (Magnet Schools 2008). These schools are run by the local school districts within which they are located. The new North St. Paul-Mahtomedi collaborative is not currently interested in establishing or coordinating its own schools, but may be open to the idea in the future (personal communication with Naomi Kelly 06-01-09).

Targeted integration programming is offered for students in all member districts, in many cases aimed at serving the needs of students of color. These activities are organized in EMID through the district's office of Equity and Integration, which is also responsible for providing technical assistance to member districts (personal communication with John Waltz 06-10-09). WMEP organizes an inter-generational exchange program called "Elders' Wisdom, Children's Song" designed to promote social

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[9] The fact that Crosswinds does not offer a full high school experience was discussed at some length in my interview with John Waltz as both an attractor for students and families due to its non-traditional organization and a detractor for those looking for a K-12 experience in the district. Currently, EMID is not approved as a high school diploma granting district, and the Crosswinds building could not accommodate additional grade levels.

justice awareness through music and storytelling (www.wmep.k12.mn.us) and offers a "Summer Scholar Institute." Learning grants are also available through the district to schools or partnerships between schools that wish to explore a particular area of study related to multiculturalism. An example highlighted on the website is a collaboration between IDDS, Hopkins, Robbinsdale and Eden Prairie where students participated in an Underground Railroad simulation (www.wmep.k12.mn.us). WMEP also refers students of color to a summer program at Hamline University aimed at recruiting them to the teaching profession (visit to WMEP office 05-28-09).

Some districts have established partnerships that allow for contact between students through field trips to shared events or by using technology such as Skype video-conferencing to connect classrooms. In North St. Paul-Mahtomedi, Naomi Kelly is developing a Youth Leadership Board in conjunction with the local Community Education department that follows a national model for involving youth in leadership and community service. Her goal is to recruit students from local high schools not traditionally recognized as leaders ("non-mainstream" in her words) to create a more inclusive, representative body and allow the group to choose a year-long goal to work toward in terms of service-learning, concluding with a culminating event (personal communication 06-01-09). The main themes evident in Kelly's description of desired programming for students were inclusion and providing leadership opportunities for students from a variety of backgrounds.

Northwestern Suburban also runs various programs designed to reach out to students and families to "help them understand and navigate the educational system"

(personal communication with Sandra Thomas 06-22-09). One program described at length was the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), which targets students at risk for drop out to help them graduate from high school. The program provides an additional year of support after graduation to help students develop future plans. Of the estimated 300 students served through the program annually, many join the military or attend post-secondary vocational training (personal communication with Sandra Thomas 06-22-09).

Educator Identity: Do integration efforts require or result in additional expertise?

Staff development is a main use of integration revenue across the state, and all the districts surveyed concentrated much of their efforts in this area. I was particularly interested to learn how integration leaders described desirable teacher qualities for work in the field, as identified deficiencies in certain areas may guide the selection of professional development activities organized by each district. The WMEP superintendent was the most explicit in discussing the significance of teacher background and life experiences as important to the mission of the district. Ted Philips described the racial composition of the education profession- "our teaching and school leadership cadre, even at the youngest levels"- in Minnesota as predominantly white (personal communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09) in contrast to that of the student body. The changing demographics observed in the metro area have resulted in more diverse enrollments than ever before, yet recruiting and hiring teachers of color remains a challenge to all local school districts. WMEP reported an aggressive commitment to trying to achieve a "better balance of staff" but "as everyone knows in Minnesota and

Wisconsin and North Dakota and South Dakota…it's just hard to do" (personal communication 05-28-09).

In discussing his personal work experience in a more diverse state before moving to Minnesota, it was clear that he considered white teachers who had grown up in predominantly white communities and attended predominantly white schools and universities limited in their qualifications to work in a "mixed-race environment." He said that WMEP was open to "quick learners" in the area of multicultural sensitivity but implied that "the learning curve in the area of equity and multiculturalism and so forth is a longer journey" for those from predominantly white backgrounds who had not sought out additional experiences through travel or education (personal communication 05-28-09). He went on to emphasize that pedagogical skill and content knowledge were essential to successful teaching, however, and that such qualifications would come first when reviewing staff.

Naomi Kelly also referenced having teachers of color in the classroom as important, and as a need identified by staff in districts she had surveyed. She also referenced her own experience as a biracial child first having a teacher of color in the sixth grade as her initial motivating experience to become an educator (personal communication 06-01-09). Her role as a classroom teacher was quickly disillusioning, however, and she now places more importance on her role as a coordinator of professional development efforts as an opportunity to have a greater influence: "I realized that if I could create <an inclusive learning environment> for adults, then they would

create it for kids. And I couldn't create it for each kid but if I reached a couple more

adults then they, that would help kids" (personal communication 06-01-09).

These two leaders viewed integration efforts focused on developing the cultural

awareness of white educators as essential to meeting the needs of growing numbers of

students of color and in creating multicultural learning environments responsive to and

reflective of diversity. The other two interviewed, (perhaps simply due to personal

communication style, personal philosophy, or age?) did not identify race or background

as essential qualities in staff in their school programs. In Northwestern Suburban this

may also be because the district has no control over hiring decisions within magnet

schools. John Waltz's comments reflected a growing general awareness for culturally

competent teaching: "…our needs are not a lot different from the members' needs. And

our needs are not a lot different from St. Paul's, quite frankly. Because they have

challenges too, around providing staff development for integrated learning environments"

(personal communication 06-10-09).   It was easier to identify what skills integration

leaders sought to develop in their teaching staffs by analyzing references they made to

how they spend integration revenue on staff development activities rather than their

response to a question about educator qualifications. The type of speakers contracted,

courses offered and workshops attended reflect general trends, yet leaders were less than

direct in describing the desired outcomes of such work. District materials cite goals

around multicultural respect, honoring diversity and creating safe spaces for students and

it was perhaps assumed that these intentions were clear.

Although objectives for staff development are somewhat similar across districts, the manner in which they are provided varies widely. Northwestern Suburban refers to their offerings as the "Intercultural Professional Development Program" within which member districts may develop individual offerings (personal communication with Sandra Thomas 06-22-09). As mentioned earlier, WMEP contracts with many outside providers, with the Pacific Education Group organizing many speakers and workshop offerings and the National Urban Alliance coordinating a literacy development program (personal communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09). John Waltz described efforts in EMID as similar to WMEP's, but with a more flexible attendance expectation. He referred to the lecture and learning series style as "sit and get," where district staff could choose which workshops they believe "will best suit and serve their needs for the year" (personal communication with John Waltz 06-10-09). He further described this as a "bottom-up" approach, because districts can make independent decisions. Naomi Kelly described the approach to be used in North St. Paul-Mahtomedi as a "stranded approach" where a focus will be decided on for the year and St. Mary's University will then be contracted to provide appropriate development opportunities (personal communication with Naomi Kelly 06-01-09).

The MDE's guidelines for districts in using integration revenue for staff development and curriculum enhancement are, as in most areas, quite general. Clear, focused links to schools and districts are called for, as are ties of the diversity initiatives or curriculum development to "increasing awareness of racial and ethnic diversity (as opposed to broader inclusion initiatives) as a means to achieving the goals specified in

76

the district's integration plan" (Brown 2008 p. 9). Staff development opportunities

designed to address white privilege and enhance awareness of minority groups within

districts have little trouble meeting these guidelines. The trouble in linking academic

achievement and integration, however is potentially evident again in this area. Districts

would likely have trouble justifying staff development efforts specifically designed to

raise African-American student achievement reading test scores, for example, as such

goals should be part of any district's inclusive education strategies.

Local Promotional Efforts to Publicize and Market Integration Programming

Highlighting district activities is important to ensuring stability in current

programming and creating future opportunities for integration collaboratives. The

benefits afforded member districts due to their participation in collaborative work were

cited by all those interviewed, without being asked specifically about this topic. Ted

Philips provided copies of materials created specifically to promote WMEP's activities

and quantify the additional services and funding received by member districts through

their participation. The linking of St. Paul and suburban schools was touted by John

Waltz as a key benefit afforded to members of EMID, as was access to the Multicultural

Resource Center at Arlington High School (personal communication 06-10-09). A lack

of perceived benefits is the motivation behind districts leaving the integration

collaboratives and to be avoided if at all possible. Naomi Kelly discussed a calculation

on the part of North St. Paul-Mahtomedi that only about 300 of their students out of a

potential 17,000 were accessing EMID's resources as a reason for leaving EMID, and

described a preference for a smaller organization where members feel more autonomy, particularly regarding the use of their districts' integration revenue (personal communication 06-01-09).

In addition to convincing member districts of the value of participating in integration collaboratives, families and students must also avail themselves of program offerings if these efforts are seen as successful. EMID, Northwestern Suburban, and WMEP all had glossy, colorful brochures available to the public touting their magnet schools, professional development opportunities and additional programs. The collaboratives are highly dependent on their member districts for student recruitment, however, particularly in providing space at school choice fairs in local districts, listing the integration magnet programs as attendance options on local district websites and in student assignment offices, and allowing staff to make site visits to recruit students. In WMEP student enrollment is handled entirely through local district offices, as is advertising for IDDS and FAIR, although a proposal has been made to transfer this responsibility to WMEP (personal communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09).

EMID has a part-time position responsible for communication efforts, but St. Paul Public Schools is the mode of promotion relied on most heavily (personal communication with John Waltz 06-10-09). EMID has also enhanced its attempts to recruit incoming Kindergarteners by increasing site visits to Head Start and pre-school programs in participating districts. Declining enrollment has created less of an incentive for member districts to heavily promote options that would take per-pupil dollars to a different school district, creating a potential conflict of interest if advertising and enrollment

responsibilities remain as they are. All collaboratives cited word-of-mouth as an

important source of support and recruiting of students, especially considering the large

potential attendance area of the integration districts. Sandra Thomas described

advertising as an ongoing struggle in Northwestern Suburban, whose member districts

cover the greatest geographical area of the metro area integration efforts (personal

communication 06-22-09).

Role of Money/Funding Issues

Without the dedicated funding provided for integration efforts through the Statute, it is certain that at least two of the models of inter-district collaboration studied here would not exist. EMID and WMEP exist as "integration districts" directly as a result of the Rule, as partnerships developed to address racial isolation in the central cities of the metro area; efforts would likely be much more limited in the other two collaboratives as well. Without a state requirement for partnerships between communities, school districts would have little incentive in a time of reduced educational funding to spend limited money on these efforts, particularly when the purpose of integration programming remains somewhat unclear.

Funding Sources: State, Local and Federal

In Fiscal Year 2009 (which ended June 30), the total budget for integration efforts across the state of Minnesota was about $80 million, with an additional $9 million dispersed through transportation aid (personal communication with MDE 04-23-09). The state funding formula for integration revenue is dependent on the racial composition of each district. Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth are referred to as the "Big 3" because they were the largest school districts when the Rule was first written and are considered to have different integration needs than the rest of the state. These three districts receive $445 per student enrolled. Other districts with 15 percent of more of their population designated as protected students receive $129 per student, and others with 15 percent or less, and those districts which participate voluntarily and not due to their proximity to a racially isolated district, receive $92 per student (personal communication with MDE 04-

23-09). Under the "alternative attendance" provision, if students leave their home district to attend school elsewhere, the receiving district will get the difference in funding; for example, a student from Minneapolis attending school in Edina would be funded with the difference of $445-$92= $353 (personal communication with MDE 04-23-09). Districts that adjoin racially isolated districts or have racially isolated schools within their boundaries receive additional per-pupil integration funding (personal communication with John Waltz 06-10-09).

Suburban districts pay a larger proportion of their integration revenue to WMEP and EMID than Minneapolis and St. Paul; this is designed to recognize that the city districts have a greater need to implement additional programming within their boundaries (personal communication with John Waltz 06-10-09). In EMID, for example, the voluntary districts of Mahtomedi, White Bear Lake, Spring Lake Park, Stillwater and Inver Grove Heights generate $92 per pupil, send $52 of this to EMID and keep the remainder for local efforts (personal communication with John Waltz 06-10-09). Similarly in Northwestern Suburban, Brooklyn Center and Osseo keep about 81 percent of the integration revenue they receive within their districts, and send the remainder to the integration collaborative; Anoka-Hennepin and Fridley keep 62 percent, and Elk River, Rockford and Buffalo keep only 51 percent (personal communication with Sandra Thomas 06-22-09).

WMEP is the oldest integration collaborative in the metro area, and had a peculiar payment structure for many years. Apparently due to an agreement made when the collaborative was first established, Robbinsdale and Minneapolis were exempted from

paying integration revenue to the collaborative (personal communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09). Although it is unclear exactly why this was (it is suggested that it may be because those were host sites for the new magnet schools and endured additional costs during construction), Robbinsdale was required to begin paying three years ago but Minneapolis was kept exempt because of its local problem with drastic declining enrollment (personal communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09).

Integration revenue is not the only source of funding for the collaboratives. John Waltz referenced an expectation that 70% of funding would come from the state and 30% from local property tax. Participating member districts must therefore show a commitment to fund integration efforts on the part of the local community, but this amount is small for most of the metro area. Sandra Thomas' description may also reflect an attempt on the part of the state to encourage local districts to implement additional integration efforts locally; she stated that "all local levy dollars stay in the district. We just get a percentage of state aid" (personal communication 06-22-09). One point of conflict over integration revenue eligibility has come from outstate Minnesota communities, some of whom felt that the Statute was functioning as a way to merely concentrate more educational funding in the metro area, which already receives the majority of state educational spending (personal communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09). Changing demographics across the state, however, now mean that many outstate rural districts are also generating additional integration revenue.

Local commitment is essential to the future of the magnet school programs in Northwestern Suburban, as they are all located in distinct local districts yet are set up in a

way to encourage movement of students from district to district. At a time when most local school districts are facing budget cuts (primarily due to declining enrollment), Sandra Thomas noted the particularly high cost of implementing the IB Programme, due in part to the additional training required for staff. So far, however, local districts have maintained their support for all the magnets for the last six years and have not shown a move to dismantle the network (personal communication 06-22-09). Naomi Kelly expressed an assumption that North St. Paul's funding would be "cut significantly" next year (personal communication 06-01-09); when MDE specialists were asked whether integration revenues would remain at their current level or potentially increase or decrease, they replied bluntly "no idea" (personal communication 04-23-09).

Transportation funding is another key component of the integration plans studied. The MDE emphasizes free bus transportation as key to marketing integration options to families in the Twin Cities area (Derden 2008) and the four collaboratives all have strategies for addressing transportation needs. Interdistrict magnet school programs must provide busing options for students in order to recruit student enrollment from many communities, and Integration Transportation Aid is available to fund these efforts (Derden 2008). This type of aid functions through a reimbursement system; students' home districts must pay for student transportation themselves and then submit expense reports to MDE (personal communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09, John Waltz 06-10-09). Unlike other choice programs available to families, such as charter schools or the state Open Enrollment Law which do not provide free transportation, integration programming offers this service as a key attractor. Both WMEP and EMID rely on this

aid to transport students to and from their magnet school programs, but do not directly manage this aspect of school administration. In Northwestern Suburban, the district has taken a somewhat different approach. Rather than delegate transportation responsibility to each individual district, the integration collaborative has contracted with an outside transportation company to be responsible for all interdistrict transportation needs. Brooklyn Center serves as the "home district" for Northwestern Suburban and submits for reimbursement from the state (personal communication with Sandra Thomas 06-22-09). Although the new collaborative in North St. Paul is not yet running programs, Naomi Kelly described transportation as an important issue to consider in planning because it represents access. If students and their families need transportation to participate in activities, she feels it is an essential service to provide (personal communication 06-01-09).

A program through the federal Department of Education (U.S. DOE) distributes grant money for local school districts to develop magnet schools for desegregation purposes, and local education agencies may apply if they are already operating under a state or court-ordered desegregation plan. The U.S. DOE's stated goal of magnet programs is to "eliminate, reduce, or prevent minority group isolation in elementary and secondary schools while strengthening students' knowledge of academic subjects and their grasp of marketable vocational skills" (http://www.ed.gov/programs/magnet/index.html). Northwestern Suburban has relied on these grants to establish and expand their system of interdistrict magnets. After receiving a substantial initial grant in 2004, in 2007 the district again received one of the largest

such grants in the country and was awarded $3,647,439

(http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/09/09272007.html). John Waltz and Ted

Philips reported the total amount of grant funding as between 10 and 11 million dollars

(personal communication 06-10-09, 05-28-09). The grants are designed three year start-

up funding, with fourth year carry-over. Recipients must show they have developed a

plan to maintain programming after the expiration of federal grant eligibility (personal

communication with Sandra Thomas 06-22-09). The other two large metro area

collaboratives, WMEP and EMID, are not eligible for these federal grants because the

small magnet school programs they each run were established several years ago and the

districts are not currently looking to expand these offerings.

The superintendents of both these districts described seeking out other types of

special grant funding, however. Ted Philips mentioned applying for a "$100,000 grant

through the state department…I think it's federal pass-through" (personal communication

05-28-09) and John Waltz reported that EMID had sent staff to a national conference to

collect information on possible new funding sources (personal communication 06-10-09).

Naomi Kelly was more cautious in discussing current grant-writing efforts in the new

North St. Paul- Mahtomedi collaborative. She mentioned smaller grants, such as one to

promote chess for students of color, as opportunities they would be seeking, but

emphasized that this would be more of a focus in the future (personal communication 06-

01-09).

Local integration magnet programs are also eligible to receive other sources of

educational funding depending on the needs of their students. Title I and compensatory

education funding, designed to supplement the costs of educating under-achieving students in schools with largely low-income student populations, were mentioned. Eligibility for additional funding is dependent on the composition of the student body in local districts as well as individual schools. Problems with the language guiding these funding sources, however, makes them less effective in addressing the needs of "disadvantaged learners" (Brown and Hunter 2009). Revenue targeted for students needing special education services is also received by the integration districts. Ted Philips described WMEP's special education population as about 10% of the total student body, compared to about 11% of surrounding districts (personal communication 05-28-09). Special Education funding, however, is one of the areas most frequently critiqued in education circles as an "unfunded mandate," as the percentage of revenue guaranteed by the federal government has never been fully dispersed. Much of the federal stimulus money focused on education efforts this year, however, is targeted specifically to increasing special education funding and should result in at least temporary increases for local districts.

Varied Local Uses of Integration Revenue

The ways in which eligible districts and multi-district collaboratives choose to use their integration revenue vary as well. The "Frequently Asked Questions" document distributed by MDE regarding the Rule and Statute includes several pages of information dedicated to "Appropriate Uses for Integration Revenue" (Brown 2008). Although a few examples of questionable expenses were mentioned by district leaders, comments made during the interviews appear to indicate that the wide interpretation of how to use

integration revenue is due more to the vague language of the Rule and confusion, rather than intentional misuse. Naomi Kelly also mentioned a news report criticizing the use of educational funding for food and other presumed extravagances, and defended the need for such expenses in the name of community building and creating schools as welcoming spaces for families (personal communication 06-01-09).

Administration is one common use of integration revenue that appears undisputed, although the differences in organizational structure among collaboratives are reflected in the positions that exist in each one. Districts' proposed integration budgets should designate no more than 10 percent of total funding toward administrative costs, although administrative activities directly related to implementation of integration programs and activities within the budget are not counted toward this 10 percent limit (Brown 2008). Interdistrict collaborative administrative positions include the superintendents interviewed, directors of educational services in WMEP and EMID, and professional development coordinators. Naomi Kelly described her entrance to integration work as taking a position funded through integration money in Osseo as a "Cultural Liaison" (personal communication 06-01-09). These positions, which focus on developing *intra*-district programs to promote integration goals, exist in most of the member districts included in metro-area collaboratives. In many cases they are part of an "Office of Equity and Integration" or a similarly titled department, although the responsibilities for such work likely vary widely across districts.

Staff development, discussed earlier, is a significant use of integration revenue both within and between districts. In addition to contracting with outside speakers or

trainers, integration districts use this revenue to pay for reserve teacher costs and provide

follow-up services to teachers (personal communication with John Waltz 06-10-09). In

Northwestern Suburban, member districts are able to organize their own professional

development activities (all of which fall under the category of the "Intercultural

Professional Development Program") but submit expenses to the integration district for

payment (personal communication with Sandra Thomas 06-22-09). According to the

MDE, integration revenue can be used to fund diversity initiatives or curriculum

development if they are "tied to increasing awareness of racial and ethnic diversity as a

means to achieving the goals specific in the district's integration plan" but cannot

supplant activities districts should already be doing in the name of inclusive education

(Brown 2008 p. 9).

In one of the few references to the needs of English Language Learners in my

interviews with integration leaders, Naomi Kelly described not wanting to partner with

districts that were just looking for additional funding for another ELL teacher (personal

communication 06-01-09). MDE describes "enhancements" to ELL services provided in

racially isolated schools as acceptable uses of integration revenue, but that the money

should not be used to pay for programming staff or materials that are required outside of

the Rule (Brown 2008). Funding of world language instructional programs, however, is

acceptable if tied to integration strategies designed to create interdistrict educational

opportunities (such as summer language camps) or increase inter-cultural communication

(Brown 2008). The MDE's "Promising Practices" document highlights several language

immersion schools in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Robbinsdale and St. Louis Park as examples of such use of the revenue (Derden 2008).

In an update to the 2005 evaluation report, the Legislative Auditor's office again clarified funding formula problems as a key dilemma of integration revenue use in the state (OLA 2008). The report repeats a need for clarifying the purpose of the program and calls for revisions in the funding formula in order to "more directly link funding to a district's integration responsibilities," and increase funding to districts with larger populations of protected students or greater integration responsibilities (OLA 2008). The Legislative Auditor's office also feels that MDE should be given greater oversight responsibility, including approval over voluntary participation plans and over the integration budgets of Minneapolis and St. Paul (OLA 2008). If these changes are fully enacted they are likely to affect the distribution of revenue resources to districts, and create new challenges for the multi-district collaboratives.

Defining Integration Goals and Objectives

Related to the positioning of integration programs as one educational choice among many in a changing metro area environment is the need for a clear definition of the goals and objectives of such efforts. This section describes particular aspects of the State Rule itself and reactions from those working in the field, and begins a discussion of the relationship between school integration and student achievement in Minnesota.

Deciphering the state Rule: Open to Interpretation?

The language used to frame the goals and objectives of integration programming is an area of contention and point of confusion. MDE program specialists are careful to distinguish between the concepts of "desegregation" and "integration," yet the Administrative Rule itself merely separates the two words with a forward slash. All those consulted agree with the recommendation of the Legislative Auditor's report in 2005 that "the Legislature should clarify the purpose of the Integration Revenue program." In order to clarify the Statute, however, it is necessary to address the fundamental goals of the state Rule, which refers to both segregation and integration. Section 3535.0100 lays out the Purpose of the Rule, which includes nine parts. Of these, Part B specifically affirms the importance of integration in public schools, Part C notes the societal benefits of racially balanced schools, Part E confirms that some parents view integrated schools as important, Part F declares that segregation must be prevented, and Part G encourages districts to create racially balanced attendance choices (Minnesota Administrative Rules, 3535.0100). Although these statements talk about the importance

of integrated learning environments, and refer to "racial balance," (defined as "the increased interaction of protected students and white students within schools and between districts" Minnesota Administrative Rule 3535.0110) *integration* is never clarified. Segregation, referenced in Part F, is exhaustively defined, however, in part 3535.0110 as follows:

> **Subp. 9. Segregation.**
> "Segregation" means the intentional act or acts by a school district that has the discriminatory purpose of causing a student to attend or not attend particular programs or schools within the district on the basis of the student's race and that causes a concentration of protected students at a particular school.
> A. It is not segregation for a concentration of protected students or white students to exist within schools or school districts:
> > (1) if the concentration is not the result of intentional acts motivated by a discriminatory purpose;
> > (2) if the concentration occurs at schools providing equitable educational opportunities based on the factors identified in part 3535.0130, subpart 2; and
> > (3) if the concentration of protected students has occurred as the result of choices by parents, students, or both.
> B. In addition to the factors in item A, it is not segregation for concentrations of enrolled American Indian students to exist within schools or school districts:
> > (1) if the concentration exists as a result of attempting to meet the unique academic and culturally related educational needs of enrolled American Indian students through programs developed pursuant to the federal government's trust relationship with American Indian tribes or through an agreement with an American Indian tribal government; and
> > (2) the concentration exists as the result of voluntary choices made by American Indian parents, enrolled American Indian students, or both.

The phrase "meaningful interracial contact" was used by two of the integration leaders interviewed to describe the goal of integration programming (personal communication with Naomi Kelly 06-01-09 and John Waltz 06-10-09), and a MDE program specialist used the term "interracial interaction for educationally justifiable activities" to describe the department's intention (personal communication 04-23-09). One way in which the MDE program specialists framed the debate over the policy was to describe the Rule as requiring districts to create "desegregation plan(s) for integration

purposes" and explained their desire to reframe the issue. The word "desegregation" brings to many people's minds the idea of merely busing students to other schools, but integration is supposed to be a locally designed effort to increase interracial contact (personal communication 04-23-09). The EMID superintendent said that he felt that efforts to define integration in this way had to this point been unsuccessful in reaching decision-makers or the public, but also described the failure of desegregation programs that focused primarily on movement of students (personal communication 06-10-09).

The intentional vagueness of the Rule as originally written was defended by at least one superintendent for allowing for more local development of efforts and allowing different "…actors to focus it in their own way" but was also described in the same conversation as "not causing the problem, but not helping us get a solution" (personal communication with John Waltz 06-10-09). Others were more directly critical; Ted Philips said: "…the language of the Rule, it's pretty loose. And it got loose results. And I don't know why they're wringing their hands over <the result>" (personal communication 05-28-09). Specific negative results of the Rule's language included the lack of a demand for data collection and evidence of program success (personal communication with Naomi Kelly 06-01-09) and financial disincentives to create truly integrated schools (personal communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09). These frustrations echoed concerns from the Legislative Auditor's report, which called for greater oversight of uses of funding received through the Integration Revenue Statute and described "some unintended and potentially negative consequences" (OLA 2005). Highlighted among these is the fact that if a district successfully achieves racial balance,

it no longer qualifies for revenue from the state for integration purposes. Local districts are also responsible for devising their own attendance boundaries, which could lead to possible manipulation of these lines in order to either *avoid* having schools identified as racially identifiable (based on the racial composition of the student body as compared to the larger school district) or *maintain* this labeling. A recent uproar over one school in southwest Minneapolis' opposition to proposed new changes in that city's attendance and school choice guidelines shows the sensitivity of the issue. The incident in question involved accusations of racism on both sides (Hughes 2009, Relerford 2009) and highlighted the social and political tension inherent in these decisions.

Tenuous links between integration and achievement

A growing area of concern and debate among integration leaders and legislators in Minnesota is how to link the national focus on academic tests results and the "achievement gap" to school integration goals. This topic was discussed at some length will all those interviewed. Some felt that because the goal was already implied in the Rule (Part A of Chapter 3535.0100 states that a purpose of the Rule is to "recognize that the primary goal of public education is to enable all students to have opportunities to achieve academic success") they would not have a problem with a more explicit connection to eliminating racial "achievement gaps." One respondent declared, however, that: "I disagree with them because I believe that's what schools are there for in the first place" and the Rule should be focused on integration programming, not closing the "achievement gap" (personal communication with MDE program specialists 04-23-09).

Naomi Kelly also discussed how the current context of education has changed how the Rule and its purpose are viewed. She described an oversimplified definition as "integration dollars are about race" and honoring Civil Rights activists who fought for justice, and a sense that a change in focus is seen by some as a disservice to this legacy (personal communication 06-01-09). Although she originally saw her work as an opportunity to address racism in schools, she now describes the goal of achieving interracial contact among students as "not enough." Her belief in the importance of discussing race in education has not changed, but now she feels that it is important to address achievement as well: "I don't want a kid to go through <school> and make friends with somebody who looks different than them but can't read" (personal communication 06-01-09). Sandra Thomas agreed that "it needs both" (personal communication 06-22-09). Ted Philips suggested a simplified version of restated Rule goals that would link integration and school achievement as to have "...all students learn at high levels and eliminating disparities in both opportunity and performance" (personal communication 5-28-09).

School desegregation efforts first enacted in the 1960's across the country primarily focused on busing students out of segregated neighborhoods in order to achieve "racially balanced" schools. Almost 50 years later, a general consensus exists among integration leaders that merely moving students together to create interracial environments is insufficient to work toward true goals of equity and justice in education. Although agreement existed that the goals of school integration are distinct from those of past desegregation efforts, and that true educational equity involves high academic

performance of all students regardless of race or ethnicity, a true definition of the concept

remains elusive.[10] In the following section I will discuss how Minnesota's school

integration efforts are linked to a larger area of academic and educational programming

interest and national attention.

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[10] It is also interesting, and important, in light of the 2007 Supreme Court ruling on school desegregation plans to note that none of the leaders interviewed discussed socioeconomic status in terms of defining integration. When asked directly about the case as a follow-up question to one regarding changes in the field, it was clear that all were aware of the ruling, yet no responses indicated a sense that it may have an impact on defining the goals of integration as not race-related.

Construction of "the Field" of integration programming

As noted by Spillane et al, local implementers interpret policy goals through local frames, influenced by past knowledge and belief and shaped by present stimuli (2002). Contextual influences are key to understanding both similarities and differences in policy implementation. In an attempt to identify ideas and organizations both within and outside of education that have had an impact on the development of integration programming as a particular field, I noted references made by the leaders I interviewed. Although some consistency existed in the mentions of local experts and organizations and to staff development and training strategies, other references seemed to reflect influences, experiences, or opinions personal to each interviewee. The concepts of "culture" and "education" intersect repeatedly in an analysis of school integration policy, often taking the form of discussions regarding "cultural or inter-cultural competency" and "multicultural education."

The use of common language and descriptions of efforts and programs in other states, in particular, indicate a sense of belonging to a larger effort and support the identity of integration leaders as experts or specialists (in fact the job title of those working at MDE label them as such). Cities whose programs were mentioned specifically included Omaha, Nebraska; Boston, Massachusetts; New Haven, Connecticut; Clark County, Nevada; Hartford, Connecticut and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. During the course of my research I was able to interview the director of magnet school programs in New Haven and used that discussion to further my understanding of the field by looking for similarities in the way he described the goals of school integration in

Connecticut with Minnesota's integration efforts. MDE officials spoke highly of New Haven's effort because of its unique cooperative effort with the local mayor and funding from the state government (personal communication 04-23-09) while Ted Philips, who had also visited, was impressed by the array of choice and facilities represented by the schools themselves (personal communication 05-28-09).

The program specialists at MDE had also attended the National Summit on Interdistrict School Desegregation, held in January at the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School. They referenced the "national conference" when discussing how Minnesota's programming compared to other efforts across the country, and Ted Philips recommended I look at the Institute's website for additional information about model programs in other states and the state of the field in general. Geoffrey Canada's efforts in Harlem were also cited, as he gave a speech locally attended by many school leaders shortly before I conducted these interviews. Ted Philips seemed particularly impacted by Canada's speech and summarized it partly:

> Philips: He said our education system is designed and is very good at getting the results it gets. And it will get those results over and over again. Kids from advantaged families will be very well served and do quite well in the public education system. But he's...a very articulate speaker and if you just think about that, our system does. Our system's terrific. And to say that education isn't working, that's not true. It's working for everyone it's designed to work for. (personal communication 05-28-09).

These comments seem to reflect an assumption of social reproduction theory in that systems set up by society will continue to produce the same expected results for its

members.[11] John Waltz's discussion of factors such as family and community being equally, if not more, important on children's lives and development than the time they spend in school (personal communication 06-10-09) echoes ideas of cultural capital. A belief on the part of the educators referenced that schools can be structured in a way to combat racial and socioeconomic class afforded privilege, however, clearly indicates a rejection of social status as inherent and insurmountable.

Marketing "Cultural Competency" and developing related skills for integration

The development of "cultural competency" is a stated goal of many professional development activities of the integration districts. "Multicultural education" emerged as a buzzword shortly after the desegregation programs enacted after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, but misuse of the term or poor implementation of programs has led it to fall out of favor in some circles. "Cultural competency" seems to be used by many educators to describe a broader set of skills for interacting and communicating with different groups of people rather than identifying a particular curricular focus. The phrase has found its way into many documents produced by such organizations and was referenced repeatedly by integration leaders. Ted Philips described an impact of changing demographics as an opportunity for the state to "really get serious about ensuring that all of our educators are culturally competent" (personal communication 05-28-09) while Naomi Kelly similarly discussed experienced staff as now interested in "looking at cultural competency…because their classroom has changed" (personal communication

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[11] see Bourdieu 1977 for a discussion of the theory of cultural capital, and the ways in which educational systems help reproduce social structures and maintain class privileges for children brought up with advantages

06-01-09). EMID's district mission statement includes expanding "cultural understanding" as a component (www.emid6067.net), WMEP similarly describes a goal of its professional development offerings (called "Cultural Collaborative" classes) as "developing capacity to promote cultural understanding"(http://wmep.k12.mn.us), and Northwestern Suburban lists improving "intercultural competency" as one of its three district-wide goals (www.nws.k12.mn.us). Naomi Kelly described "having people in districts on board that understand the value of intercultural competence" as essential to the development of their new multi-district collaborative (personal communication 06-01-09).

All of these references, however do little to define what cultural "awareness," "understanding," or "competency" actual mean. A piece of promotional material received from the WMEP district office did include a definition, although this was curiously situated in a text box on the back of a booklet, with little context provided to connect the concept to other information on the page. The heading "2 Dimensions of Cultural Competence" is followed by these definitions:

> *Surface Structure*: Use people, places, language, music, food and clothing familiar to and preferred by minority groups of students
>
> *Deep Structure*: Involves sociodemographic and racial/ethnic population differences and the influence of ethnic, cultural, social, environmental and historical factors on behaviors and student learning (WMEP Ledger 2009).

The use of the IDI (the Intercultural Development Inventory) as a tool for assessing and developing this desired cultural competence was discussed with several interviewees. Two of those interviewed (a program specialist at MDE and the new director of the North

St. Paul-Mahtomedi integration collaborative) are trained IDI facilitators and described their personal experiences with the tool, while Sandra Thomas in Northwestern Suburban described one member district, Osseo, as having used it extensively (personal communication 06-22-09). Dr. Mitchell Hammer, the developer of the IDI, has a website that describes its applications and repeatedly references "intercultural competence," but without once providing a definition for the phrase (www.idiinventory.com). The tool itself was originally developed for businesspeople working in other countries (personal communication with Naomi Kelly 06-01-09) and it is generally accepted that cultural awareness is necessary for international economic success (Brown and Hunter 2009).

A desire to be "colorblind" on the part of teachers was discussed as a recurring theme at the statewide School Desegregation conference in March, and described as a barrier to meeting the needs of children of color. Advocates for acknowledging students' racial identities believe that because race matters in society, to not recognize it is to ignore the challenges students face (or may face in the future) and not adequately meet their needs (Wise 2005). The need for "culturally competent" educators is discussed across education, but is a basic assumption among integration specialists. The role of racial awareness, from multicultural educational practices to addressing white privilege, is an integral part of developing cultural competence among those interviewed.

Additional Academic and External Influences on Integration Programming

Critical Race Theory was cited by Ted Philips as an area of study that educational leaders should apply to their practice. In particular, he noted the theory of converging

interests (developed by Derrick Bell and described in his book *Silent Covenants* 2004) which proposes that gains for people of color in U.S. society have occurred at points in history when promoting rights also benefits the majority community (personal communication 05-28-09). He seems to feel that the interests of students of color and the local business community are converging and he is hopeful that this will generate support for education. Delgado and Stefancic's discussion of the study of "intersectionality" in Critical Race Theory, which examines how the combination of varied potentially disadvantaging factors including race, sex, class, national origin and sexual orientation affect a person in specific situations (Delgado and Stefancic 2001) were echoed in statements by Naomi Kelly. She spoke specifically about a need for the recognition of "multiple identities:"

> Kelly: I'm really hoping in our professional developments that we can talk about multiple identities. And stop thinking about black children as just black children. And not black, poor, gay. And not whatever other pieces that we all have. So my recommendation will be <that> for every initiative that we pick that we focus on multiple identities. Hey listen, it can be race, but we're not just going to have one conference around race. We have to be inclusive, we have to remember that everybody's not just one thing (personal communication 06-01-09).

The *Brown v. Board of Education* case was not specifically cited by name, yet its influence clearly underlies work on school desegregation and integration issues. Naomi Kelly at one point stated that "history has already shown separate is never equal" (personal communication 06-01-09). Without the context of *Brown v. Board of Education* and subsequent lawsuits that resulted in school desegregation and race-conscious school

101

assignments, there would be no "field" of integration programming. Efforts in this policy area directly link the legal arena, changes in demographics, community identity and public opinion with educational programming. Court-mandated efforts to desegregate changed the make-up of schools and districts and created a new focus on interracial and multicultural education. Despite policies that have been adopted and initiatives in place across the country, school integration has arisen as an area of programming efforts and academic interest primarily because there are few places where it truly exists. Particularly in the wake of the 50-year anniversary of the *Brown* decision, many have lamented the lack of progress, and in a broad sense a back-pedaling, of desegregation efforts (Bell 2004, Clotfelter 2004, Ladson-Billings 2004, among others[12]). Increased globalization and concerns about the international standing of the United States have highlighted the need for student to be able to communicate and work with diverse groups of people, yet a disconnect remains between the premise of a multicultural society and the nature of schooling. Proponents state that "an increasingly diverse society will need desegregated schools as an important passageway to living and working together in a multiracial democracy" (Anderson 2005 p. 33) while those working on integration efforts cite the many challenges in reaching this goal.

Several educational consultants who work nationally as professional development leaders were referenced in interviews. One, Gary Howard, works particularly on issues of white privilege, which is an emphasis in many of the districts reviewed as the majority of teachers in Minnesota are white. Glenn Singleton, author of *Courageous*

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[12] 2004 marked the 50th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, and the case was widely discussed in educational literature that year.

Conversations About Race, and a leader of the Pacific Educational Group which has been

contracted by WMEP to conduct diversity trainings for staff, was also mentioned.

WMEP also partners with the National Urban Alliance on a project specifically geared

toward helping suburban schools receiving Minneapolis students through the CIY

program learn how to differentiate instruction

(http://www.nuatc.org/projects/wmep/wmep.html). The high cost of bringing in outside

experts for such staff development was also offered as a reason to contract with local

providers or to use in-house specialists. St. Mary's University is the provider of choice

for both EMID and the new North St. Paul-Mahtomedi collaborative.[13] Naomi Kelly also

described her process in hiring a local consultant to participate in the development of the

new collaborative, who will help create evaluation strategies and planning structures.

She also referred to the use of the ADDIE (Assessment <sic>[14], Design, Development,

Implementation and Evaluation) planning model (personal communication 06-01-09).

This is a strategy used in educational instructional design that her collaborative plans to

use in its development of new programs and in assessing the efficacy of current offerings.

MDE program specialists and the WMEP superintendent also made references to

work by Scott Page (personal communication 04-23-09, 05-28-09). His book *The*

Difference describes how diverse groups are better at problem-solving and supports this

theory with empirical research. Although his premise does not limit a definition of

"diversity" to describe racial and ethnic differences, his work has been applied to

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[13] Interestingly, the superintendent of EMID worked for St. Mary's before coming to his
current position, and the new director of the North St. Paul-Mahtomedi collaborative
worked with EMID for the last year.
[14] Traditionally the "A" in ADDIE is "analyze"

education and is familiar to those working on issues of school integration. A sentence

from the prologue of his book perhaps represents the appeal of his work to those in the

field: "…rather than being on the defensive about diversity, we should go on the

offensive. We should look at difference as something that can improve performance…"

(Page 2007 p. xxiii).

Those concerned about school desegregation and integration discuss the field in

terms of mission and the need for action. From the references to organizations that have

developed packaged "diversity training" seminars for educators and school district

personnel, to authors whose work implicitly affirms the diversity rationale first used to

support the benefits and value of desegregated learning environments in *Brown v. Board

of Education*, the field of integration seeks to justify its aims. Networking opportunities

are also essential in the establishment and expansion of professional awareness and

practice in any field. The national summit held in Boston in January and the Statewide

Integration Conference held in St. Paul in March are two examples of meetings designed

to provide such opportunities. In the months since the March conference, integration

leaders in Minnesota have established a new communication network and held a two day

retreat to develop goals and plan future activities. The group has described ambitious

objectives, including the creation of a new professional organization that would represent

the interests of integration programmers across the state[15]. The establishment of a unified

identity and clear set of shared goals may potentially create a more powerful voice for

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[15] An email received on Aug. 20 indicates that the tentative name for this organization is
the "Minnesota School Integration Council" or "MNSIC." A meeting is planned for
Sept. 10, 2009.

integration work in the state of Minnesota. There was unanimous agreement among

those interviewed that changes in the field are necessary and likely, but that consensus is

difficult to build and decision-making will be complicated.

Decision-Making in Metro Area Multidistrict Integration Collaboratives

      The collaborative nature of school integration programming in the Twin Cities

metro area requires decision-making structures that allow for input of a greater number of

stakeholders than a traditional school district. State education law, however, dictates

much of the accountability measures and reporting that these districts and collaboratives

must establish and information they must provide. Some similarities exist in the

structures that have developed, but fundamental differences in organizational philosophy

are evident in the governance of each district.

Leadership: Who's in Charge?

      Of the four initiatives studied, two had centralized decision-making and planning

structures in many ways similar to traditional school districts. These two, WMEP and

EMID, also both run two of their own magnet programs, which requires them to follow

certain guidelines that Northwestern Suburban and North St. Paul-Mahtomedi do not.

For instance, state law requires that districts with secondary schools must have a

superintendent (personal communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09), which dictates

administrative structure to a certain degree. Before a full-time superintendent position

was created in 2004 (Historical Timeline 2005), WMEP outsourced its administration of

human resources and finances. Ted Philips described his job as split "seven-tenths

superintendent of our schools, and three-tenths superintendent of the rest of our

activities" due to the funding structure of the district (personal communication 05-28-09).

John Waltz was more vague in describing the responsibilities of his position but was

originally attracted to work with EMID because of the challenge to "help them create some stability, provide some communication, some governance structure…some organizational pattern that made sense for the collaborative" (personal communication 06-10-09).

Naomi Kelly emphasized that her role is *not* one of superintendent, as that collaborative has, at this point at least, no intention of establishing its own schools. She described this as a strategy to avoid being "top-heavy" (personal communication 06-01-09). Based on statements made throughout much of our interview, however, it is clear that her position is endowed with strong decision-making power; a sincere effort to create structures allowing for the input of community stakeholders is evident, however. In my field notes I wrote "the buck stops here," but it may be that avoiding a formal designation of "superintendent" allows for more flexibility in professional responsibilities in the current leadership role. She described working with a leadership group composed of representatives from member districts, parents and community members and giving them decision-making power: "You're the leadership group. It starts with you, and if it's okay with you, then we'll move on. If not, it won't move on but it's your responsibility to come up with something that's viable" (personal communication 06-01-09). It is clear, however, at this early point in the development of the collaborative that she has say in both identifying members of the leadership group and providing direction, and therefore plays a strong role as head of the nascent organization.

Northwestern Suburban does have a superintendent, but the responsibilities of the position in that district are distinct from those in WMEP and EMID due to the local

administration of the network of magnet schools in the member districts. Sandra Thomas

has been the superintendent for eight years, since the position was established, but will be

leaving this year (personal communication 06-22-09). Selection for leadership also

appears driven by the structure of each district. WMEP and EMID, whose organizations

most closely mirror traditional school districts, hired leaders who had both held positions

as superintendents prior to their work in integration. Sandra Thomas and Naomi Kelly

had both held administrative positions related specifically to diversity and equity work

prior to their selection as leaders of their current collaboratives but had never worked as

principals or superintendents.

Collaboration: Cause and Effect

Both Naomi Kelly and Sandra Thomas cited the requirement for multi-district

collaboration as central to their local integration efforts. Sandra Thomas discussed

interpreting how to create a collaborative, and how to include the input of all the member

districts, as a primary challenge when she began working in Northwestern Suburban

(personal communication 06-22-09). The language used to describe organizational

structure was also seen as important to Naomi Kelly in emphasizing the contrast between

North St. Paul-Mahtomedi's current efforts and EMID, the district they have just left.

> Kelly: ...one of the things that was identified in the data from the previous integration
>
> collaborative and integration districts was that it was run very much like a regular school
>
> district- top-down? And the students and the parents and the community members that have
>
> come forward and wanted to kind of lead this said: "We really want it to be grassroots-up."
>
> We really didn't want to be top-heavy…we are going to really go backwards. And we're

going to gather the input from, from backwards up. We're really looking at starting small and doing it well. We will never be a *district.* …the parents and the students want a *collaborative"* (personal communication 06-01-09).

The Collaborative Councils (CCCs) which must be established in each interdistrict effort are very loosely described under the Rule: "Each isolated district and each of its adjoining districts shall appoint individuals to participate in the multidistrict collaboration council. The council shall be reasonably representative of the diversity of the participating districts" (Administrative Rule 3535.0170 Subp. 3). The Rule further states that districts that operate under Joint Powers agreements may establish an "advisory council" to that organization that can operate in lieu of a separate multidistrict collaborative council (Administrative Rule 3535.0170 Subp. 4).

EMID, Northwest Suburban and WMEP operate under Joint Powers agreements but these boards look different in each district. In Northwestern Suburban, the Joint Powers board consists of three representatives from each member district: a parent representative, a school board member, and the member district superintendent (Current Joint Powers Board 2009). WMEP's Joint Powers board has eleven representatives, one from each member district (www.wmep.k12.mn.us) and EMID has ten members elected to its board (www.emid6067.net). The impact of the Joint Powers agreement was viewed differently by each district. Ted Philips emphasized the voluntary nature of participation in a Joint Powers board as without mandate power, but one that allows for the development of an "entity" rather than merely a "committee" (personal communication 05-28-09).

A perceived lack of adequate community representation in other collaborative councils was a driving force behind the recruitment of participants in the new councils in North St. Paul-Mahtomedi (personal communication 06-01-09). Their new effort has a Multidistrict Collaborative Council as described by the Rule, which "just consists of superintendents from each district, the business managers, a Board rep, and one member from the CCC. This group is really advisory." The true decision-making power is clearly meant to lie, however, with the local CCC, which consists of "…two parents from every district, two students from every district, two staff from every district, and one community member that doesn't have students, doesn't work, just lives in the community. So that's seven per district. And then we have ad hoc members" (personal communication 06-01-09). This group has been meeting monthly for the last ten months, although MDE only requires quarterly meetings.   Creating bylaws and selecting programs are the primary responsibility of this CCC; decisions are then reviewed by the Multidistrict Collaborative Council, and are finally approved by the North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale School Board (personal communication 06-01-09).

MDE's role as an oversight organization has been strengthened since the Legislative Auditor's report called for increased authority to be granted to state officials in identifying the efficacy of integration programming across the state. The role between MDE program specialists and district leaders did not appear contentious. The MDE specialists welcomed the expanded role of site visits in their job activities and a focus on identifying best practices in school districts receiving integration revenue (personal communication 04-23-09). As one specialist put it, "this work is on the cutting edge" and

they also view keeping up to date on equity work happening around the country and distributing this information to Minnesota districts as part of their primary responsibilities. Naomi Kelly referred to MDE's role more frequently than any other leader interviewed, perhaps because of the developmental stage of the North St. Paul-Mahtomedi collaborative. She referred to MDE's description of state best practices, professional development plan requirements, and evaluation expectations (personal communication 06-01-09). The MDE staff also listed providing technical assistance, interpreting the Statute and Rule for districts, and conveying the message of the integration program among their tasks (personal communication 04-23-09).[16]

Although potentially allowing for greater representation and communication, the collaborative nature of the integration districts makes them vulnerable to changes in member districts relative to funding or programmatic priorities. Both EMID and WMEP have experienced the effects of having members leave their collaboratives, and the possibility exists that major shifts could occur in the future if the anchor districts of Minneapolis and St. Paul decided to leave WMEP or EMID (respectively). The development of the North St. Paul-Mahtomedi collaborative came after the North St. Paul-Maplewood district officially notified EMID the previous year of its intention to leave. Prior to this decision, a task force was formed to look at data regarding the participation of students from that district in EMID's programming. The task force

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[16] Under the Statute, MDE is afforded budget approval authority for each district receiving Integration Revenue (Minnesota Statute 124D.86 Subd. 1a). As no leader interviewed cited this role, it may be that budget review is perfunctory and that expenses are rarely denied.

determined that the amount of money sent to the integration district was excessive for the small number of students that were attending the two magnet schools, and they decided to pull their resources out and form a new collaborative (personal communication 06-01-09). Mahtomedi, North St. Paul's partner district in the new collaborative, remains a part of EMID until the following year (personal communication with John Waltz 06-10-09). This means that Mahtomedi is still paying into EMID's programming while participating in the planning of the new collaborative and making a symbolic one dollar payment as a partner district (personal communication with Naomi Kelly 06-01-09).

In discussing North St. Paul's departure from EMID, John Waltz did not minimize the impact of the loss of a member, but did not seem particularly concerned about long-term effects. The sixteen-month notification period required by the Joint Powers agreement allowed sufficient time to develop a financial plan to respond to a reduction in funding. Naomi Kelly estimated that the departure will cost EMID about $200,000, about one-sixth of its overall budget (personal communication 06-01-09).

WMEP has similar bylaws that require a lengthy notification period (Feb. 1 of the previous year) if a member district decides to pull out of the collaborative. Great concern developed earlier this year when Minneapolis began to discuss possible plans to leave WMEP. As the largest member of the collaborative by far, such a decision would have drastic consequences. More than 400 students from Minneapolis participate in WMEP programming, either through attendance at FAIR or IDDS schools or through CIY (personal communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09). Sandra Thomas mentioned parent organization and rallying as influential in Minneapolis' decision not to withdraw for the

112

time being (personal communication 06-22-09). Brooklyn Center has notified WMEP that they will most likely leave the collaborative next year because they are also a member of Northwestern Suburban, but this would only result in a loss of about $25,000 and a minimal number of students. Robbinsdale considered leaving WMEP a few years ago but ultimately decided to remain a member district (personal communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09). The voluntary nature of participation in the integration collaboratives reviewed is clearly a point of weakness in planning for long-term stability.

Because integration programming is funded primarily through special revenue sources, the influence of changing legislative priorities is also tangible in the field. The current Rule under which the schools operate is only ten years old, after having been reworked in the late 1990s. When asked about key political players at the state level, respondents cited state senators and representatives involved in both the drafting of legislative language and that participate on the Education Finance Committee. The most frequently mentioned was House Representative Carlos Mariani, who is also the Executive Director of the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership. The current political climate is seen as less than supportive of education in general, and integration issues are seen either as completely "off the radar" of most legislators or under attack by others suggesting that the funding be cut entirely. The integration leaders interviewed agreed that political tension exists among legislators discussing the future and current role of the Rule and the Statute. Ted Philips described the source of this debate as related to a history of local control in educational policy:

> Philips: Minnesota is, and all states probably are, very much into local control. So, the
>
> Deseg. <sic> Rule is written in such a way that it allows communities to make their own

judgments, decisions and priorities about the use of integration revenue for their

communities. And as a result, you get a lot of variety. And it should be expected. If you

hold constant the expectation of "meet your community's needs" and then people do. So

legislators are conflicted…when you get local control you get variability in application and

outcome. If you try to be specific, you get the push-back. So, a lot of conflict…and I don't

mean conflict in terms of fighting, I mean people are conflicted. (personal communication 05-

28-09).

In spite of growing national accountability requirements, Brown and Hunter echo the

importance of local control in describing public education as "a local issue with

minimum input from the federal government," due to funding responsibilities at the state

level (2009). This further supports the need for sociocultural approaches to policy

analysis in order to understand complex local conditions.

Growth of Political Advocacy Efforts

Threats to continued funding for integration through the Revenue Statute have

inspired integration leaders to actively participate in lobbying efforts aimed at legislators.

This year, the three large metro area integration districts (EMID, Northwestern Suburban

and WMEP) hired "the services of a government affairs specialist" (personal

communication with Ted Philips 05-28-09). Naomi Kelly also participated in meetings

away from the capitol with other integration leaders to provide input about the desired

direction of lobbying efforts (personal communication 06-01-09). John Waltz described

testifying before working groups and subcommittees in both the House and the Senate

(personal communication 06-10-09).

In particular, they have attempted to guide the conversation about integration away from the revenue statute and back to the Administrative Desegregation/Integration Rule. Although the Legislative Auditor's report recommendations refer repeatedly to the "Integration Revenue Program" and a need to revisit the funding formula and clarify its purpose (OLA 2005), integration leaders believe the true source of the problem lies in the vague language of the Rule. The distinction is significant in identifying the driver of policy in this area.

> Philips: Our objection this last legislative session was they were working on integration revenue and we thought they should be working on the deseg. <sic> rule. Work the rule, and the outcomes, then the budget to drive it. They're over here working on the budget. You've still got the same deseg <sic> rule. And over here in the money you're trying to put limits on it and so forth and that ought to come out of the rule. So our hope is that there will be a joint Senate-House workgroup in the off session between now and next January-February that will hopefully bring a proposed new deseg <sic> rule into consideration. (personal communication 05-28-09).

The connection between integration efforts and measured academic achievement remained a point of debate throughout the legislative session. Sandra Thomas described her district's interpretation of the Rule as a call for "providing racial interaction and educational programs that are justifiable," Additional expectations regarding student achievement would be especially challenging for Northwestern Suburban to meet as the district does not actually run the magnet schools in its program (personal communication 06-22-09). The other districts would also struggle with new requirements due to the diffuse effects of program activities; limited student programming directly tied to state

115

tests such as the MCA IIs is funded directly through integration revenue. Measuring the effects of professional development designed to address issues of culturally competent pedagogy, for example, on MCA II math scores in multiple member districts would be very difficult to do accurately.

Ultimately, no decisions regarding changes to either the language of the Rule or the requirements of the Revenue Statute have passed this year, but integration leaders interviewed appeared confident that their voices had been heard at the state policy-making level. It appears likely that the increased lobbying activity by integration advocates this year is one source of the motivation to create a new network of integration educators in Minnesota. Many of those who were involved in political activity during the legislative session were part of the planning committee activities for this new endeavor (earlier referenced as "MNSIC"). Overall, the collaborative nature of multi-district participation in integration districts, Joint Powers agreements and the requirements for representative councils in the Rule appear to foster environments for cooperative decision-making. Whether the membership of the representative councils or the bylaws of these groups are indeed allowing the voices of diverse stakeholders in determining how each district is actually run is a question beyond the scope of this study.

Student Educational Achievement and School Experience

Using national school performance data, the "achievement gap" for Minnesota schools reflects trends common across the country, in which standardized test scores show a significant difference between the scores of African American and Latino students and white students. Scores on the NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) showed a difference of 33 points between African American students and White students and a 31 point difference between Latino students and White students on the 4th grade Reading portion of this exam (Education Trust 2007). These gaps were similar on the 8th grade Math exam, with point differences of 37 and 28 respectively (Education Trust 2007). The 2009 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment results disaggregate achievement by ethnicity and show similar differences. On the 4th grade Math MCA II, 80 percent of White students scored at proficient levels, while only 58 percent of Hispanic students and 45 percent of Black students did so (Minnesota Assessments 2009). In 8th grade Math, overall White student achievement was only 65 percent proficient, but the gap with Hispanic and Black students remained, with proficiency levels of only 35 percent and 25 percent respectively for these groups (Minnesota Assessments 2009). On the Reading MCA IIs, in fourth grade 82 percent of White students scored at proficient levels compared to 49 percent of both Black and Hispanic students (Minnesota Assessments 2009). In 8th grade, 78 percent of White students were proficient while only 41 percent of Hispanic students and 38 percent of Black students scored at these levels (Minnesota Assessments 2009).

The difficulty in linking the concepts of educational equity and educational excellence is not particular to integration programming. Most educational literature, state academic standards, and school district missions reference these goals at least superficially. Ultimately, however, current attempts to evaluate the status of either one in public schools are weak and lacking. The statements of some of those interviewed, expressing feelings that standardized testing results that show racial "achievement gaps" are merely putting numbers on a phenomenon that people already knew about (if they were paying attention), mirror Ladson-Billings' critique of the concept itself. Because the social factors that have led to the so-called "achievement gap" between students of color and white students go far beyond school boundaries, current metrics fail to pinpoint exactly where efforts should be directed to improve student performance in schools. Economically-driven academic practices and policy decisions are difficult to defend as a culturally appropriate response to local needs (Abu el-Haj 2009), yet they remain popular among decision-makers as quickly identifiable actions. In this sense, the legislative auditor's report and comments from integration leaders interviewed which show that the Rule is clearly the driver of the Statute are crucial to identifying how integration efforts in Minnesota could be improved. If reform efforts are focused solely on the funding formula problems described, the separate issue of confusion among everyone involved over how to link equity and excellence, integration and the "achievement gap," will remain unaddressed.

As discussed earlier, many superintendents and directors noted the absence of language regarding academic achievement in the Rule as originally designed. One of the

ways Naomi Kelly has described her new initiative as distinct from the others is in its commitment to data collection and evaluation, and including these efforts in the initial design of the collaborative (personal communication 06-01-09). Sandra Thomas discussed the potential addition of such requirements in measuring the success of Northwestern Suburban as a significant challenge, as they do not actually run the magnet schools that are part of the collaborative (personal communication 06-22-09). Having never tracked test scores or absenteeism, such responsibilities would need to be added to a master plan of activities for the district, and strategies would need to be developed in order to compare student performance in magnet schools to their potential performance in a home district. Additionally, several of the magnet programs function within a larger school, and additional confounding factors would need to be considered.

Similar to the design of other multi-district integration collaborative efforts, the goals of the Choice is Yours program as written refer only briefly to improving academic achievement. This is somewhat peculiar considering the program was implemented through court order, after a finding that the educational opportunities available to low-income students in Minneapolis public schools were inadequate compared to those of their suburban peers. Subsequent evaluation reports of CIY emphasize decision-making and choice aspects for families to a much greater extent than issues of academic achievement. Out of 34 report findings, only the last two refer to academic achievement, and although some evidence suggests that students involved in the program do slightly better than their eligible non-participating counterparts, the conclusion of the authors is clear: "over a four-year period, the achievement results were mixed" (ASPEN Associates

119

2009 p. 8). The report suggests that better analysis will be possible after more cohorts of students have participated for several years (ASPEN Associates 2009) but this highlights another challenge to educational practitioners under current requirements- the need to show tangible student achievement from year to year.

A frequent criticism of NCLB assessment measures has been an emphasis on the "snapshot" approach to assessment, rather than tracking individual student progress to show growth. Many schools have now implemented a greater variety of formative assessment techniques to measure student growth over the course of a school year, but the results of MCA IIs and similar achievement tests are still reported in terms of passing percentages for the whole school and by subgroups of students. The great deal of flexibility among states in how to test and disaggregate data among racial and ethnic groups is a key criticism of NCLB statutes (Brown and Hunter 2009). Gary Orfield has criticized enforcement of rigid standards such as those under NCLB as exacerbating inequalities because they do little to equalize opportunity for students in minority schools. Actions that can be taken under the Act may label many such schools as failures, narrow curriculum to "endless testing drills" and drive experienced teachers away from the neediest schools (Orfield and Frankenburg 2007 p. 6).

Included in a list of "Frequently Asked Questions" about the Rule and Statute is the following: "Can integration revenue be used to fund programs focused on improving academic achievement for students or closing 'achievement gaps' among groups of students?" (Brown 2008 p. 9). The MDE "strongly encourages districts to develop programs and activities under their plans that simultaneously advance both the goal of

120

improving student academic achievement and the goal of increasing opportunities for integration" and refers to language in the Rule that requires that integration plans be "educationally justifiable" (Brown 2008 p. 9). In this response, there is clearly no requirement that districts provide clear evidence of *how* their efforts are "educationally justifiable" and the existence of a debate among legislators is understandable. In an era of extreme focus on "educational accountability" which in most cases is represented by numerical test score data, the inability of integration districts to provide convincing results linking their interracial contact efforts with improved student achievement makes them vulnerable to criticism and potential loss of political support. In addition, "the effects of segregated education cannot be cured by merely enacting strong demands for achievement gains and changing nothing else in schools that are usually unequal in every major dimension relating to student achievement" (Orfield and Frankenburg 2007 p. 6).

Those in the field clearly feel that intangible benefits exist for students educated in integrated learning environments, and are struggling against a decision-making climate more focused on results than process. Naomi Kelly was explicit in stating that there need to be more "creative" ways to measure academic performance "measured by the test, but…let's be more culturally competent in our assessment" (personal communication 06-01-09). She believes that integration will have a positive impact on achievement, but "how you measure that is going to have to change" (personal communication 06-01-09). Specific ways in which she believes these positive impacts will occur may be in increasing school attendance of students targeted for support

through integration efforts, which should lead to additional learning time and increased graduation rates (personal communication 06-01-09).

The effects of failing to educate *all* students to high levels are noted outside of education as well. One of the highlighted findings of a report on Minnesota's children from 2000 Census data was that "minority children are less likely to graduate from high school" (Ronningen 2004). Black and Hispanic students graduate from high school in four years at a rate half that of their white peers (Twin Cities Compass 2009). The link between these disparities and economic interests in local communities was noted by Ted Philips (personal communication 05-28-09) and is evident in broader literature. Brown and Hunter, in their discussion of the impact of the *Parents Involved* case, state that due to the dependency of the country on the larger global economy, if the United States is to remain competitive, it "cannot afford to undereducate entire segments of the population along racial or social class" (2009 p. 596). A report released this year by McKinsey & Company further seeks to quantify the effects of the achievement gap between white and black and Latino students, as well as between students of different income levels, on the U.S. economy and individual achievement (2009). Among their findings were calculated earnings losses that they equate to an "economic equivalent of a permanent national recession" (McKinsey & Company 2009). The report also found, however, that a wide variety of performance among schools with minority and low-income students suggest that the gaps can be closed and that "race and poverty are not destiny" (McKinsey & Company 2009). The challenge for those in integration is now to show how their efforts

122

to create racially and socioeconomically balanced learning environments can also have a measurable effect on these achievement gaps.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The data collected through this investigation confirms the conflict between policy language and local interpretation in the field of school integration in Minnesota. In particular, the research has highlighted the extremely broad range of local implementation strategies, many of which are not adequately assessed or funded.

Although educational policy may not hold all the solutions to problems of school segregation, as Jean Anyon states "…it is considerably more likely that equitable practice will follow from good policy than from bad" (2005 p. 6). It is therefore important to continue to study the impact of policy at multiple levels of implementation to identify the good and the bad. Anthropological perspectives offer insight into the experiences of multiple stakeholders and the cultural assumptions that drive policy development and decision-makers and should be included in analyses of their efficacy. The field of school integration is heavily impacted by legal decisions, and changing considerations of the importance of race in school assignment programs are important to include in such analyses. The "diversity rationale" argues that diversity should be recognized as a compelling state interest (Moses and Change 2005), and the highly contested debate over such ideals evident in the *Parents Involved* Supreme Court case show strong differences in opinion among legal experts, academic researchers and the general public. Moses and Chang urge educational researchers to consider the narrow applications of the diversity rationale in the development of particular policies while also maintaining awareness of

broader issues of discrimination, inequality and injustice, and to "integrate analyses of

diversity with considerations of social justice" (2005 p. 10).

Functioning within an already somewhat amorphous branch of educational

programming, local integration districts and collaboratives struggle with defining their

role relative to member districts, potential students and their families, and policy makers.

Combined with a tradition of local control, the future of such programming is uncertain.

Despite the frequency of references in educational literature to the *Brown v. Board of

Education* case, Critical Race Theory and "cultural competency," *many* people I spoke to

during the course of this study, including those working in the field, asked curiously why

I was studying the topic of school integration in Minnesota. One superintendent even

said "And why did you stumble upon this topic for heaven's sakes? It's not a common

topic." What does this mean about the importance placed on interracial contact and

"diverse learning environments" by the general educational community, even those

ostensibly committed to its prominent role in their work? Especially important, how can

Minnesota's efforts be considered progressive and "model" programs for other parts of

the country, yet most local educators do not even have a general understanding of

integration revenue (indeed, many don't know it even exists) use or knowledge of

programs funded by this money? In fact, it seems probable that many educators, families

and community members have interacted with efforts funded through the Statute

(attendance at Courageous Conversations workshops, Multicultural school-community

events, participation in CIY, etc.) but are not aware of how they were paid for.

Interviewees referenced this lack of public knowledge and understanding of their work

rather off-handedly, but local support is clearly essential if the funding and resulting programming are to continue.

NCLB and tests such as the NAEP have led to much attention in recent years on the differences in educational achievement between states, and the standings of the U.S. in the TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) behind many other nations, including those rapidly developing through globalization, are frequently referenced as a call to national action for improving education. With an increased focus on equitable resource distribution at the state and local levels rather than federal, and efforts to address local disparities becoming more important (Brown and Hunter 2009). however, analysis of the effect of state policies locally are essential. In its statement of purpose, NCLB links the issues of the "achievement gap" and school choice (107th Congress 2002).[17] As Minnesota's Desegregation/Integration Rule and Integration Revenue Statue also reference these issues, the importance of identifying connections and dis-connections between the two is reinforced. As school choice programs originally enacted with desegregation goals are now expanding, but without civil rights requirements, it is essential that those committed to school integration commit to studying and documenting the purported benefits of such learning environments (Orfield and Frankenburg 2007).

Criticism of local integration efforts have focused on their failure to truly achieve racial balance in many schools funded by integration revenue, and the fact that racial achievement gaps exist in these schools as well (Draper and Relerford 2009). The

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[17] The Act's specific language states: "to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind."

integration leaders contacted for interviews acknowledged that these problems do exist, but defended their work as focused on justifiable goals. The voluntary student assignment systems in place to enroll students in these schools, as well as the year to year variations in member districts all create situations over which the integration magnets have little control. As described in the 2009 evaluation report of the Choice is Yours program, however, more can be done in terms of promoting integration choices to families of low-income students and underrepresented minority groups.

Continued professional development programs designed to raise the skill level of educators in urban, suburban and rural communities to deal with a diverse student body are also crucial. At the statewide desegregation conference in March, Thea Abu el-Haj presented a proposed "Relational Framework for Addressing Difference" based on four principal assumptions:

1. The aim of equity is substantive inclusion.

2. A focus on the equal moral value of each member of society

3. Focus on, rather than ignore, difference, but do so from a relational perspective

4. Everyone must be included in the process of change. (Abu el-Haj 2009).

These concepts are based on an understanding of diversity as much deeper than the version presented at oversimplified workshops described by some in the field; ones that emphasize holiday celebrations and artwork at the expense of appreciating the different experiences of varied groups of people in the United States and the basis of these experiences in historical inequity. McNeal states:

> As history has shown us, one court decision or legislative mandate is not enough to sustain meaningful, systemic education reform. Achieving education equity in America will

127

require changing the moral compass of citizens by instilling a strong sense of civic

responsibility in ensuring that every child has access to a quality education. These

educational goals and values must permeate at every level of society, transcending beyond

race, gender, and class. This will ensure that policies and legislative mandates designed to

foster school integration are successfully implemented. (2009).

As conversations with integration leaders and educators in Minnesota show, such a shift

in direction is difficult to accomplish, and more so when the ultimate destination remains

unclear. It is evident that all those interviewed view improving academic achievement of

students of color as urgent. They are also acutely aware that merely creating superficially

integrated learning environments will not erase the "achievement gap," yet they value the

goal of positive interracial contact as essential to developing successful students. This

essential dilemma of how to connect excellence and equity remains central to the future

of integration programming in the state.

School integration is both a social dilemma and a policy challenge. This research

demonstrates that effective implementation of policy to address the racial isolation of

students in Metro Area schools will require a more robust definition of the goals of

integration and improved methods to promote effective programming and track progress

toward these goals. Although Minnesota's integration efforts are seen as fairly

progressive nationally, the state's school choice laws in conjunction with underlying

social and economic inequalities create situations in which educators ostensibly dedicated

to similar goals of increased achievement for diverse learners compete for resources

rather than cooperate or collaborate to find effective solutions. The exclusion of charter

schools from the state School Desegregation/Integration Rule in particular creates a

problematic situation for metro area school districts. In the wake of the *Parents Involved*

Supreme Court case, states and local districts are adjusting their integration efforts to

promote student assignment by socioeconomic status. The interdistrict plans described in

this study, including the Choice is Yours program in Minneapolis, are already

distinguished by voluntary participation and do not use race-based enrollment guidelines.

Considering the fact that these efforts already in place have struggled to adequately

represent the diversity of the communities in which they function, however, it is

important that the social justice orientation of school integration work not be lost. Many

local and national educators continue to work toward the ideals expressed in *Brown*, that

public schools in our country remove barriers to opportunity and access and reflect its

diverse character.

AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The following issues became apparent through analysis of school integration in Minnesota, but true investigation into these areas was limited by the focus of this paper. Additional study would likely yield insight to the future direction of efforts at the state and local levels.

English Language Learners and School Integration

As part of a recent on-line debate in a New York Times blog, the directors of the immigration studies program at New York University describe the educational progress of English Language Learners as the "elephant in the American classroom" (Súarez-Orozco and Súarez-Orozco in "What Do School Tests Measure?" Aug. 3, 2009). The potential underrepresentation of ELL students in the integration magnet programs in the Twin Cities metro area is an issue that has been used to critique such efforts. The 2009 Choice is Yours Evaluation report notes that Hispanic students were the least likely of all eligible groups to enroll in the program (2009), yet Minnesota has one of the fastest-growing Latino populations in the country (McMurry 2001). Minneapolis and St. Paul Public Schools note the great variety of home languages spoken by their students on their websites, and although the integration districts also reference these numbers, the linguistic diversity in their programs is clearly less than central city schools.

The need to consider the particular needs of speakers of native languages other than English was a part of many original desegregation plans in the 1960s and 70s, following an increased awareness of bilingual education, but much of these efforts were

scaled back or discontinued during Reagan administration (Orfield 2007). In 2007, the

English Language Learner population was estimated to be 7 percent of all students in the

state of Minnesota, with the largest proportion of these students classified as Asian or

Latino (Education Trust 2007). By 2020, these minority groups are projected to increase

by 34 percent and 28 percent respectively (Education Trust 2007), with likely increases in

the number of ELL students attending schools. The continued decline in numbers of

white students may indicate a shift in focus of integration efforts. Regardless of the

strategies employed, increased attention should be placed on the role of bilingual

education and the needs of English Language Learners in integrated school environments.

Impact of Professional Development Programming and Administration

Although a great deal of attention is paid to the delivery of staff development

programs designed to increase educators' "cultural competency," it is unclear if

evaluative methods are being consistently used to determine the effectiveness of these

efforts. I attended a break-out session at the State Integration Conference in March on

the use of the IDI for school "walk-throughs" and some districts are obviously paying

more attention to data collection than others. A deeper analysis of such efforts was

beyond the scope of this study but would follow logically. It appears likely that increased

calls for educational accountability in general will lead to greater focus on identifying

tools for use in this area. Comparing the knowledge base of front-line educators working

in intentionally integrated environments to peers working in regular member district

schools (with both high minority and low minority populations) would perhaps yield

insight into how the lessons from professional development opportunities are distributed and enacted in practice. It is likely that integration districts will need to provide evidence for the value of their programs in terms of closing the "achievement gap;" they would do well to also document the effects of other efforts to build positive interracial interactions and cultural awareness. In the context of efforts to increase communication and idea-sharing across districts (such as with the MNSIC), attempts to identify commonalities among integration educators would be valuable. Comparing the efforts of those in positions with similar titles (in particular directors of Equity and Diversity, or Equity and Integration) and implementation in varied local environments would provide insight to the interpretation of state policy across school districts.

Native Americans and School Integration

American Indian students are exempt from requirements of the Rule because although they are defined as "protected," they are also considered members of sovereign nations (Minnesota Rule 3535.0110). Under part 3535.0160, schools considered racially identifiable due to large concentrations of American Indian students are not required to develop and submit plans due to this dual status. The educational history of Native Americans in Minnesota, as across the country, includes acts of subjugation and efforts to destroy cultural identity. Attempts to remedy past discrimination have done little to improve current educational achievement of Native American students in Minnesota, as significant "achievement gaps" indicate that white students score higher than this subgroup as well. Although the number of Native American students is small in metro

area school districts, in other parts of the state the population is much higher and a large part of what constitutes "diversity" in outstate Minnesota. Like other minority groups in the state, the Native American population overall is projected to increase by 27% by 2020 (Education Trust 2007). The number of Native American students attending integration programs is very small, but the relationship between other educational policies targeted at improving education for Native American students and integration issues should be further explored.

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Appendix A
CODING SCHEMA FROM INTERVIEW ANALYSIS
The seven main categories are labeled by number, with subnodes further numbered after the main code.

Community Context (1)	*Community Factors (1.1)* **.1** Racial Diversity (or lack of-white flight) **.2** Changing Demographics **.3** Immigration **.4** Socioeconomic status **.5** Business community **.6** Education-Poverty-Crime link **.7** Member district size (number of students) **.8** Residential segregation	*School Choice/Selection (1.2)* **.1** Magnet schools- general purpose **.2** Declining enrollment-competition **.3** Attractors **.4** School size **.5** CIY (Choice is Yours) **.6** Cost per student **.7** ELL- underrepresented in integration schools? **.8** Segregated charter schools **.9** Neighborhood schools

Defining Integration (2)	*Conceptually (2.1)* **.1** Goals **.2** Personal motivation **.3** Cultural **.4** Racial balance/ interracial contact **.5** How connected to academic achievement? **.6** Recognizing *multiple* identities **.7** Labeling of individuals by race/ethnicity/SES etc.	*Legislatively (2.2)* **.1** Problems with the Rule (disincentives, vagueness) **.2** Goals **.3** Need for change in language/clear definition **.4** how to measure?

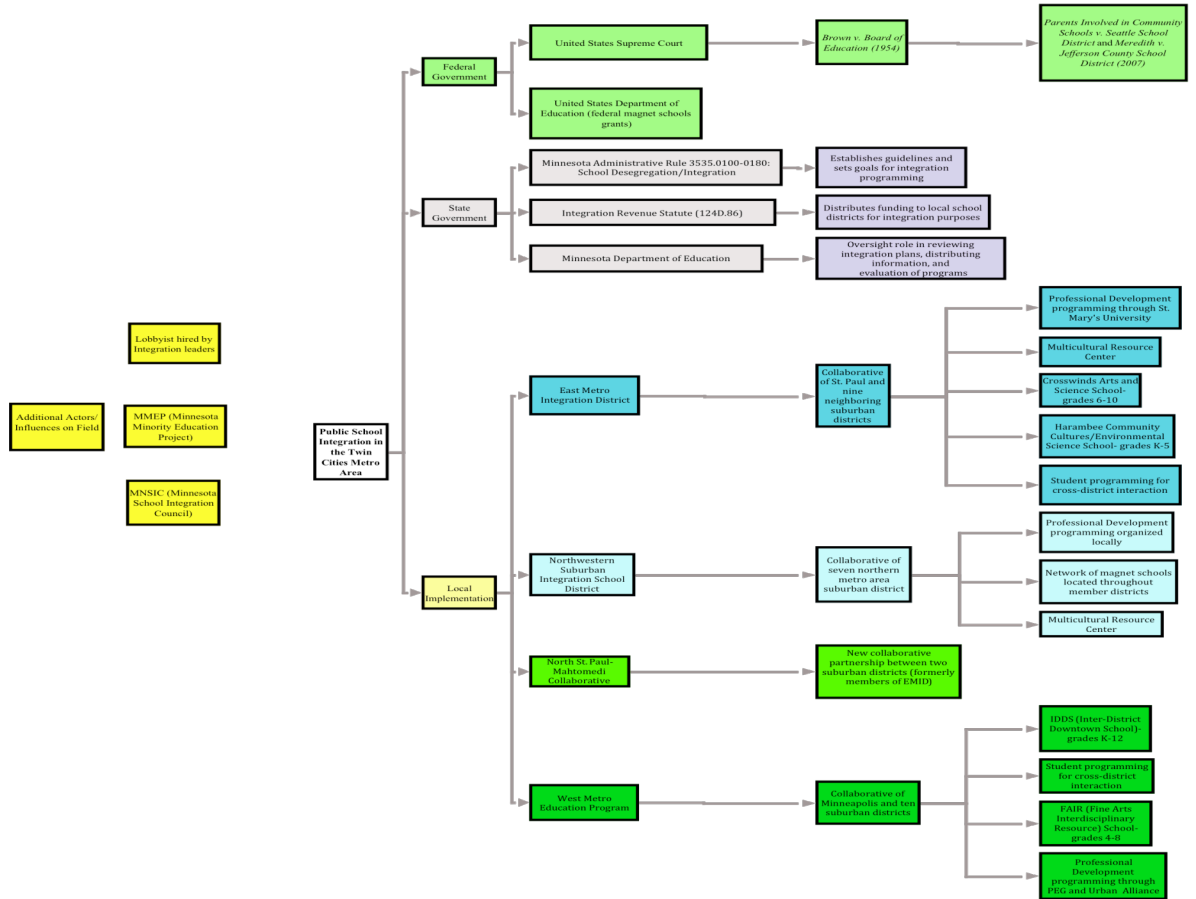| Construction of "the Field" of school integration and related educational programming (3)	*Outside organizations / examples (3.1)* **.1** Institute for Race and Justice **.2** New Haven, CT **.3** Clark County, Nevada **.4** Hartford, CT **.5** Geoffrey Canada	*Outside influences (3.2)* **.1** Academic: CRT-converging interests theory **.2** Whiteness **.3** Cultural (multi/ inter-) competency **.4** Invisible Man **.5** Social reproduction theory **.6** Personal philosophies of education **.7** *Brown v. Board of Education* **.8** 2005 OLA Report **.9** *Meredith v. Jefferson County* Supreme Court decision	*Consultants/ Experts (3.3)* **.1** for district planning **.2** PEG **.3** ADDIE model for program planning **.4** Courageous Conversations/ Glenn Singleton **.5** St. Mary's University **.6** Urban Alliance **.7** Gary Howard **.8** Scott Page (U of Mich.)

Decision-Making (4)	*Districts (4.1)*	*State (4.2)*
	.1 Delegating Responsibility **.2** Centralized v. decentralized **.3** Lobbying on state level- political pressure **.4** Community input (e.g. CCCs) **.5** member district school boards and representatives to multidistrict collaboratives	**.1** Legislature- key players **.2** Current political climate **.3** MDE (Minn. Dept. of Edu.) oversight role **.4** Disagreement among actors- political tension **.5** Need for action

Organizational Identity (5)	*Mission (5.1)*	*History/Development (5.2)*	*Sharing of Ideas and Resources /Referencing other Integration districts/collaboratives (5.3)*
	.1 District activities **.2** Role of superintendent **.3** Benefits to members **.4** Voluntary nature of participation **.5** Desired teacher qualities/hiring/staff selection **.6** Non-discrimination **.7** Public Image **.8** Voice for integration on state level? **.9** as school coordinator (magnets) or not **.10** language/wording	**.1** Membership- districts **.2** Non-participation- Effects of withdrawal of members **.3** Enrollment (size, etc.) and student selection **.4** Legal guidelines (Joint Powers) **.5** Promotional efforts **.6** Changes in organizational responsibility **.7** Planning processes **.8** Staff turnover	*Business Model References (5.4)*

Role of Money in District/ Collaborative Functions and Structure: "Pay to Play"(6)	*Revenue Sources (6.1)*	*Revenue Eligibility (6.2)*	*Revenue Uses (6.3)*
	.1 State (Int. Revenue statute) to members, then to districts/collaboratives. **.2** Transportation Aid **.3** Federal grants (magnet schools) **.4** District budget cuts **.5** Compensatory Ed, Title I **.6** other grants **.7** local district money	**.1** Member district identification (racial isolation, racially identifiable schools) **.2** Urban v. suburban districts	**.1** Admin. positions **.2** Setting priorities- state and individual districts **.3** Staff development **.4** "cost-effectiveness" **.5** Create schools (magnets) or not **.6** questionable expenses **.7** within districts alone (not part of collaborative district)

Educational Achievement and Experience for students in participating districts (7)	*Measurement of Outcomes (7.1)* **.1** Evaluation **.2** Test results "showing the obvious" **.3** need for valid assessments **.4** graduation rates **.5** school attendance	*Disparities/Inequalities (7.2)* **.1** Show need to redesign policies **.2** NCLB regulations **.3** Disadvantage in "the system" **.4** Access to resources/opportunities **.5** "achievement gap"

Appendix B: Policy Fields Map

Appendix C
School Integration in Minnesota: Defining Aspects of Educational Excellence and Educational Equity
Dimensions of misalignment between academic achievement and integration

	Problems of Definition	**Problems of Implementation**
"Integration" as defined in State Rule	What are meaningful interracial experiences? How are they different from interracial contact ("rubbing elbows")	Exclusion of private and charter schools from Rule requirements
"Achievement Gap" and integration	Should specific language about closing the "achievement gap" be placed in the Rule? Are achievement and integration separate goals?	Do integrated learning environments reduce the "achievement gap?" Are problems of student academic performance and problems of segregation solved in different ways?
Cultural Competency	How is/should the concept be defined? What is the current understanding among researchers and educators?	How can cultural competency be measured and assessed? (e.g. role of IDI in schools, effectiveness of professional development) How can cultural competency be taught to staff and students?
Impact of Race in Schools	How to identify students (or not) based on biologically inaccurate categories... Schools as mirrors of societal injustice (e.g. housing discrimination)	Addressing historical issues of discrimination and lack of access How can integration plans effectively address the effects of institutional racism and not perpetuate white privilege?
Defining Value of Diversity in Education	As a Civil Right: should schools reflect community demographics and facilitate interaction? As Economic Imperative: should schools prepare students for a globalized economy?	How can schools prepare students to work in a globalized world? How can schools be structured to reflect a multiracial and multicultural society?