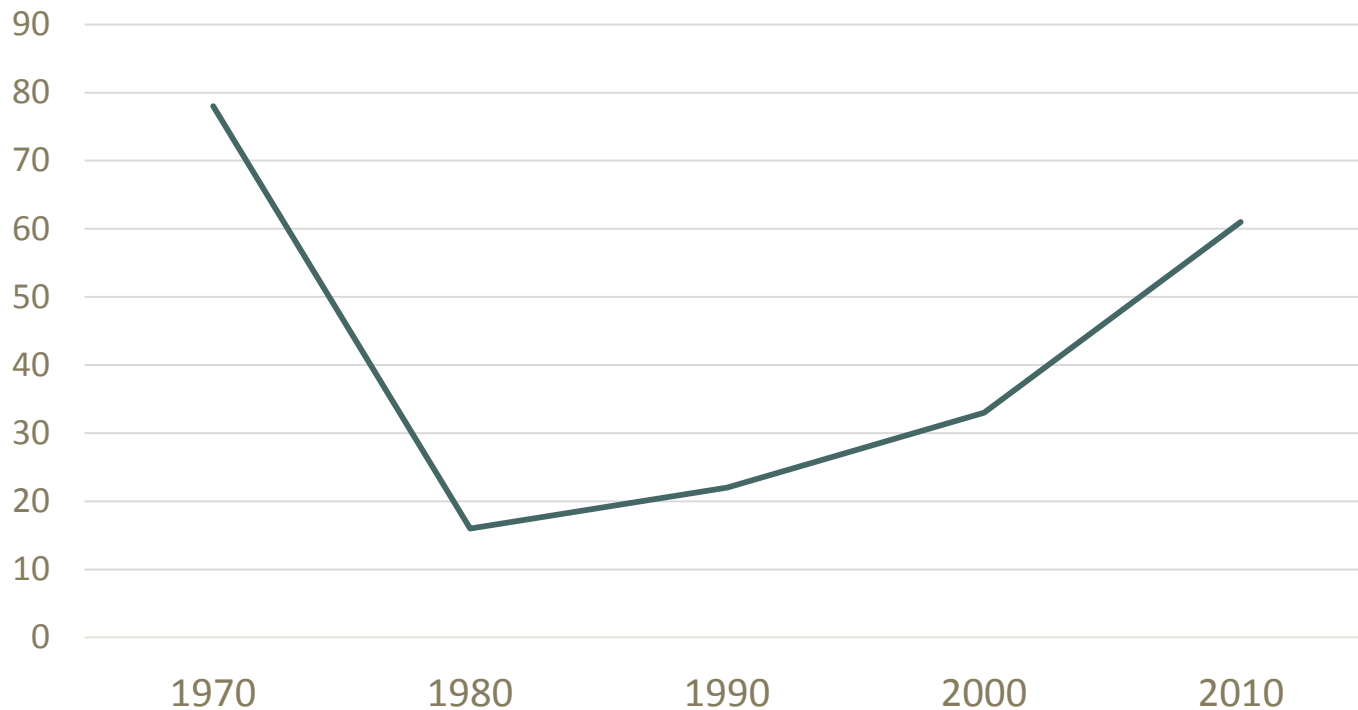


*CREATING A 21ST CENTURY
MOVEMENT FOR EDUCATIONAL
EQUITY*

Amy Hawn Nelson, UNC Charlotte
Sandra Wilcox Conway, Independent Consultant

**PUBLIC SCHOOL
ADVOCATES**

BLACK/WHITE DISSIMILARITY INDEX: CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

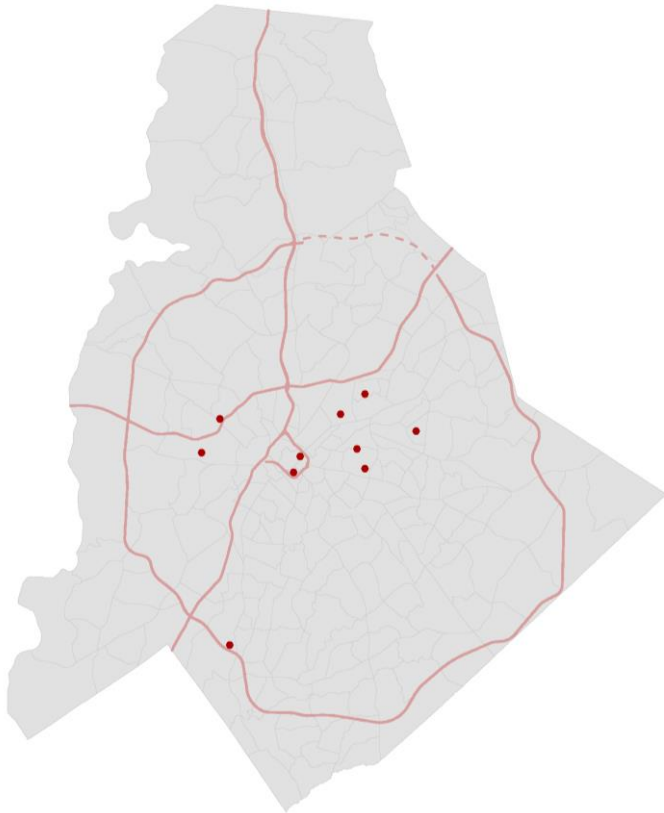


From: *Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: Structure and Agency in the Resegregation of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools*, Mickelson, Smith, Hawn Nelson, in *Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: School Desegregation and Resegregation in Charlotte, 2015*

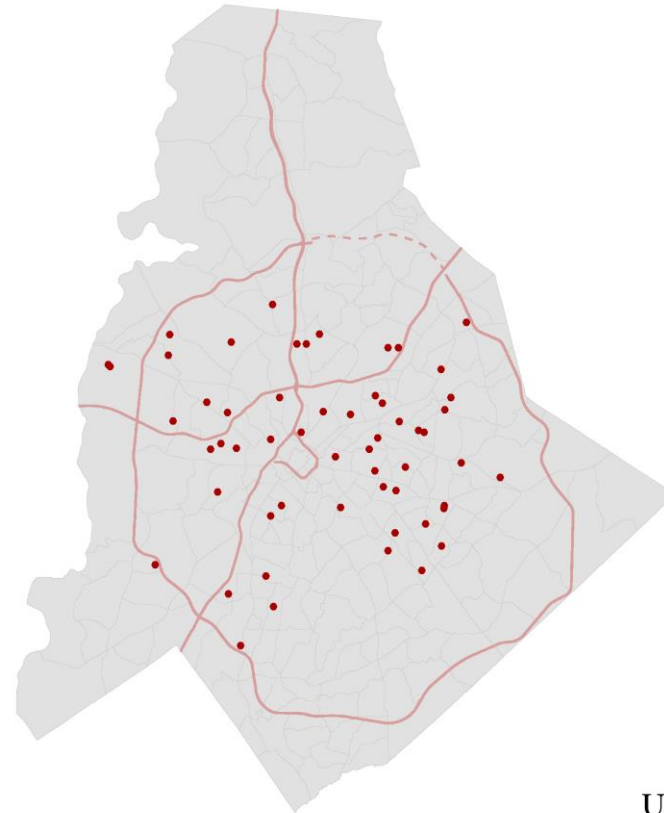
Source: American Communities Project and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

SCHOOL ISOLATION

2001



2013



1

THIS IS A MOVEMENT... AND
WE JUST HAVE TO KEEP
MOVING.

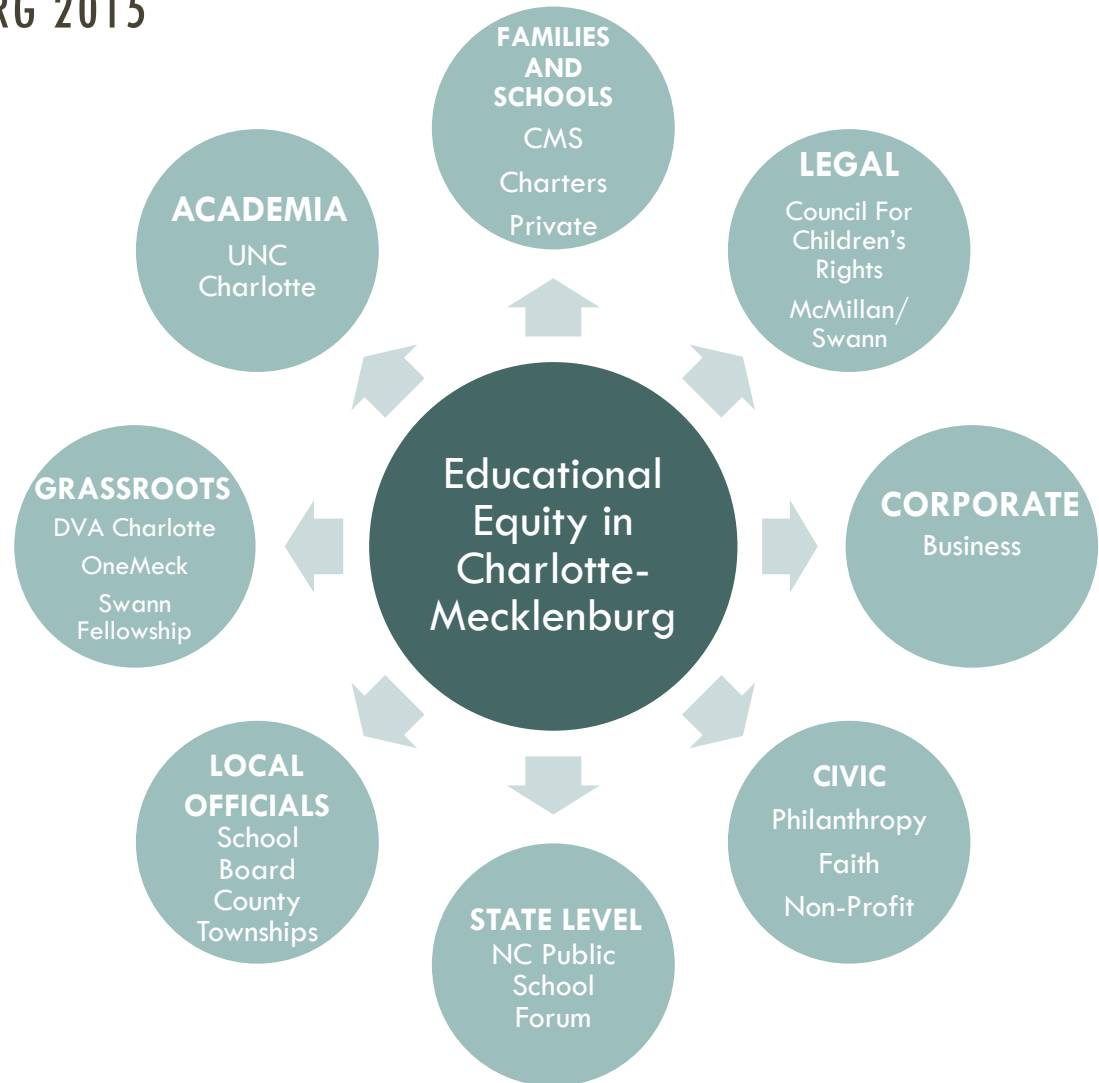
2

1,000 CUPS OF COFFEE

CREATING A 21ST CENTURY MOVEMENT FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUITY
COMMUNICATIONS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY
CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG 2015

**Network Centered
Organizing:**

- Create a common vision
- Respect for different paths
- Trusted connectors
- Supply clear tools and options for engagement
- Action oriented
- Staffed appropriately



STRATEGY FOR CHANGE

UNDERSTAND:

Strategic use of events and media to establish our shared story

ENGAGE:

Target influencers and create tools for discussion and engagement

ACT:

Direct advocacy for systemic change

PHASE 1

UNDER
STAND

STRATEGIC USE OF EVENTS AND MEDIA TO ESTABLISH OUR SHARED STORY

Events

- Levine Museum of the New South, The Unfinished Business of School Desegregation, February 8, 50 attendees
- UNC Charlotte, The Dream Again Deferred, May 5 – 325 attendees
- Caldwell Presbyterian and MeckMin, August 24 – 500 attendees
- MeckMin Mondays – Sept 14, 21, 28 – 300 attendees

Media Coverage

- Charlotte Observer
- Charlotte Agenda
- Newsweek
- EdNC
- Social Media – FB and Twitter

BUILDING THE NARRATIVE

Yesterday

- We have a proud, nationally recognized history of coming together and we were known as “the city that made desegregation work.”
- Desegregation was a rejected success, we have returned to pre 1970’s levels of segregation
- We revisit this specific issue of systemic injustice every 20 years mostly prompted by legal action

BUILDING THE NARRATIVE

Today

- In our community we have the Children of Segregation, the Children of Integration, and now we have the Children of “Choice.” Yet, the most vulnerable children in our community have no choices.
- There is an elephant in the room – 50 out of 50 in economic mobility; Worst place to grow up in poverty after Baltimore
- Isolation is harmful to individual children and our community
- We bus more now than we did during desegregation efforts
- We celebrate those making the choice for diverse schools and neighborhoods

BUILDING THE NARRATIVE

Tomorrow

- This is an issue of both the head and the heart.
- Must work for Our Kids. (Not, My Kids).
- We are a Technicolor city, we should have Technicolor schools. Not isolated schools.
- Integration is not like the weather. It is not an uncontrollable force. We can “choose” to do better.
- Not just about the School Board drawing lines – funding and housing are key to long term equity.
- We may be the people and the city we are looking for.

PHASE 2
ENGAGE

TARGET INFLUENCERS

Targeted Meetings with Influencers

- CMS School Board and Leadership
- City and County Leaders
- Corporate Leaders (Opportunity Task Force)
- Civic Leaders (Faith, Non-Profit, Neighborhood, Arts)

CREATE TOOLS

Provide tools to help people engage in their sphere of influence. Information hubs:

- DVA Facebook Group
- MeckMin Website
- Quality of Life Explorer
- OneMECK website and email lists
- Opportunity Taskforce Website

Materials to empower trusted connectors:

- One page summary – Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow
- Government/Education intersection
- Neighborhood and school data
- What Can Houses of Worship Do?
- Meeting in a Box

TOMORROW

HOW DO WE RESPOND AS PEOPLE OF FAITH?

UNDERSTANDING | COMPASSION | JUSTICE

Commit
to
educating
yourself

- Your personal history
- Your faith tradition
- Your neighborhood
- Our community

Engage
with
others
who care

- House of Worship
- School
- Neighborhood
- Workplace or Volunteer Organization

Act to
achieve
educational
equity

- Vote
- Seek diverse schools and neighborhoods for your family
- Write or speak with your local officials
- Work to elect leaders who support educational equity

SCHOOL BOARD

Role in Education

- Select the Superintendent
- Allocate local funding in the budget
- Assign students to schools
- Policy making delegated by State
- Advocate for students

Ways to influence

- Elect officials who support public schools
- Lobby school board to support specific policies and practices, speak publicly at school board meetings, communicate with board members, and attend meetings.
- Publicly support school board decisions that you agree with.

CITY

Role in Education

- Housing policy
- Neighborhood health and stability
- Public safety

Ways to influence

- Elect officials who support public schools, advocate for City collaboration with County and CMS
- Advocate for healthy neighborhoods
- School Resource Officers

COUNTY

Role in Education

- Public health (mental, emotional, physical)
- Student preparedness for preK
- Allocate operational funding, 26.3% of CMS annual budget
- Capital funding

Ways to influence

- Elect officials who support public schools
- Lobby County Commissioners to support specific policies and practices, speak publicly at county commission meetings, communicate with commissioners, and attend meetings.
- Publicly support County Commission decisions you agree with.

PHASE 3
ACT

DIRECT ADVOCACY FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

School Board

- Establish public will in support of diversity and inclusion in student assignment
- Key issue for upcoming School Board elections
- Hire consultants to support student assignment process
- Lobby for sustained support and funding of public ed advocacy

DIRECT ADVOCACY FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

City, County and Townships

- Part of fall debates and platforms
- Renewed understanding of connectivity to funding and housing issues.

State and National

- Currently not a top issue for lawmakers
- Priority for NC Public School Forum

WHERE DOES THE MOVEMENT GO FROM HERE?

Short Term

- Continue to engage sectors that bridge isolation and engage the head and the heart – Faith, Arts, Non-Profits
- Activate Voters and Influencers in Key Decision Points:
 - Elections – November 2015
 - Student Assignment Guiding Principles – 1st Quarter 2016

WHERE DOES THE MOVEMENT GO FROM HERE?

Medium Term

Advocate for a 21st Century Public Ed Advocacy Organization:

- Trusted data source
- Effective use of social media and civic journalism
- Values and leverages teacher, students and parent voice
- Active management of all networks of supporters
- Local lobbying
- Collaborative State and National Lobbying

WHERE DOES THE MOVEMENT GO FROM HERE?

Long Term

Charlotte Mecklenburg
CHOOSES to be “the city that
makes it work” for ALL
children