

City of Worcester Community Dialogues on Race

JUNE 1, 2015: REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

The following is the compilation of notes received through July 13, 2015; we will post additional notes as they are received. This document has not been edited for typos or grammatical errors and content comes directly from the notes supplied by the note takers.

Desired Outcomes of this meeting:

1. A list of ways representative government is and isn't advancing the needs of marginalized groups/under-represented constituents and communities.
 - Lack of Diversity on boards of those representing constituents
 - Feelings that if you don't know anyone in the city, you are not recognized and cannot get anything done.
 - Even if you know someone, you can't get anything done. SLOW.
 - When was the last time the city was redistricted? It no longer seems to match constituents. It seems many areas are not adequately represented.
 - Districts were combined at one time to 1.....is it now 1 or 3... Who represents what one?
 - Differences between the precincts numbers and the districts.....Impoverishment is underneath questions.....are they represented appropriately and fair representation in the district
 - Does Council –at-Large members adequately represent the diversity and larger population?
 - District Councilors are a little more accountable than At-Large members.
 - No mechanism for Council- at- Large members to be held accountable to and for constituents. Need a mechanism to hold them accountable ..to represent “all”not just where they want to spend focus and get votes towards re-election. (This was repeated about five times by various group members)
 - What is role of “At-Large” council member?
 - Concern about “At- Large” catering to those who can get them re-elected again. Time and focus on neighborhoods with large power economic base and do not get resources to districts that have a need.
 - Do “At-Large” pick and choose who to represent and what issues? How do they fit into the process?

- Confusion of “At-Large” how they work with districts to get things done.
- To run for public office you need money and this limits potential folks from running to represent the neighborhoods that have no economic resources to fund an election campaign.
- Suggestion is to have an Advisory Committee to rethink elections (re: low 14% voting) Committee to regard cost of running, resources needed to run, and how to get more folks involved.
- Lack of diversity in all elected officials. Where is core competency of council representing the neighborhoods that need representation.
- Can/Will/Should city support, develop, and train people in neighborhood who can represent their neighborhoods and bring diversity to board?
- Worry about leadership in Worcester; that while there are elections, there are many “back door” deals. There is a public show and then more going behind the scene. (need transparency)
- Government is inefficient and slow
- Need to be transparent
- In public house, 30 year resident stated, multiple directors appointed and do not serve Worcester tenants...play politics.
- Gov would look like population of city they represent
- Map shows lowest # of voters is in lowest economic area.
- Suggestion: Understand why not voting and try to get more involvement.
- Map shows over-all apathy in city
- Suggestions: Put mechanism for at-large councilors to be held accountable and to whom
- A mechanism needs to be established for “At-Large” councilor to be informed and accountable. The “At-Large” concentrate where they want and are not engaged in building relationships, knowing problems, or getting needed resources to parts of city that need them most.
- City representatives need to know people and build relationships while engaging with people.
- City doesn’t engage community until they want something from the people.
- Representatives should earn all neighborhood votes by engaging and knowing people. If not an election year, the folks in neighborhoods do not see the ones that are representing them. The folks want to know who their representatives are throughout the time of serving. Want to know who they are on off years, so they know where candidates stand on relevant issues when election time comes. Not a campaign slogan but know because are working with them in neighborhoods through time in serving
- There is lack of engagement of representatives to constituents.

- There would be a follow through on campaign promises
- Program likes this are good for the community...brings community together.
- There is a loss of the belief, “We can make a difference” and it shows in the voting.
- Group members voiced being upset (described themselves as full of rage and anger) at the facility this evening. Some felt having auditorium seating was intentionally done to disrupt and keep folks apart, from being able to communicate clearly. Was this a symbol of city government?
- The Group 6 participants indicated that one of their main concerns for a more representative government is the issue of voting. The Group’s focus on voting centered on low voter turnout statistics and the need to make sure enough people are registered and participate in the election process as both voters and candidates. The Group also expressed its concern that more diverse candidates for the various local/city positions are important.
- Addressing the low voter turnout, the Group stated that the city should find out why the numbers have dropped over the past years. This recommendation prompted a discussion on younger voters and their lack of interest in voting. One member of the group stated “Almost no younger people vote.” The Group expressed their opinion that the younger voters feel that “it [*the political issues*] has all been decided by older people and they don’t want to vote because they don’t believe their vote will make a difference.” Later, another Group member stated that younger people feel they or their communities are “devalued” and the wider community is not concerned with the issues younger people find important. Also, the point was made that young people are hesitant to trust candidates who will not deliver on promises made. (No specific examples on this issue were provided).
- Group 6 members stated that life is different now because younger people do not read newspapers and they do not converse/discuss issues. The Group stated that efforts must be undertaken by the city and others to educate the younger people so that they understand that voting is important. The Group concluded that efforts to educate the younger people fall back on parents. Additionally, the Group expressed a belief that “we need to speak their [young people] language and use the means that they use to communicate like social media.”
- The Group considered the following broader proposals to address the issues about young voters:
 - The Group discussed the value of having local colleges like Quinsigamond require students to be registered as local voters when they become enrolled in the school. In response, a city official indicated that such a proposal would interfere with the rights of out-of-state students who want to vote in elections in their home state. Moreover, a Group member stated that some youth want to stay connected with their home communities in Massachusetts and they are not connected to the Worcester issues because they don’t live here.

- Generally, the group believed that an increased civics education in the local schools would have a positive outcome and address voter apathy.
- Continued voter registration drives targeting the young voters.
- In addressing the opinion held by some young people that municipal government does not represent their views, the Group stated that efforts need to be undertaken to have more diverse candidates. To that end, the Group wants more outreach to the various diverse communities to discuss issues and identify and encourage potential candidates who can run for office. Additionally, the Group thought the City should develop a leadership program or “candidate workshops” for various diverse communities from which viable candidates can rise.
- The Group wants more transparency in what a person needs to do to become a candidate. A member of the City Council indicated that such information is on the City’s website. The issue circled back to leadership training and the city’s engagement with various community, civic and church/religious groups.
- Generally, the Group took the position expressed by one member that “diversity is a loaded question in that diversity includes so many things like: race, socioeconomic status, education, ability, and language to name a few.” The City Council member indicated that the local government is taking steps to hire diverse employees.
- In terms of knowing whether representative government works, the Group talked about the efforts of the City to connect with the diverse communities and the cyclical nature of diversity. That is, if the city engages with diverse communities those communities in turn would be encouraged to participate more in the process.
- I am concerned about crime management on the 700 block of Main Street. There are ongoing problems. I have installed video surveillance, which has curtailed some issues. I would like community involvement in maintaining safeties in our neighborhoods. I want the law to apply equally and fairly for everyone.
- I have been a Worcester resident since 1990. I am a landlord. There is a transient population in Vernon Hill. I want to encourage people to stay in the city. The transient nature of our population may be why people don’t engage in government. I want to incentivize permanent residencies.
- City government chooses who they want to deal with in the minority community. In doing so, they choose the leaders. There is a Japanese saying that the “quacking duck gets shot.” When there is a racial problem, some yell and scream, so the city gives them grants to quiet them down. Some groups try to block other groups from working with the city. This has to change. The NAACP encourages participation in city boards and commissions, but many minorities are uncomfortable serving because there are not already people of color on

commissions. City government needs a wider, inclusive scan of minority communities. It is alienating parts of community.

- I don't know when to engage with local government. I don't know when, how, or what to expect to get back from local government. I have lived here my whole life, but it's never come up.
- The demographics of the city are changing rapidly. There is an increase in people of color. The city government E system doesn't respond well to those changes. Neither the elected government, nor government employees represent the city's demographics. The low rate of voting is a problem. The districts that vote the most are in the north; those are the wealthier/more white areas. We need to improve the number of registered voters and the number coming out to vote.
- I remember, in 1995, during the MLK dinner, the keynote speech dealt with inequities in Massachusetts. A reporter in the T&G followed up with a piece explaining that elected and other city officials do not represent demographics of the community of color. In 2015, that community has even less representation. How can we make it feel like people of color are part of the system, where their voices are valued? Even school committee members have voiced issues of not being heard. The city manager hires all city employees (with a couple of exceptions). When I look at DPW, the majority of employees are not minorities. What can we do to change this? We have more people of color now, but less in government. How will we know when there's a change? When we see it. I don't see effective change. In schools, in Massachusetts, 92% of teachers are Caucasian. Not so for students. In Worcester, 90% are Caucasian, but the majority of students are people of color. Look around in Worcester: it does not represent. People of color are not being hired. We want jobs, to feed our families, and to have a place we call home. This is not happening in Worcester.
- The main reason why I'm here is the education I received. It gave me a love and curiosity for government. From what I've read, there are issues in Worcester where kids are not educated to grow up and become voters. Education is the key to helping get people to vote. If I don't have lights, water, access to resources, then voting is not on the list of things to do. Every parent wants their child to outdo themselves. Racial issues stem from lack of education and lack of a chance. I know whether I vote or not is going to affect me. If I can't eat, get a bus, I can't focus or care on who will be in the government.
- Lots of foreigners don't speak English. You don't think about local government when you're working and trying to keep the lights on. It's great that the city is reaching out, but it needs to reach out where people are – Price Chopper, the shelters, etc.
- I am a former teacher. I experienced racism while a student in Catholic schools (more so than in public schools). Having been a teacher, I was bothered by the

teachers in the lunchroom. How they refer to students – assumptions about living in Great Brook Valley, etc. What you say in the lunchroom comes into the classrooms, including those assumptions. Language barrier is the key to survival. It takes 4-8 years to get academic language. Voters don't vote because the person last year didn't fulfill their promises or open the door to communicate with you. The school committee is filled with personal agendas and ridiculousness, rather than broader issues. I am a serious voter and have learned how to vote better. We need to hold politicians accountable. Worcester is strong in terms of people of color – but people of color have other things going on in terms of their hierarchy of needs. I have seen parents irate and want to fight. It's not personal. We need to educate parents on how to communicate with the school system. We need to open up and learn from each other culturally and linguistically. We need to make our kids feel good so that kids aren't afraid to bring things up that need to be addressed. Kids are intimidated by their teachers, by their grades, by suspensions, by teacher personality and behavior.

- We need to make people feel special.
- Making ourselves visible is an ongoing theme. As a long-time educator, I'm often the only one of color. We need to show my child the opportunities – that there is someone like her. Visibility plus integrity is important. It starts with teachers. If you want to teach, go for it, but there should be a level field. Kids are yearning for teachers who are people of color.
- Administrators and politicians may not understand the importance of people of color.
- The city doesn't look the way it needs to look. It must be more proactive. Grants should be given differently to different organizations. They give to the same groups over and over. The city workforce can be controlled. The city needs to commit to hiring a diverse workforce, even if it's a lot of work. It takes years to change a workforce; we need to hire different-looking people. Worcester is segregated. Worcester gets money from HUD, which is supposed to help that fact. The city could do more.
- Boards and commissions could be diverse. Is the city getting the word out to all the different parts of the city? Churches? Shops? Groceries? Do people feel welcome?
- From 1968 – 2008, people have wanted jobs. The bottom line is that people have no hope and no jobs. Upward mobility happens only after three generations in a row have jobs. Otherwise, poverty is perpetual.
- Some boards operate under the “good ole boy” system. People of color may never get on. Commissions don't always help all residents. You can't get on the trust committee, the historical commission. It's done through networking.

- The Plan E system was established when this was a white elite city. Now, it needs to evolve with the city. As the city has changed, city employees have not. Voting is not the answer, but it is important for overcoming district and at-large councilors.
- Lower income neighborhoods need to be properly informed and heard.
- Younger people don't care about government because they just don't know about it.
- Young people don't vote no matter their reasoning/background. It's not a race issue. It's a systematic issue where certain younger people don't get involved because a relative or someone they know has been unfairly arrested for a small crime (i.e. marijuana use) and they're turned off by government/police.
- Crime watch- same people show up.
- More people need to get involved but how do you market and recruit.
- Learned vs. Assumed-how government works
- Not worth the investment (youth opinion)
- Been @ many tables where people discuss the big issues but no action
- Everyone especially youth are looking for Instant solutions
- School Committee needs to represent the youth they are working for/with
 - Cost to run for office and time prevents qualified candidates.
 - Great to see Senior (student) running for office
 - Boards and commission
 - Rules that govern committees, can't & can say open meeting – restrict things. Time to change those rules
 - Instant solutions need to be seen by young people to keep interest
 - Money coming in but it gets distributed in the wrong places/projects
 - 300 jobs but lots more youth who need it, but hundreds more need job
 - Make money- no places for commerce for (teens/people) to work/invest
 - Good example: Chandler street initiative – pay kids to clean up neighborhood.
- How people interact with local government
 - Email/telephone with a city councilor
 - Build individual relationships from that
 - Engagement around work
 - Some know state and federal elected officials
 - Some volunteer in non-profits on personal time interested in serving and helping the public
- Those who professionally interact through community organizations also come into contact if they serve on a municipal organization. However personally, they

may not interact at all, especially if they're from poorer communities that are spoken at, not engaged with.

- Perception of Government
 - Among youth and lower income populations a widely held perception of government is that it works for people putting money in government pockets.
 - Certain individuals who may not be among minority populations also feel as though they are not listened to.
 - Locals in their twenties also seem disassociated with government and believe as though it isn't doing what it should.
 - If the world is run by people who show up, why show up if nobody is going to listen?
 - There are still cycles of social crises (ex. Opiate overdoses) and the government responds however nothing happens.
 - Sometimes government is very frustrating, and makes things more complicated.
- Situation is systemic. More people are needed from all walks of life in order to make change. Sometimes you can work within a system of privilege in hopes they will give back. We need to own our levels of privilege and use them to our advantage.

2. Shared understanding of how representative government might change to address under-representative constituent's concerns.

- All positions should be elected in the city government
- Systematic review of government process
 - Accountability
 - How representation is to community
 - How things are funded
 - Transparency
- Perhaps use "Regional Research Bureau" to help but need to watch and be cautious of their political bias. Others said no to RRB; an outside independent research board who cannot be swayed politically should review.
- Issue of elected vs appointed officials. To be able to appoint, gives too much power to one appointing. Residents should look at different city charters to know there are other options/styles of government.
- If you have a city manager, you need to have a mayor and council to be strong and take back power. Concerns this is not way it is working, so not balanced.
- Have paid full-time counselors
- Need to know process to get on board
- What are you going to do to make a difference?
 - Serve on a Tenant commission seat.....question is will experience, knowledge, organization, involvement prevail over formal education?
 - Attend other dialogues

- The City should look at current employees and “nurture them up.” In other words, because politics is a process, many people do not run for office because they do not feel supported, but the City could nurture employees from diverse backgrounds and encourage them to run for office.
- The City could create more city government internship where candidates (especially young people) can “shadow” city councilors and commissioners and learn about the responsibilities of the position and leadership development would be built into the process. The representative from the City indicated that currently there are interns from colleges.
- The City should have a program designed to speak to the immigrant communities about the political process and working at the grassroots level to increase representation. This type of interaction would also overcome language barriers.
- City and local candidates should reach out to the various churches and community support organizations to explain what can and will be done for voters.
- The City should engage young people in conversations about the importance of voting/political process and those conversations should be held at time and places where the young people are – for example, in the schools. Such engagement will possibly produce young leaders.
- The City could partner with the schools to send home multilingual flyers with kids to notify parents about programs like the Community Dialogues on Race. Additionally, reverse calls may be another method to increase community involvement in these conversations.
- What am I willing to do, as an individual to make a difference?
 - Members in the Group talked about their personal experiences in their church where they encouraged and supported underrepresented people to speak out on issues of concern. Time was waning as we touched on these topics, but throughout the discussion people talked about the importance of talking about these issues at home with their own children or young people with whom they encounter.
- What am I willing to do, as an individual and with others, to make a difference?
 - Seeing people and having kids see people to emulate is all about the community stepping up. Stepping up with our neighbors or as a community. Hardly anyone does volunteerism. We need people to recognize that volunteerism isn’t just a river clean-up.
 - The faith community needs to come together, as it has done historically. We need to invite the faith community to the table, and include the marginalized communities, like LGBT.
 - The Chamber of Commerce ought to be here.
 - The Chamber does push people aside. It is not a place I would rely on, even if they should be at the table.
 - The Chamber is “from another planet.”

- We need to come together all as a group. We should start at a neighborhood level. When we do, the mayor and city council are not coming. We need to meet and invite everyone together.
- We need to engage with one another. We need outreach on these events translated and put in places where the people go.
- It is hard to figure out what groups to bring together. Some were hot, but now they no longer exist. I have been a part of many coalitions that no longer exist.
- Business and nonprofits are also a problem. Their boards of trustees and directors are not diverse either. The city needs to help foster diversity in leadership, as do businesses and nonprofits.
- Communities of faith are a good place to reach people of color. As a city-wide entity, faith communities are a great way to reach all.
- We need to think not as groups, but as individuals. Even if you're not a person of color, you can mentor and be champions for people of color. It will take time.
- Put Words → into action within a reasonable time. Don't let decisions drag on.
- Review of Boards and meetings. Conversations shouldn't be just behind closed doors. Open to the public.
- Purposely & continuously recruiting people from various backgrounds and various neighborhoods year after year; until government's image does reflect the people it represents.
- How do you make change happen?
 - You need to be involved over and over again to establish a tradition of ensuring "two totems" in every organization to help start expanding the circle of influence.
 - Sustained effort is required in order to achieve change
 - Expanding our comfort zones is integral- whether that's our social circles, our geographies or our attitudes.
- What ideas can we share with representative government?
 - There's a huge difference between representatives and the people that they represent. So we need to make sure those of us who can represent do represent.
 - More people should run but campaigns are both time consuming and financially demanding. It isn't easy to get involved at the elected level, communities should be better represented.
 - There are too many taboos about what people can and can't talk about at open meetings. Boards and commissions ought to be able to be easier to address. Change the rules on how issues are addressed by the public and how laws are passed.

- Plan for the future: Youth need quick turnaround so they remain engaged especially when they see the government being slow
- Not apathy but lack of opportunity or cynicism related to civic engagement is privilege because it requires time which working poor don't have.
- We should be giving money to community improvement projects done by local government. We need to invest more in crime prevention and youth jobs not fixing roads.

City of Worcester Community Dialogues on Race

JUNE 8, 2015: PUBLIC SAFETY

The following is the compilation of notes received through July 13, 2015; we will post additional notes as they are received. This document has not been edited for typos or grammatical errors and content comes directly from the notes supplied by the note takers.

Desired Outcomes of this meeting:

1. A list of ways local public safety organizations are and are not helping marginalized groups/under-represented constituents and communities feel safe and protected.
 - What are your main concerns about public safety organization?
 - What are things that make you feel safe?
 - Presence and visibility of police
 - Relationships with community members
 - The department reflects who you are and they are in the community
 - No profiling. Positive interactions → getting to know the community members
 - Also approaching people in a positive way (“How are you” vs. “I need to see your ID”)
 - Training connected to community needs
 - Whole community comes together (non-profits, churches, etc.) for engagement
 - Having the officers and members of the community get to know each other as individuals, as human beings
 - What are things that make you feel unsafe?
 - Media coverage is always negative
 - Officers have negative interactions – when they’re called to a scene, it is usually because of a problem so their interactions with people tend to be negative
 - Create opportunities for officers to have positive interactions with people

- When the department is not responsive to requests for more of a police presence (for example, when there are issues with some crime in the neighborhood)
 - Approach/attitude of officers
 - Making you feel like you are being interrogated when you are a crime victim
- What roles do you think the police should play in our community, and how effective are they in fulfilling those roles?
 - They should engage with the community
 - Officers should introduce themselves to people in the community
 - Officers should start a dialogue with people, ask them how they are doing
 - If officers are always engaged, then the burden is not on the community members to approach the officers to discuss something
 - Officers should be involved in community activities
 - Get to know youths through leagues
 - One participant recalled growing up near a jail and knowing all of the officers there and the officers knowing all of the kids and the positive interactions that came about when they all knew each other as human beings
 - Having local police, from Worcester, who are invested in their communities
 - Put police in schools to be friends with the kids, not to police them
 - Have police be mentors
 - This can lead to workforce development generally
 - It can also show kids what officers do and how they can join the police force
 - Physical safety vs. emotional safety
 - Officers do not seem to be focused on the emotional safety
 - Work on not having the perception of the cops as the enemy
 - We've lost community policing
 - How can officers know the community when they are not there?
 - Perception that training of officers now is more militarized
 - Parents need more involvement with their kids
 - Learning process for everyone
 - Do not judge people by their looks
 - Appreciate one another
- What are your main concerns about public safety organizations?
 - Response times across all public safety organizations

- Respect for people without making assumptions based on what a person looks like or where they live
- Lack of Transparency
 - It is problematic when it seems that the only way to get information is a lawsuit
- Lack of Community Policing
 - Being visible in the community
- Language barriers hindering or preventing individuals from contacting public safety organizations or from getting service when it is needed
- What are things (people policies, practices, etc.) that contribute to making you feel safe in our community?
 - A member of our group stated that he feels safe in his community in the west side of Worcester and feels that they police are on his side. He recognized that this is not the experience of everyone and that he is one of the lucky ones.
 - A member of our group who works with individuals in the Southeast Asian Community stated that there is a class that is visited by a Vietnamese and non-Vietnamese police officer, and while it may not help people feel less scared of the police, it helps build a rapport with the community to know that the police can be friends of the community.
 - A member of our group told a personal story about a neighborhood in which she used to reside where bikers would have party in the neighborhood. Both police and neighbors attended the party. Communicating with people in the community and having fun with the community made the police not feel like enemies.
 - Members of the group discussed crime watch as a beneficial program that helped officers and civilians develop a rapport with one another.
 - There are about 40 neighborhood watch organizations in the city, but it is often difficult to find out about them because they are neighborhood created.
 - At Holy Cross, the neighborhood meets every month with the same officer.
- What are the things (people, polices, practices, etc.) that contribute to making you feel unsafe in our community?
 - A member of our group shared a personal story where a police officer stopped her for turning the wrong way on a one way. She was not aware the officer was pulling her over and did not stop immediately. When she stopped the officer was frothing at the mouth and screaming at her with his hand on his billy club.

- In her frame of reference, the officer's actions were because she was a black woman
 - She used her skills as a mediator to remain unprovoked, but stated that she felt that she was being provoked.
 - A member of our group recognized that he is in a demographic of people who feels safe around the police. He also discussed his work with youth stated that when he speaks with young people he finds that the white kids feel safe but the black kids feel that they are pulled over for nonsense reasons. He hears this over and over.
 - Another member of our group who works with youth told a story of a youth of Southeast Asian descent who was working at a restaurant. A police officer came in and spoke with the youth. The officer was sure that he knew him from somewhere. The officer announced loudly that he had seen the youth when he arrested his father. This young person wants to be a police officer but was confused by the actions of this officer.
 - A member of our group also discussed how young people don't trust that the police will be there for them.
 - One member of our group stated that as a small woman she is conscious of her size and aware that she can be susceptible to bullying from others and from the police. Especially when biking around Worcester
 - A member of our group discussed how the ACLU gets 100-150 calls regarding problems with the police each year. These calls raise issues of verbal and physical assault
 - It is a cultural issue with the police.
 - There are cases pending against officers for offenses such as rape and sexual assault
 - When people are directed to the Bureau of Internal Affairs they are reluctant to report for fear of intimidation or discouragement
 - A member of our group shared a personal story about police monitoring and ticketing in a certain area of the city to the extent that members of that neighborhood felt that they were being occupied. It does not give good vibes to the community when they feel that they are under siege.
 - As an example of the police culture, a member of our group shared a personal story about leading a training for young police recruits and hearing racial slurs directed at her from the trainees with no repercussions from police leadership.
- What roles do you think the police, in particular, should play in our community, and how effective are they at fulfilling those roles?
 - Our group discussed how the police should participate in actual community policing.

- This involves putting real effort into developing relationships not just putting a few officers on bikes
 - Our group discussed how the police should have an attitude of de-escalation. This would involve police officers who show up and step down the situation.
 - This would involve extensive training for police officers in how to de-escalate.
 - One member of our group told a personal story about when police came to an elementary school and helped the students learn to ride bikes. The member of our group discussed how it would be good for the police to build relationships with students and young people
 - This member also discussed how it would be beneficial to have programs run by police officers for high school students and possible at-risk-youth. It would allow the police and the students to see the other as a human and not the enemy. It would also allow police and students to learn from each other and help combat the “us vs. them” mentality.
 - Our group discussed how police work too many hours.
 - One member of our group discussed how they do not think police officers start out jaded, but as they work so many hours and do not take opportunities to participate in the community they become jaded.
 - A member of our group raised the question about how adults can build relationships with police.
 - A member of our group discussed how the police should view arrest as a failure and work toward prevention not suppression
 - A member of our group discussed how we need funding set aside for developing these roles in our police force.
 - A member of our group discussed how keeping data on race and police interaction beyond arrests would be valuable. Right now the only race related data kept by the police is for race and arrests.
- What are your main concerns about public safety organizations?
 - Safe
 - Finds Worcester a safe place to live overall, feels Worcester is very diverse which is a positive thing- appreciates the idea of taking risk with the Dialogues to address problems on the table.
 - Another individual shared he felt safe.
 - Personally feels safe, but it is an unsafe situation for many others
 - “I feel safe but unsafe b/c people pumping up the negative neighborhoods all of the time”- Ex. Don’t go into Main South

- “I live in the heart of Main South- lots of tension, drug deals. Gang units come by and grill you to death, they do not smile etc...We need to look at what can police officers do to bring youth together”
 - Unsafe
 - Does not feel safe in Worcester, feels there is a target on his back as a black male. Feels there is profiling taking place in schools etc...”As a youth worker, I am afraid for my students.”
 - “I feel Worcester police are not a part of the community”
 - Examples of initiatives shared.
 - Down South police officers are a part of the community working and attending and participating in youth basketball games etc...
 - Germantown community policing is on another level. Worcester should explore this.
 - Caucasian mom to 2 kids of color, she is aware there is a target on their back and communicates this often to them.
 - Comments:
 - Media always displays/portrays the communities of color in a negative way. Ex. They do not highlight peaceful protests of Baltimore- only the negative portions.
 - We should not teach men of color to conform and accommodate.
 - We need to look at school systems-ALL of the systems should be reflective of the community.
 - My role as a white person is to help white people break down negative stereo types they have.
 - City is safe: Someone like Dontae doesn’t feel safe—it is a problem!
 - We have to remember the city does have limits
 - We are worth it; put more resources into the community.
 - Teachers are underpaid- they sacrifice lots of their time why can’t police officers do the same.
 - A way to make the community safe- living wage jobs for people who live in the community.
- What roles do you think the police, in particular, should play in our community and how effective are they in fulfilling those roles?
 - What actions can public safety take to regain or enhance trust?
 - If I call the police, they should come and do their job

- Know privilege, understand communities work in respect us (you work for us), you have no right to exterminate me, understand your role.
 - Question: Is diverse police workforce an issue here?
 - Under a civil service umbrella, there are laws and procedures that must be followed. Veterans are highly preferred.
 - It's deeper than just hiring a person of color as an officer. Its starts with a dialogue of the mind. Setting individual up for failure if you hire just to fill a slot.
 - Hope Dialogues continues, this mtg will not put a bandage on things.
 - Cultural Competency- is it a part of training of Public Safety? Yes it is
 - Mutual education is very important
 - Toss around the word minority so much. Don't know what it means anymore
 - Public Safety going into inner school systems and visiting
 - Civic engagement should be institutionalized
 - Respect resources: Law enforcement should reach out in positive manner as well- it goes both ways.
- MAIN CONCERNS ABOUT PUBLIC SAFETY
 - there are drug dealers/crime and prostitutes in my neighborhood and they are coming in with different license plates (ex: New York)
 - we need to support the police to get rid of drug dealers/prostitutes
 - there are not enough police
 - "a drug dealer lives above me and a prostitute lives below me. I call the police - they have to show up
 - but what else can they do. Do something. Take photos - take notice of those not in the neighborhood."
 - some environments feel unsafe
 - why is crime going up in the city?
 - "I have friends who were abused or harassed by the police -- they file complaints - but the police never follow up on the complaints"
 - there are 300 jobs for kids this summer but 25,000 kids -- so it's scary about what is going to happen this summer
 - "my biggest fear is more police"
 - "we have to have respect for one another - we have to respect the law - the police have a job to do"

- "I make it easier for myself - so I give them my id - take responsibility for myself so I don't get beaten"
- there are racist and bad cops - but no matter how bad he is - if I am responsible he won't both me
- safety of my children
- if I don't interact with the police in a bad behavior manner - he won't shoot and kill me
- more is good about police then bad
- "I support the police."
- even in heaven there is law
- police serving and protecting us
- people need to be educated. They need respect
- police are not our enemy - they are here to protect us - we must respect them even if we are right
- people don't have enough respect for the police
- we need to educate the people about respect
- police put their life in danger but people don't have respect for them.
- what are we doing to educate about respect?
- prostitutes/guns - they are jobs. What is the city or police doing to have these people stop - taking them to jail is not a solution - they still have to make money so they go back to doing it
- it's not just about police but about the social problems
- **WHAT'S WORKING - WHAT'S NOT WORKING**
 - Working -- our gang unit has programs all year to help kids have an adult model to follow and stay away from gangs - it's a great program and its working
 - Working -- the police/clergy union
 - Not Working -- concerned about how things are reported in the media - that is one of the reasons I came today because I wanted to see things here first hand
 - Not Working -- mentality of police being under attack so they won't listen to concerns/ criticisms
- **Contribute to making you feel safe:**
 - Fire department responded quickly in my community.
 - Police foot patrol is a positive thing: "You see more when you are walking"
 - We want to recognize that this one of the toughest jobs in the country.
- **Problems:**
 - WPD is not representative of the community, i.e., race, ethnicity, gender.

- The majority of police do not live in Worcester...they don't care about the community and are not invested in "our kids"
- "WPD is the biggest gang unit there is"
- "Blacks are treated more violently"
- A member at the table states that she has been pulled over and harassed because she is black.
- Someone stated that he was present when a stabbing took place in the Main South area and it took the police and ambulance ½ hr to arrive. This individual further commented that the police and ambulance would probably have arrived sooner had the incident occurred in a more affluent area of town.
- Another member states that the fire department and police give preference to veterans in the hiring process; there is a concern that veterans have poor coping skills and thus are more "reactive". The person indicates that he has no data to prove his point but that this is what his "guts" is telling him.
- "We need to know more about police training".
- "What are they planning to do to fix problems".
- Cultural Differences must be understood.
- Government Officials need to study drug and mental issues that plague Worcester
- Police Misconduct. Police use vulgar language and many times vulgar behavior
- Generally feels safe in the city- perception of bad area because of high number of low income groups
- Concern of public safety- drugs and alcohol adults in the city worry about children's safety
- Worcester Police Department; people are afraid of being beat up by police. Make Policies about guns and deadly force. Public has no voice or input in the decisions
- What makes you seem unsafe? Coin collection stolen, police did not seem to care.
- Protect and serve; should be motto. Seems as if "control" is new motto
- All people deserve same human rights; equal playing field, ability to get a job,
- We need to have a good medium; officers who do a good job and enforce the law, but also treat people as humans
- We are NOT against the Police
- We need more transparency.
- Something needs to be done about Police Officers killing people and not going to jail or being indicted.
- WE ARE ALL AFFECTED
- There are no statistics on police weapons shot.
- Education is important- child programs have been out. Police need to come to meeting to see what the big issues with city are.
 - Drug

- Gang
- Prostitution
- Empty buildings
- No Youth Jobs
- Body Recorders/Cameras
- Need to learn/understand the difference of: “Hey how are you doing?” vs. “hey what are you doing”
- Worcester is trying to make things work. Community review board oversees and goes over why decisions are made. So community can understand.
- Main Concerns reg. Public Safety?
- What do we want/need to feel safe in Worcester?
 - I work with youth in Worcester. Most men of color in city have a bad story to tell w/ police
 - On encounters, rude language from police ex. What the “___” are you doing here?
 - Want good police with their responding with assumptions. Right now both good and bad
 - There were story of son having good experience and encounters at Boys’ club with officers. But relationship and respect changed in one incident. Son had gone to a sport event for being on a winning team. He returned to Worcester, excited and happy. He was with two friends, laughing and joking around. One friend took some money from the other and he said, “Give me back my money.” Neighbor heard and police were called and when police arrived, the gun was drawn and pointed at son’s head. All those years of positive encounters at Boy’s Club were gone. Son’s perspective of police changed in instant. Mom said reported to police about the incident, but it went nowhere. Son shaken.
 - Ex-police officer at table reported that as a black young man he had similar experience. Unmarked cars pulled in front and behind him. He was scared. He saw badges but scared and almost ran. One police had hand on gun ready to pull. Internally, his mind spoke to tell him not to run because he had done nothing wrong. But he was scarred; the experience is imprinted in his mind.
 - Participants worried that are “bad actors” of police officers, but the brother officers will not call them out.
 - Underlying belief of police is, “If you have never been sued, you are not doing your job.”
 - Participants thought police should know the youth in the neighborhoods, but also recognize there is a lot of moving around from one part of city to another.

- Issues with Police are a systemic issue. Police are militarized. Not just one shot, but they are emptying all bullets. It is war mentality that is coming home and into neighborhoods.
- Men of color are being traumatized. Folks of color are talked about and taught bias.
- All leadership down through police officers need training to deal with the bias against people of color.
- Police officers need to have support and enough of the support to process what they are going through.
- Have youth/children gotten a boldness to stand up to police recently? Need to teach respect, but hard to do when fear is prevalent and reality is the people of color are not treated justly.
- Need to teach kids to say that they are fearful when approached by police but trust of police is just not there. Fear is real and the reality is right in front of them holding a gun. Fear of staying and getting beat on. They are caught in between two bad choices.
- Part of problem is that children/youth are bold because they are fearful about what they see being done to others.
- Need Training and support for children along with families support to teach good values and positive upbringing.
- Teach respect for self, parents, and others.
- Need to have accountability in community.
- Sometimes folks call into dispatcher and get grief about what they are calling in about. Told they shouldn't be calling and treated negatively. This type of encounter builds distrust.
- Practices need to be interrupted by justice.
- All of society needs to treat each other with respect, especially professionals (police, gov.) Build respect across the board to build trust.
- How do we draw in others from community to come, listen and learn?
- Need to be mindful of accepting others where they are without snap judgement or bias as well. If someone comes to table and is not aware of self and their bias and/or assumptions, still need to be inviting of person for coming.
- Need to be on guard about white privilege. Easy to just go and not notice what you are getting because of white privilege. Need to point out white privilege to each other.
- Often folks of color are spoken to with such bias as " I know your kind" and expected to take the disrespect.
- Why are the good police not standing up to others so justice with happen? This happens over and over.....it is a bias among the police.

- Desire to have statistics filled out and reported about who they are stopping, and what is their race. (there were reports of tickets filled out with incorrect information...person of color noted as “white” in box.
- More dialogue is needed between police office and community. Seems like an “us” against “them.” Many in community have family in police and should build community among all without assumptions.
- Theme in dialogue seems to be that police b(internal affairs) are not addressing issues. Do we need a civilian board to be involved to get community involved with police work?
- Question: How do we keep police involved when they are afraid of being sued or getting shot at?
- People of color, mentally ill, white folks are all being shot at.
- Need to address systemic issues: Jobs
- Police need to be easily approachable. They need to appear as if interested in addressing the issues; that they care.
- Conversation at table about last time folks of color verse white folks., When was last time your were frisked? White privilege is real.
- Proposal: A Community group needs to come along Internal affairs to help with transparency and so community will know the truth. When Internal affairs works, it is held inside and public and victim do not know what happens. Have a civilian review board, for board to know facts of case, outcome, and to ask questions. They do not need to know details of victim or officer. Just review fo facts to hold IA accountable and transparent.
- Need transparency on hiring, procedures, and training.
- Does police hire only from W. Academy? Is training comprehensive enough? Is there sensitivity training?
- Fear of soldiers coming home and into police force in Worcester; becoming to militarized.
- New police with little training have badge and gun but is there fear behind that gun so are quick to pull it out?
- Too much force is used by police.
- Too much force is used even after person is in handcuffs.
- Black lives DO Matter. How to make sure Worcester doesn't become next Ferguson?
- In 1980's folks could “hang” It is not allowed in many neighborhoods any more. If there is a group, even if small 3-4 folks, police called to disperse.
- City Government and police need to admit that there is an issue as 1st step to building trust.
- In Dec. city government accused Black Leaders of not organizing and doing anything in neighborhoods. That was disrespectful. City

Government needs to build trust and respect so all folks can work together.

- Racism impact on young people's education opportunities and expenses
 - Impact may be more internal than external, especially for public schools
 - Assumption that people of color from public school got help because they are of color or poor.
 - Stems from community and surrounding environment. Attitude has to start at home that education open to all and self belief that anyone can succeed
 - Experimental impact-systematic impacts on minorities since system is not designed by minorities they may not understand what is needed.
 - People with less exposure to people of different backgrounds may lead to prejudices which impact experiences and opportunities
 - Sometimes people want simple solutions-how to have discussion w/ parents and solutions get more complicated
 - Negative tone set at school and needed to correct. What led to new policies on having people w/ lecture or suspended and not...didn't impact culture
 - People got frustrated with school out of control. Selected from afar with policy change. Removed ability at local level to do what needed to be done.
 - Law intended to help created a lot of frustration, lots of paperwork and meetings.
 - Safety to keep kids safe should be priority
 - Policy had large racial impact. Large numbers of minority males had been suspended. Legal change partially motivated by race. May be to helpdistrict look better with fewer minority suspensions.
 - Challenge to deal with discipline problems—administration, parents and teachers all overwhelmed.
 - Not a lot of support to implement new policies
 - Worcester racial starts in schools impressive—faculty problem doesn't make student body need changes to develop role models
 - Even for minority in advanced classes faculty award minority students and...on majority students. Projects faculty belief that minorities won't do well. May not be intentional.
 - Predominantly or all white faculty. Student body v. diverse w/no clear majority. All teachers were white. No one student felt they could relate to.
 - Uncomfortable for minorities in high achieving scholars program to be surrounded by white students and taught by all white teachers

- Advanced classes felt at white students and teachers sends message that student felt of white students and teachers sends message that students and color can't get there so they don't try.
- Feedback
 - Faculty that doesn't look like student body needs to adjust to student needs
 - So do students
 - More supportive to people of diff people/ racial/ background in schools.
 - Fundamental order how suspension /disc rules.
 - Frustration over new suspension /disc riles.
- What can educators do to make it better?
 - Male student of color who is a good athlete can succeed socially
 - Race shouldn't be focus but should look at what is best for particular kids
 - Need to supplement school w/ values taught in community and home
 - White teachers can teach non-white kids but everyone needs to adapt- whether they are kids or teachers
 - Kids should be prepared for flexibility for life
 - Teachers should learn to talk to kids about their lives inside and outside of school—people who care about students almost like counselor or advior
 - Colleges have them so why not at public schools
 - Student advisors could help. Some guidance counselors work. Just need one person
 - Important to have someone listen to student-sometimes school problems reflect home problems. Can then adjust solution to whatever problem may be->support system
 - Teachers would welcome additional help b/c somewhat overwhelmed with required testing and data. Teachers don't have time to get to know students as much as they would like
 - Population of teachers need to have experiences to relate to students and listen and provide support.
 - Some schools have older students be big bros/sis to younger students. When that goes away, teachers follow and don't show interest
 - More mentoring between upper and lower classes-not always enough support b/c upper class students also have a lot going on and may not have time
 - Newcomers from different cultures and don't have families who can help students work and succeed within system
 - Some help to teachers can also benefit from understanding newcomer situation

- Student reps...school committee has chance to have bigger impact beyond school
- Students who don't feel like they are being heard need to seek out people who can do that
- Every month, student body reps meet w/ superintendent to voice students' concerns-Many students may not know about that
- Alumni day- good chance for students to hear from people who went through what they did. Alumni who can come back could be helpful-> should volunteer so that it comes from the heart
- Teachers would welcome support-alumni can help give students a real sense of what next phase has in store. Esp good if they hear from services and successful older students
- Would also be good to bring diverse students in all ways to show kids from different backgrounds some different models.
- Feedback
 - Provide more support system for whole student life-personal and academic
 - Alumni who come back to share experiences of next phase-include high school back to grade school.
 - Provide diverse mentors/advisors so all kids can see they can do it.
- What can community and faith organizations do? Can they help support ESC resources?
 - Minority communities feel like their lives were set on certain path from birth. It will go like lives of everyone else in community
 - These should be people who can show them their life can be different and successful. They don't have to do what everyone else in community has done
 - Church/faith organizations can engage youth in different ways than school-leadership, social, and communication skills. They can reach kids in different ways
 - Some programs can be integrated into school-fill in study halls w/ more pragmatic skills classes
 - How do you surround child with community-Has to come from strong and consistent tradition that you can go further than elders
 - Youth do need to reach out more to see that there are ways to succeed
 - What more support can be provided are for native English speakers
 - Education system should focus on education rather than teaching to a test that may not have impact on their lives.
 - System programs esp. challenging for Worc. Schools yet several STEM higher education institutions. –what can they do to reach out to help

schools, whether faculty or students? Maybe they could do to offset student debt.

- Minority higher education faculty and students
- Dymaet (?) –students in 8th grade. Completion can lead to college tuition could use more funding/resources
- Feedback
 - Bring in alumni and higher educational resources esp. STEM to help public school students-not just school skills but life skills like financial planning and responsibilities
 - Community organizations can supplement schools on teaching life skills
 - Support students outside of school /...organizations who can help families
- How does racism affect young people’s educational opportunities and experiences?
 - Race and poverty are very linked-do we over emphasize race?
 - They are the same discussion. Look at how schools are funded and who tends to live in better funded
 - People of color are disproportionately poor
 - Because they are linked, they are deeply
 - There are a lot of deeply engraved beliefs that people are acting on
 - Black children are disproportionately disciplined. It’s not intentionally malicious, it’s systematic.
 - Education in cultural...is very important, for teachers, for everyone
 - Everyone has experience with prejudice, we need to take an opportunity to walk in each others’ shoes
 - There is a learned cynicism, and a defense mechanism to racism, even latent racism
 - Schools provide a lot of services, they should be focused on educating
 - Students end up in jail, that is the impact of this
 - Educators don’t look like their students
- What can educators do to address different forms of racism within the educational system? What can students do?
 - Educators should empower students, should be able to address racism. Needs to be a mechanism for their counselors in education
 - Youth are powerless and overburdened, teachers are overburdened, faith board are overburdened, we can’t address it at this level
 - There are things we can do as educators to address it. Look at the...the English ...is not enough, teachers can find ways
 - More leadership programs that include people from community

- More opportunities for youth, there is such competition
- How can we support young people who aren't getting jobs, who got turned down?
- We need more positive role models from the community day in and day out
- Need more people committed to the program
- Knowledge needs to be accessible, schools need to go out of their way to make schools offer curricula that resonates(?).
- Need more jobs for every youth
- We should redesign the school system, let's talk about darker schools, let's talk about rethinking schools
- Our school system doesn't match the needs of society
- Why don't we open up Tech, Worcester Tech, at night and offer a trade to schools
- We're getting away from tech schools when there is still a need
- System issues are difficult to address
- Hire indigenous workers, make room for alumni from programs take leadership
- Difficult to get young people involved in the community
- Factors that contribute to feeling of safety in community
 - Neighborhood environment is a factor in our feeling of safety.
 - Kids at play in neighborhood.
 - Outside barbecues and gatherings.
 - Neighbors outside homes interacting with neighbors.
 - Police presence in the neighborhood.
 - One participant mentioned a feeling of safety and ease because a public safety officer lived in her neighborhood and the cruisers regularly parked in the neighborhood gave a sense of security.
 - Positive interactions with the police, within neighborhood, provide a sense of security.
- Factors that may contribute to a negative feeling about public safety officials or a feeling of not being safe
 - Negative personal interactions with police during innocuous traffic stops (hostility and arrogance of police officer during encounters).
 - One participant spoke of her younger brother being beaten by a police officer in their neighborhood, where her family was the only black family.
 - Our interactions and the interactions of our friends, family members and other community members may influence our view of public safety officers and the feeling of safety we have day to day.
- Main concerns about public safety organizations

- What contributes to making you feel safe in the community?
 - A more visible police force that, at all levels, reflects the community
 - Community policing
 - (Participant statements) In the past, police knew the kids (who were in gangs...dealing drugs...); they defused situations... They would go to the house to talk to parents/ Jail was a last resort. / Police have to work with parents; not take responsibility from parents
 - Community activism
 - residents policing themselves
 - Clean and caring neighborhoods
 - Neighbors who know each other and watch out for each other
 - Need dialogue between young and old “to get understanding between the generations—both ways”
 - Clean neighborhoods (1 comment)
 - Respectful officers
 - police (should) see people as equals/ human beings
- What contributes to making you feel unsafe?
 - Disconnect between police and community
 - Lack of community representation at all levels of police department
 - Worcester officers of color who were never promoted filed a lawsuit against the city
 - Police department is hiring people who are not from the community, including people from the military
 - Only 4 of 486 police officers in Worcester are women and two are approaching retirement
 - Can’t build trust with Police Department”
 - 22 open cases of police brutality“
 - Cops were bullies when I was young....now they pull out guns.”
 - No transparency
 - Implicit biases/ Unequal treatment in our communities
 - People standing in front of their own house are being questioned
 - Cops don’t see people as human beings.
 - Management sets the tone. At some level in Worcester, there is no respect for people with less.
 - Resident behaviors
 - Drugs / alcohol are destroying our neighborhood

- People know what's going on but don't share it with the police.”
 - Neglect of elderly/ Elders need to get more involved
- What roles do you think the police should play in our community?
 - Community policing
 - talk to parents
 - connect with young people
 - defuse gang-related retaliation
 - engage respectfully with everyone, especially low income residents and people of color
 - Solve crimes, not just harass people on the streets
 - Police should police the police
 - Police have to be trustworthy.
- How effective are they in fulfilling those roles?
 - No examples of Worcester police doing community policing.
 - Police department lost a couple community policing grants, which in the past were effective in bringing the community in touch with the police.
 - Police not doing police work / crimes are not solved
 - One participant whose home was broken into repeatedly was told that the finger print guy doesn't work on week ends.
 - Police department is under-resourced
 - Police treat people with disrespect
 - Police treat people unequally/ act on implicit biases (we all have biases; police are people)
- The conversation that will happen in this group is already a challenge because we are not a very diverse group and this reflects what happens in the community – those that are not at the table are often those that are most marginalized.
- It is important what community leaders say in the event of a tragic event
- Summer Youth Corps, Shotspotter system, and many good things public safety officials are doing for the city that are not being reported – only bad things are being reported.
- Collaboration is more important than confrontation.
- If you don't have a strong public safety component then economic development and education cannot prosper
- Confusion as to how these community dialogues are being publicized and to whom? Are these dialogues geared towards community organizations or towards residents or both?
- Who feels safe coming to a community dialogue? I had an African-American friend tell me they don't feel a large community forum is a safe space for them.

- I have been robbed multiple times and the relationships and connections I built with my neighbors after the robberies helped me feel safer
- Hearing about the Worcester police officer who was recently arrested for police brutality was alarming
- Seeing police at community events gives me a feeling of comfort and seeing police collaborating with churches makes one feel like they are safe
- Police alone is not the solution – programs that use collaboration between police and nonprofits are very helpful; it is not just about arresting more people but about changing the dynamic around how we help those after they are arrested
- Those who don't want to see as many police are saying so because they are often feeling under siege whereas others who want to see more police aren't feeling safe enough
- Acknowledging that there is indeed a difference between how we view police based on our race and the neighborhoods we live in
- The role of police in our community is to protect and serve
- The role of police in our community is to create a positive face
- Police relationships that build safety and not just presence
- It would be nice to see more police officers of color
- Institutionalized racism and white privilege exists and cannot be separated from the conversation
- For people here from other parts of the world, anyone in a uniform is suspect - and when they come to the U.S. as refugees they are educated that in the U.S. the men and women in uniform can be trusted.
- Utilize innovative community outreach methods to show that police officers are human and can be trusted.
- Very few people of color are at community crime watch meetings and it would be great if more people of color attended these meetings or if there are more groups formed that are not necessarily crime watch groups that meet directly with city government and city officials
- There is already dialogue fatigue within communities of color about race and police – they don't need to come to a community dialogue being held by the City because they live it every day and they are tired
- There needs to be more honest dialogues about race and police interactions
- Concerns Discussed
 - Harassment and brutality by police
 - Lack of procedures to follow up
 - Police do not have authentic collaborations with communities of color
 - Crime watches criminalize young people and diminish voices
 - More representation of communities of color in fire department
 - concern about law enforcement in schools and criminalizing young people

- Representation at all levels of public safety
- All black males perceived as a certain element because of a clothing trend
- Fear police have of people of color is going on nationally. What is the problem when pulling a gun is your first response?
- Lack of training of police. Need to teach officers that different people respond to their uniform in different ways
- At 64 as a black man still gets butterflies in stomach
- They (police) do not look at me as a citizen but as part of a dangerous group
- Historically why minorities living in communities they are living in now is because their places were torched and burned down. Great Brook Valley became 80% minority because of this displacement. Minorities living in areas where it looks like no one cares. Historically crime watches have been put on by the other to keep an eye on the other.
- Pleasant and Austin Streets had a group of adults who organized eben activities for young people. Adults in the community made it impossible for the people who wanted to cause problems not to cause problems. Crime watches should be better than what they are today.
- Balance of helping youth and calling the police
- The us and the them. Lack of opportunity to be together. Sunday is the most segregated day. Needs to be more representation from all neighborhoods at dialogues.
- Need political will to say this (gangs, drugs) is a problem. Do not wait for a crisis.
- We would not be sitting here if it weren't for Ferguson and Baltimore. What is happening now in Worcester is what was brewing in Baltimore before. Look at solving it before it erupts.
- Children being directed to school to prison pipeline (Gaston institute study). Latino's Worcester have higher rate of expulsion. This is a concerted effort of privatizing schools systems and privatizing prison systems to deny Latino and Black children authentic public schools. High stakes testing part of the problem.
- Strong concerns about schools to prison pipeline. For those returning to the community from jail parole is hard. No jobs.
- Rhetoric is to follow the rules to succeed but the rules are designed for individuals to fail. Why aren't police supporting educators? They could be the biggest advocates for diversion programs but they are not.
- Many (officers) drive in and out of our communities
- Militarization of police force. Attention brought to ALEC and case of judge in PA being bribed to send people to jail.

- Criminal record reduces economic opportunity.
- Shepherd King Crime Watch. Direct engagement of police and foot patrols. Despite efforts residents do not feel safe in their neighborhood.
- Respondent harassed after pulled over and brother was arrested at own home.
- Police have left partnerships in city.
- Community building vs. policing
- In past community work, parents wanted more activities for youth as opposed to foot patrols.
- Referenced coming together after South High murder for students to give testimony and discuss racial tension.
- Respondent indicated positive interaction with police when having permit to carry
- Many young people find themselves with negative interactions with police
- Leadership representation of the city at all levels needs to look like the public. Plans need to be developed for that. Work to grow the group.
- 40 years change has been happening and it has been like talking to a wall. No preparation and no planning. Lots of talk and no action.
- Report card needed to show what was done in a year and the strategy to do it.
- DOJ cannot walk away and this be an exercise in futility but instead leave with a sustainable plan.
- We've lost millions of dollars because of lack of plans and commitment.
- Many initiatives make city leaders feel good about themselves and put on a resume but get nothing done.
- Discussed Governor Patrick's commission on assessment and how it was pre-determined there would be no support for ELL students.
- At South before the murder people indicated problems but nothing was done about it.
- Public safety in schools is an issue. Use professional development to train educators. Bring educators to the families and make see reasons behavior is going on. Get community to know each other.
- Learning each other's stories work in schools. Sad to see people who refused to open doors for people of color still be promoted in the system.
- No use of sustainable holistic plan to explore culture. Minorities in school system won't necessarily change it- whole system and internalized racism still at play.
- Diversity won't hurt but will actually help. Students need to see adults and see similar people in a safe space.

- Immersion at a young age validates child's culture (ie Spanish in younger grades will make Spanish speaking students not see their language as bad).
- People's concerns about Worcester Public Safety Organizations
 - Big Focus on Prevention
 - More Interaction with youth to give kids hope.
 - More real data—PD public info requests—frustrated
 - PD refusing to talk to media= Wall
 - Need
 - Pan handling is an issue—but they are in survival mode/ Doesn't like ordinance
 - PD-inappropriate language (approach, respect) F bombs. Puts up walls
- Responsive?
 - Incident with David Russo, how WPD responded to this incident (cars on city hall to prevent rally= shut down conversation)
 - Police use intimidation. When PD does this and elected officials don't challenge this. –(Hard to have CMUO)
 - Counter—PD treated poorly/ targeted
 - CM has support, some activist defend CM that he is trying to balance
 - Police in Schools
 - Prevent bullying and other problems demystifies on both ends
 - Police as the police
 - Do they have youth development lens?
 - It's all about the right cop with the right training
 - Youth workers might be better in place of PD in some situations
 - PD as role model in school vs. hiring an expert/youth worker (Could Have Both)
 - Belmont St. incident—PD (Could Have Both)
 - Center for non-violence—trained 300 youth/ to call mediator
 - Disparity in PD work force
 - Important for youth to see someone who looks like them
 - Diversity within pub safety important—do they have your best interest at heart?
 - PD officers typically live in Worcester—added benefit.
 - Last 2 classes of police reflect more diversity.
 - CM—Set of rec—CC
 - Chief of Diversity
 - Fills jobs in city intentionally with rich diversity—Makes us a better community. Hazel Berny—has unique ability to talk to youth

2. Shared understanding of how public safety organizations might change to address under-representative constituents' concerns.

- What actions can the police, fire, medical emergency responders or other public safety officials take to regain or enhance your trust? What can the community do to regain or enhance trust in public safety organizations?
 - Churches and community organizations should invite officers to an “evening with police” event with their organization
 - Everything to improve relationships shouldn’t be put on one understaffed department
 - Everyone on the force should participate – all officers should spend time volunteering
 - Kids feel that the job of police officers is to interrogate or intimidate
 - Need to teach and train so that this isn’t the perception
 - Training for officers should include hearing from people who have had negative interactions with the police
 - Stories of negative interactions should be shared with the recruiting class
 - Have officers who can engage in conversations/community dialogue
 - Have officers at this event to share their point of view
 - Open this dialogue to both sides
 - Everyone has a responsibility to improve the situation, but some have more responsibility because of their training and position
 - Have opportunities for more dialogue, perhaps at community organizations
 - Create a community board to oversee practices and policies
- What can we all do to ensure that public safety organizations work more effectively?
 - Community group or board to oversee them
 - More transparency
 - Kids don’t know how to become a police officer
 - What is the training for officers and who decides that
 - Most people at our table did not know that each city has a police review board
 - Media needs to shift the narrative
 - Now it is just police as the enemy
 - We all need to share our personal experiences – whether it is feeling unsafe in interactions, being interrogated when a crime victim, or having a relative on the force – so that we can increase understanding

- Recognize that it is not unsafe for all equally
 - Some communities are impacted more than others
- Ways public safety organizations are and are not helping under-represented groups feel safe and protected
 - Visibility
 - Transparency
 - Relationships/familiar faces
 - Accountability
 - Starts with relationships
 - Visibility in community needed to develop relationships
 - Approach to interacting with citizens needs to be friendly/non-confrontational to develop relationships
 - Need to have a way for police officers to have positive interactions with citizens and vice versa
 - Develop these relationships between officers and members of the community so that they know each other as individuals
- Shared understanding of how public safety organizations might change to address under-represented constituents' concerns
 - More dialogue with those under-represented groups
 - People interact differently with the police; need to get all experiences
 - Important to tie the experiences of race to the dialogues in intentional ways
 - Also have the personal stories from all perspectives to add to the dialogue
 - Have officers in the community
 - Encourage officers to volunteer
 - Have officers serve as mentors to young people
 - Get buy in from the unions
- What actions can the police, fire, medical emergency responders or other public safety officials take to regain or enhance your trust? What can the community do to regain or enhance trust in public safety organizations?
 - A member of our talked about how police can recognize the good in a person and recognize the humanity of mistakes.
 - Our group discussed how the police can be friendly and come into situations with an attitude of respect and friendliness instead of an attitude of confrontation.
 - Our group discussed how the police should be deliberate to make relationships and get to know the good people in a community not just the bad people.

- A member of our group asked whether there were trainings available to police on communication, because many of the problems raised seemed to stem from a lack of communication skills.
 - Our group discussed how there is some training, but unless it is proactive and practiced after the training ends not much will change.
 - Our group also discussed how more frequent trainings would be beneficial to bettering the communication skills of the police force.
 - Our group was also curious about how often police trainings occur, specifically with regard to communication with the community.
 - A member of our group raised a concern that training on communication skills and community policing are not accepted within the police culture (officers who are community police are lesser officers)
- A member of our group suggested that the police need to be open and transparent about problems within the police force.
 - This member stated that some concrete steps that would aid in transparency are body cams on all officers and submitting to an independent investigation by the DOJ.
- A member of our group discussed how the police are capable of nurturing and that some police officers are better nurturers than others. The police force should recognize and use those individuals to train from within.
- Our group discussed how the police and civilians both need to make efforts to engage one another.
- Our group discussed how the police force should look like the city. It should be diverse and have officers who live or have lived in the neighborhood where they work.
- One member of our group discussed how we need a mutual understanding of the benefit we get from each other.
 - Not just the citizens needing the police to protect them but also recognize that the citizens pay taxes to pay for the police's salary and insurance and child's college.
- A member of our group discussed how the police reflect the community's thoughts about people and neighborhoods.
 - When a community thinks certain people and areas are bad that impacts the police
 - This member noted that as a white guy, he can avoid bad areas.
- What can we ALL do to ensure that public safety organizations work more effectively?

- One member of our group discussed how we need to not stereotype the police and not automatically see the police as evil.
 - Another member noted that this is easier said than done when the police are at war.
- A member of our group stated that there is a problem with this question. We are not the professionals; the police should be taking on the challenge of bridging the gap. It is their job.
- Our group discussed the mirror effect—when I’m angry at you, you become angry at me and how this impacts interactions between the police and civilians
 - A member of our group discussed how we can stop the mirror effect by changing our behavior.
- Our group discussed how the community needs to be educated in how to deal with the police.
- who should oversee police behavior?
 - One member of our group discussed body cameras and a civilian review board with subpoena power
 - One member of our group discussed how oversight may not work with the police culture.
 - One member discussed how a civilian complaint to the police doesn’t work.
 - One member stated that they were talking to a civilian friend who works with the police and was told that they don’t like to go after cops for any reason.
- What is police culture?
 - A culture to protect their own even when they are wrong.
 - A culture where the police are never wrong.
 - A culture built on intimidation
 - A culture that is above the law
 - A culture where the police feel that they are under siege and being viewed by the public as the enemy and vice versa.
 - A culture where the police fear the public, especially black men.
- Next steps:
 - Lots of clashing between community and police but they are not here- conversations must continue
 - Development of a Community Advisory Boards for Law Enforcement- monthly or quarterly conversation between community and the police so they are both engaged on issues/concerns in neighborhood and address things proactively and collaboratively as well.

- Bring students of color to Police Station/Fire Dept to get to see where and how they work. Relationships can be developed in the community in such a manner.
- Judicial system must be involved to make the last two bullets above a success
- What can we all do to ensure that public safety organizations work more effectively
 - Human Rights Commission
 - Neighborhood groups
 - Stone Soup
 - Community Gardening organizations
 - Regional Environmental Council
 - Churches
 - Attach faith based organizations to police stations
- CONCERNS/WANTS
 - concerned that things around the country with police are creating a mentality of bunker/being under attack and the police chief doesn't respond well to that. Want police to hear concerns/criticisms and support. Past dialogues have been shut down by police chief out of defensiveness.
 - better presence in city/more positive relationship
 - there used to be a clergy ride alongs with police - that has disappeared - wish it could be revived
 - "I was in the wrong place/wrong time and was beaten - I had a conversation with police chief and I understood why it happened - fear of people having a gun"
 - we have black and latino clergy meeting on the side - I've attended these meetings and asked the police questions but no one took me seriously
 - "take the blame off police - put it on our clergy - they sell out their own people" Another participant responded that "you don't speak though for all clergy"
 - there are a lot of extenuating circumstances in meetings between police and clergy
 - The Worcester Police and Clergy are going to start their union again with them as co-facilitators. We just needed a reset/took a break - then come back together with a more purposeful union
 - hold our leaders responsible
 - good in past - police have built relationships with community leaders
 - "as a white woman, I've never been asked for my license by the police - I've never been made to feel unsafe by cop - but have been with my back male friends when stopped"

- ”for me to feel trustful - I have no trust now - with it broken with no accountability - if there was a commitment to trust when my friend filled a complaint it would have been followed up on”
- there has been no follow up on the case of the cop abusing prisoner in jail here
- cops with guns in school make me uncomfortable
- more people killed by cops then cops killed
- if you are doing something bad/hanging with bad people you have risk to lose your life or be arrested
- we need more police
- we need more neighborhood protection
- if we don't respect the police - we have to change - so when we met the police we have to respect them
- some people hate police - we have to respect the police even if the police are wrong
- solution = respect ever policeman
- the police here are good - in other countries you would be in trouble if you don't listen to them
- WHAT CAN POLICE DO TO GAIN OUR TRUST - WHAT CAN WE DO TO TRUST THEM
 - police need training
 - our attitude to police is bad - we have to respect them
 - as citizens we could take care of our kids so they don't get involved in gangs - the gangs are stealing/shooting/selling drugs -- if we don't take care of our kids they will leave you and join a gang
 - do the police have a citizen concerns board to handle complaints/concerns of citizens?
 - is there a forum to express support? Another participant said that there is a first responders rally at Lincoln Square on June 20th -- opportunity to thank police/ems/fire
 - there should be ways for praise and gratitude -- and ways for complaints/concerns to be addressed and responded to
 - for complaints - people can contact the city manager's office - they have responded in past efficiently
 - we are the customers of the police - go to the city manager
- NOTES FOR TABLE 4 REPORT BACK
 - unsafe -- crime, drugs, prostitutes / not enough police / too many police / police accountability / cops with guns in school
 - safe -- more good about police then bad / police better here than in other countries

- respect -- respect of citizens by police -- respect of police by citizens – education
- working -- gang unit programs that are a good role model for kids / police clergy union
- not working -- mentality of police thinking they are under attack so defensive when criticized or concerns are voiced
- regain trust -- follow up on citizens' complaints / civilian review board for police complaints / police training / citizens attitudes-respect / neighborhood watch / call city manager / our leaders need to be accountable and responsible
- Need more community policing
- Need more outreach and more communication with the community.
- Increase mentoring program for kids.
- Have hiring practices that require residency in Worcester.
- Create advisory committee or police/community liaison program.
- Respect, speak to people like human beings not like criminals.
- Train police on de-escalation techniques; sensitivity training and competence around mental health crisis.
- Have separate unit investigate police department
- Meet regularly with the community
- Send out more information to the community.
- Police Officers are to serve and protect. What can we do to make their jobs better?
- Possibly have an on-going dialogue between police, (active and retired) with community members to address the issues. Establish a relationship to help police and community know what they are addressing, doing, and concerns of all.
- First step needed: City gov. and police to admit there is an issue.
- Need to address systemic issues; have enough jobs, housing, Good education, and basic needs met.
- Have a conversation with police, gov. and community how to build relations with trust and respect.
- Need more comprehensive training for Police Officers. Need to make sure Police Officers have support to process what happens to them.
- Suggestion of having a civilian group to review the facts of cases brought against police. Internal affairs would do their work but civilian community group would review details and ask questions. (without names of specifics of case)
- Suggest an ongoing group of police (active and retired) and community members to meet each other and develop relationship of trust and dialogue together.
- What actions can public safety official take to enhance community trust
 - Treat people with respect.

- EMTs, Firefighters, police and other first responders need to respond to people in the community with dignity, respect and patience.
 - Individuals going through drug withdrawal need to be treated with patience and respect.
 - Respond to individuals' homes, respect and patience.
- Continued Training
 - Bedside manner: work on communication style, as there is concern that some public safety officials are on power trip.
 - Serve and Protect: the notion of how a public safety official serves and protects needs to be expanded to include a connection with the public.
 - Continued Training by outside organizations. Would like to see public safety officials engaged in interactive and comprehensive training. There is concern that some public safety officials simply sign in to trainings and nap.
- Community Engagement
 - Participate in youth and community sports (boxing, basketball).
 - Participate in organizations that have a broad and diverse group of community members, as opposed to remaining insular within one's own group.
 - Websites only go so far. Public safety officials need to reach out to the community through other channels (church, sports, community groups, public service and assistance organization) to interact with the public and communicate what it is they can do for the community.
 - Get members of the public talking and included in the conversation about public safety and community.
- Continued work with Cultural Competence
 - Improve language skills.
 - Work on universal non-verbal communication skills.
- Wrap Up: Going Forward
 - Sustainability: work with existing organizations.
 - Honest and frank conversations with existing organizations and new ones.
 - Keep the work going.
 - Relationships.
 - Maintain existing relationships.
 - Keep lines of communication open.
 - Form new relationship.

- Work on honesty and trust.
 - Holistic Approach: Look at issues through many different lenses.
 - Recognize that many groups of people in different regions of the country have unique perspectives and view and tackle issues differently.
 - Recognize that everyone comes with preconceived biases and prejudices.
- What actions can public safety officials take to regain or enhance your trust?
 - Community representation
 - Reinstate police auxiliary to create pipeline for women
 - Mandate more women on police force—they are 52% of the population (Women officers are not the ones doing the shooting of unarmed Black men)
 - All police should come from the community
 - Police department says it's understaffed, but it's not just numbers that matter
 - Improve community relations
 - Make police athletic department a major community effort
 - Be open to compassionate criticism about police impact
 - Treat all people with respect
 - “Humble down”/ Police have to recognize that their authority can't be absolute
 - Police could use a “mantra” to help calm themselves
 - Anti-bias education/ recognize your own biases
 - Understand generations of structural racism
 - Understand the stresses of poverty, historical factors
 - Recognize that temptations are different for urban youth
 - “Cultural sensitivity training is superficial” (—anti-bias education should be in-depth & ongoing)
 - Be accountable to community
 - Citizen review boards
 - 5 reps from 5 areas of Worcester act as liaisons to police and are consulted
 - Change culture so police will speak up when police officer speaks inappropriately
 - Need transparency, racial profiling data needs to be public
- What can the community/ we all do to ensure that public safety organizations work more effectively?
 - Other people to watch/ observe police./ Community activists can highlight injustices; take videos.

- Create opportunities for people so drug dealing isn't so enticing.
- "Nothing to prevent African Americans from running for office" (African Americans should run for office)
- Contentious themes, unanswered questions
 - Community is divided. If you say, police need to do a better job, you're anti-cop.
 - If police are not effective, what can we, acting with compassion, do about it?
 - Is there a way to be pro police and pro community?
 - Community is not represented in the community dialogs
 - How can we change a culture of insensitivity? "Who knows how to change hearts?"
 - People (residents; police) act protectively of those they identify with: "My tribe. I'm not going to say anything."
 - Temptations are different when there's no opportunities; no hope
 - Does lack of resources undermine the effectiveness of police?
 - (It's how resources are used...)
- Observations of / by the group
 - Participant who grew up in streets of Harlem spoke in favor of community policing
 - Someone who identified as a White immigrant noted that people of color were treated differently than she was.
 - Someone from the Bell Hill neighborhood said residents watched out for each other/ pointed out difference in treatment of residents by socioeconomic status
 - Someone from the South said safety begins in neighborhoods
 - Someone from suburbs who works with youth from the city said temptations are different when there's no opportunities; no hope.
 - Social worker: young person who needed psychological evaluation was inappropriately treated by police officer asked how to change the culture of insensitivity
 - Someone from a poor White family with brothers in criminal activity spoke in favor of personal responsibility / You either support the police or you support criminals/ Worcester is not Baltimore/ There is racism [but] race shouldn't matter as much as character
 - Someone who entered the group at the end said that the African American population are exploited by themselves as well as by people who represent them. Redress of wrongs extended to people who never experienced slavery. The person asked, "how many generations does it take?"

Someone answered that the question applies equally to Whites, to everyone. It's not just Black people who can't get out of a rut.

- Data on Stop and Frisk (reports put biracial individuals as white)
- No surveillance in schools (no live connections)
- Security officers in school not police
- Community economic solutions- have police champion this
- Stop blaming people of color for Black on Black crime
- Treatment on Demand
- Don't target peaceful protesters
- Cultural competency and anti-racism training
- Pools- huge factor for public safety
- More robust youth employment program to make young people feel good about skills application.
- Used to have community schools-lots of crime occurs after schools close.
- Mindfulness and anti-racism counseling. Truth commissions, not mental health
- Compassionate city with caring and communication
- Deal with lives where they are
- Partnerships not police lead but with police as partners
- See people as an asset and not criminals
- What can city do to enhance positive experiences?
 - Need documents in other languages (Used buy back flier as an example)
 - Need consistency –w/ tag- white/eng
 - Need to diversify messaging just b/c you don't know about it doesn't mean it's not happening
 - How do you speak to Guinean community They don't have radio stations. Find a restaurant or church.
 - (Positive)—Status of women—arresting too many women, they are victims. John's highlighted, women are now being connected to resources
 - DA/PD go into schools
 - PD does not receive special training when it comes to going into schools.
 - FD—easier to get to come to events—bring truck, block parties
 - PD—Level of bureaucracy, sense they want to get OT
 - DA brought in training to PD to how to better interact with community.
 - (Perception—they are there to help) FF have propensity of concern
 - Veterans court to deal with vet issues
 - Beat cops build relationships/trust
 - More officers of color are in the police clergy—in that helping role
 - There are many positive
 - What is the data on crime watch groups being people of color?
 - CM meeting with PD clergy

- Physical space –15 years ago, visit to Lowell PD HQ, has a well-lit, inviting, welcoming reception area
- Dispatch—new building by airport. CM—will create new space to open it up
- Need parking space for RX box return
- More outreach, more languages, more training, more engagement
 - Low income, working 2 jobs can't come to these meetings
 - How are we engaging these folks?
- Drug courts
- We need community to support us! (City) needle boxes
- (Positive) Harcan (FF/PD)—Call 911
- How else can we enhance trust?
- Conversations!
- Dialog
- –Hope Coalition youth asked any questions? They had—felt genuine.
- Chief came out quickly on recent holding call incident, But what about Report back?—Here's what happened to those officers that didn't report it?
- Learning about the work of being a cop
- Resource officers are key in schools.
- Need more transparency—PD needs to release video, want info, follow up—what did PD do to discipline those officers?
- Pre-trial publicity—need to be careful
- CM—this is an honest sincere effort to have a conversation
- Report Out:
 - PD not engaging

City of Worcester Community Dialogues on Race

JUNE 15, 2015: YOUTH AND EDUCATION

The following is the compilation of notes received through July 13, 2015; we will post additional notes as they are received. This document has not been edited for typos or grammatical errors and content comes directly from the notes supplied by the note takers.

Desired Outcomes of this meeting:

1. A list of ways racism affects young people in their educational experience/process.

- How does racism affect young people’s educational opportunities and experiences?
 - Our participants reported:
 - I am at Worcester State University. Race determines whether someone goes to college, as well as your background. If you don’t see yourself reflected there, you might not believe there is access for you.
 - Applying for college is very difficult. Some are perceived as white colleges – or might be too expensive.
 - Presented a list of comments that teachers have made to students. Those comments are:
 - “The people in Ferguson are acting like savages. It’s such a shame.”
 - “We would love to hear a black person’s perspective on the black and blue or what and gold dress fiasco!”
 - “Your people should be indebted to Abraham Lincoln. He freed the slaves!”
 - “I don’t know if someone like you should apply to WPI. I think you would do better at QCC.”
 - “You live in Great Brook valley? You’re brave!”
 - “I can’t teach you guys black history. There’s just no time to fit it in the curriculum.”
 - “I think you will be able to relate to this book. It’s about kids who grew up in the ghetto and made a life for themselves.”

- “There are tons of scholarships for black and Hispanic kids. The ones who will really have trouble paying for college are white students.”
 - “Why should we talk about our differences when we’re all the same?”
 - “I don’t see race or color, I am colorblind.”
- Guidance counselors lean towards Quinsigamond Community College, not Worcester State.
 - Guidance counselors tell people that they can’t achieve their goals.
 - There was a survey explaining that 75% of students are below the poverty line. Also, college prices are going up.
 - If I was a student, and heard the comments [listed above], I’d be angry. This is why people get angry, act out, and do things they might regret.
 - Being a person of color, a person of the global majority, doesn’t mean you’re poor. People who work in school systems should speak out when they hear these things. There needs to be advocacy when you see it. Students need to be supported. Adults should take their arguments somewhere else.
 - There are problems at the top, including with people who are doing the hiring. We need dedicated people who are willing to work with kids regardless of their race and standing.
 - We don’t necessarily need teachers who look like you – it’s having a teacher who cares, regardless of what race.
 - The issue has to do with skill sets. We should expect teachers to have a basic understanding of systems of oppression. Maybe teachers aren’t understanding what they’re saying or their biases.
 - Race is often discussed in the context of history, such as *Brown v. Board of Education*, after which many teachers of color were pushed out at the time of integration. That has an impact today. We struggle to find educators of color. It’s hard to deconstruct because it’s so subconscious. We need someone who is uplifting and helping students achieve their goals.
 - The system is naturally oppressive. High school sucked. I had no voice. More youth need to speak up. You guys have the most hope. You literally could change everything – you are the future.
 - Most of these things are happening because of stereotypes. If you hear it, you start believing it. For example, Asians are smart and black people are dumb. So, Asians move to the top of the list and blacks move to the bottom.

- My third child talks about race – everything is a race thing for him, and every teacher is racist. He feels everything is racist.
 - So much of racism is based on environment. If a teacher makes these comments, you're helpless to do anything. Nothing systemically changes.
 - Racism affects other things, not just school. For example, public health systems impacts one's ability to learn in school. If you're sick due to racism, you're missing school, which impacts your grades.
 - There's a problem of criminalizing low-level issues. If you're late or tardy and you're in the white suburbs, it's no big deal. If you're black, it could be a suspension.
 - Tardiness may be caused because students may not have rides. It's hard to depend on busses. People should be held accountable, but there shouldn't be such strict consequences for tardiness. I work with drop-outs. Absenteeism and tardiness is a factor for those dropping out. We need to know our students and understand their situations. We should try to figure out solutions to the problems.
 - Our participants came to a consensus and shared the following points at the report-back session:
 - Kids feel oppressed and demoralized.
 - Teachers are perpetuating stereotypes that kids are internalizing.
- How does racism affect young people's educational opportunities and experiences?
 - One group member discussed how scholarships for people of certain races is racist
 - One group member discussed how focusing too much on race in education takes away from learning
 - One group member discussed how there are a lack of high school graduates due to bullying
 - One group member discussed how children are negatively affected by the failure of schools to reflect the diversity of the student body. Both administration and teachers
 - One group member discussed how conflict resolution in schools is not good. Schools reflect the conflict that many students experience in other areas of their life.
 - One group member discussed how it is a problem that children can drop out of school at 16
 - One group member discussed how schools are not run uniformly which negatively affects students of color

- A group member asked a follow-up question: when you discuss how students of color are treated differently what are you referring to?
 - Response: There are different resources available to different students and in different schools and there are often different levels of parental involvement
- One group member discussed how the media's portrayal of young people of color affects how teachers treat students of color. This member believes that this is a huge part of the problem
- One member discussed how there are a lot of factors that negatively affect a student's ability to advance in school
 - Parents are beaten down
 - Parents uneducated
 - Lack of opportunity
 - Culture
 - Class and economics
- One group member discussed how curriculum, specifically history, is not reflective of the student population
 - History does not show triumphs and successes of people of color
 - Students are being taught history that white washes and erases parts of history
 - History is taught from the perspective of the winners
- One group member discussed how around the country there is a lack of diversity of in staff.
 - The lack of staff that reflects the students makes it hard for students to relate to and trust staff.
 - One group member gave a personal example that offended this member: a Caucasian teacher told a student not to come back to school unless the student's homework was completed. The group member felt that this teacher did not understand the student's culture and how a statement like this would impact this student. This group member thought that greater diversity in staff would increase understanding of the impact culture and race can have on education.
- One group member discussed how schools should have guidance counselors or a person in that role in the school to help children
 - There is no one to help students resolve issues
- One group member discussed how a lack of cultural competency training affects young people of color

- One group member discussed how students should have mentors; someone who is not from their family and who isn't there to judge them
 - The group discussed how this would be most valuable from an early age
- One group member discussed how there should be more preventative actions so students don't reach high school disparaged.
- At the end of the discussion on Question 1 the group decided that the two answers to report back were:
 - Students are affected when schools are not representative of the population the school is serving. When both administrators and teachers are not reflective of the diverse student population
 - Students are affected by more than just racism. Class and other variables can also impede a student's ability to learn
- Demographics- geography of where different students go to different schools. Geographic diversity relates to geographic discrimination. Overlaid with racial disparity.
- Pre School- Behavior of students of color is punished more severely than White students
- Negative assumptions of communities of color- not assumed going to college.
- Parent: Told C's were good enough for his daughter. Should be A's. Taking away one's culture also impacts school performance
- Assumptions that there is less parental involvement in communities of color
- Literature is Western based and not enough appreciation of other cultural expressions. Acknowledge culture also in art and music.
- Student: hear things in history class that may not be true. In school needs to be more diverse history that is inclusive of all narratives. Otherwise negatively impacts students' identity.
- Student: In a history class teacher had a debate on slavery. Did not recognize impact the discussion would have on students of color. Should have taken an argument and shown sides at the time period not a debate. "Why would you debate the Holocaust? You don't want to debate something awful"
- Training is important. Teachers should be learning with the students.
- Older English teacher only focuses on european history and is not representative of students.
- Teachers not acknowledging race. Not acknowledging the problem we continually face.
- Curriculum is not under local control.
- Lack of comprehension by teachers of the context where students are coming from
- Low expectations of students

- Speaking disrespectfully to students is a road paved from school to prison
- Students of color are 3x more likely to be in trouble—structural racism
- Discipline policy needs to be same across the system – discipline discrepancies
 - Chaotic environments
 - No consistent discipline across the system
- What is experienced is white supremacy – history, music, art
- What you see affects what you think – student to staff racial make-up
- How does racism affect young people’s educational opportunities and experiences?
 - Handout from one member re: how students are discriminated against b/c of their name (Ex. A)
 - Disparity in punishment (Ex. B)
 - Students of color re punished more severely than white students
 - Suspension rates
 - Higher among black & latino students
 - Students suspended more than 2 → higher dropout rate
 - Alternative ideas for discipline? DOJ’s new standards of discipline
 - Conference in parents instead of suspensions
 - Breaking policy by not intervening beforehand
 - Training for teachers?
 - So they can think differently about how to punish students
 - Cultural shift of thinking
 - Teachers have to learn about their biases
 - Cultural training
 - The new model has made suspension rates drop
 - Lack of resources, lack of accountability
 - Teachers blaming students & families
 - Do we have structures in place?
 - Challenges at home → how can schools work with families that are vulnerable
 - Climate of blaming
 - Municipalities are not getting the same funding as suburbs
 - 4th of 5th grade when students start falling off
 - Students not feeling like they are cared about
 - Young black boys internalize the implicit bias and cannot understand
 - Early intervention is critical
 - Comments compiled by youth (Ex. C)
 - Ages 13-18
 - Teachers are frustrated with the lack of accountability from govt for allocation of resources. They would prefer we stop victim-blaming the

students for poor performance rather than addressing the lack of adequate resources to support student success in the face of social challenges like poverty and homelessness.

- I know a fourth grade teacher who said poverty creates challenges. How do we work with students to deal with issues instead of punishing the kids? She can “tell by grade three which kids in her class will end up in jail.” Some of the kids would rather look tough than look dumb, so when they’re put on the spot... they need more attention.
- That’s just about the time boys start to age, to look like men instead of cute little boys. Implicit bias begins to show through. If that teacher can “tell” a kid will end up in jail, what chance does that kid have in that classroom?
- It’s also about caring. Kids don’t feel cared about.
- Structural problem in allocation of resources. Municipalities don’t get the same funding than the suburbs do. They’ve been trying to fix the aquatic facilities at South and can’t find the money to do it.
- Ask a teacher and they will tell you the awful things that are said in the teachers’ lounge. No understanding of life for their students. Disconnected.
- They have police but they won’t allow any outside agency to come in for mental health counseling. Worcester is the only city or town in the state that won’t allow the mobile emergency mental health response team into their schools.
- 92% of the teachers are European descent/ from the dominant culture.
- Stereotypes come with us being raised in racist society but education can help us to see them and correct ourselves.
- Early intervention seen as good because they have teachers identify families to “assist” in keeping their boys out of the system, when in fact the program introduces them to the system with labeling, tracking, expectations biasing their experience from then on. Really all kids should have access to high quality care that supports families.
- Harlem kids got all kinds of attention for progress due to early intervention, but once the extra supports were gone from early intervention programming and they were on their own, they fell right back again.
- Handout given of racist things students have heard from teachers
- Says they don’t have time to put black history in the curriculum. How do you think that makes a kid feel? How do you think a kid processes that when they hear it?
- How do the white kids even feel when they hear it?

- Kids will think they're not important enough to be included in curriculum. They need to learn to live in that culture in order to succeed. Black history is American history
- When students were asked to name 20 famous people in history, they were nearly all white men.
- I didn't know about any black history,. I never heard WB Dubois' name until college, and certainly didn't learn about the genocide of native American people. Now at least I know they teach Howard Zinn at South High.
- Latinas are ridiculed in textbooks, and our narratives are being completely erased. Don't call me Spanish or Hispanic because I speak Spanish, I don't call you English just because you speak English. You should take time to get to know me and where I am from.
- One of the local schools made a class split into two groups and to debate for and against slavery. I know there's an important lesson to be learned about the system of debating ideas, but this exercise was harmful to some of the students forced to research and present the pro-slavery argument
- It's ingrained in you that you want to be with the whites and not be "otherized" so you steer clear of conversations about race. How do we have the conversation without me having to become the voice of all Asian people?
- In school we never ever talked about black people or black history. I went to a private school and it's very different. They never mention it at all. But they have to understand that the people they teach will be out in the real world. Once we turn 22, there's a policy for people with disabilities to move out of their parents' house and they will have to get along with lots of different people at their jobs and neighborhoods.
- The problem is not socio-economic. Racism is ingrained in society. We've got to bring people together. The real problem is social dominance.
- We don't talk about race anywhere, so why would schools be different? We (people of color) talk more than white folks typically about racism so we could all teach you how to have these conversations. People don't feel safe, aren't aware of their biases. Need comprehensive, transformative education, more than just a training, and support for whole systems change.
- We don't know enough about other people and their cultures and their accomplishments – such a major piece to be lacking curriculum
- Individuals can make a difference even if problem is system. A good teacher can be transformative. No coincidence that we're at Tech, National

Blue Ribbon School, Principal of the Year, Colin Powell, Obama said we were a model for the nation. “Someone invested in us.”

- Need culture of opportunity, with hope for getting a real job out of school and getting ahead.
- It struck me at last week’s and it strikes me again now – it’s really a dynamic where one person doesn’t see the other as a person. I want to know how we change that dynamic. At the core, if teachers, or police officers, or citizens, don’t see people of color as human, how can we push people to have these conversations? What kind of training could you possibly give?
- Some people just have no empathy. It’s not natural to have empathy – you have to learn it. Some people never do. How do we get people to feel what we feel?
- Return to 4th grade comment – maybe third or fourth grade is when the kids begin to see the differences between them and they need support as they see racism. There’s a big need for empathy there.
- Clark University has the University park school. Lots of neighborhood kids go there, end up in higher education. What are they doing there?
- As a children’s mental health counselor, I had to take a whole semester on race, power and bias. Now it’s part of our regular process to consider those things in each case. That might be a practice that could be transferred to the schools.
- Most teachers commute in from the suburbs. It means the teachers don’t look like the kids, don’t relate to or connect with the kids, and the taxes on the salaries we are paying them go to help the suburban schools rather than staying in the city. There could be a residency requirement for teachers so they would need to have some come from the neighborhood. If you have a stake in your neighborhood, it will matter to you that the schools are good.
- A good training will help people look past the individual to see how the system of racism hurts them too, how they’ve been fooled into voting against their own interests from a rationale that is motivated by hate or from a place of scarcity, feeling there isn’t enough to go around so it would hurt them to share. It becomes clear how it’s a white person’s problem just as much as, or more than, a person of color’s problem. We’ve got to speak up, stand together and tip the scales the other way.
- You can’t teach what you don’t know. Many teachers don’t have any experience with people of color until they are standing in front of a classroom.

- The system of supervision used in social work is another model that might fit in the schools. Plus you need to bring counseling into the schools, earlier the better to cover trauma in early childhood.
- Schools are very segregated, money is not equitably distributed among the schools. Not everyone is aware of that.
- 90% of people in power in schools are Euro. The numbers have to change.
- Until they do, the white people in those roles can at least act as allies, speak up when they see racism, and try to reflect on ways they can make things better so that the teachers of color can be persuaded to come and might feel welcome and appreciated, not worried about people moaning that they took away jobs meant for white girls.
- Been in Worcester 19 years. When I first came to Elm Park Head Start, we did home visits with every family, got to know them as people, and it made all the difference. Need to rebuild that kind of connection. Would be great to have teachers living in surrounding neighborhood of school, embracing and supporting local community. Becoming part of the neighborhood.
- Summary points suggested by group for report out – this was the most disappointing part of the evening for me, since it didn't feel like the oral report included any of these bullets compiled by us as a group:
 - Major problems/ how racism affects youth in education:
 - Schools segregated and not equitably funded
 - Not an individual level problem, not an individual level solution. Not just up to students to fix the system. Will take all.
 - White people's problem too – need to get past guilt and see how racism negatively impacts every person's life on this planet
- How does racism affect young people's educational opportunities and experiences?
 - One participant said that we need to do something about the school to prison pipeline. He stated that North High School is racist. We should not have the militarization of our schools. Students need counseling, not metal detectors.
 - One participant said that she would like to see fair treatment in Worcester Schools. She noted that when the bilingual program started at the Adams Street School, there was a yellow line painted in the schoolyard, and Spanish-speaking kids were told that they could play in the area behind the yellow line.
 - One participant noted that the MCAS testing is racist.

- Another participant said that the problem with School Reform was that students are over tested, and teaching is over-regimented and restricted by bureaucratic processes. In Finland, teachers have more discretion to teach subject areas beyond what will appear on MCAS tests.
- It was noted that because of race and poverty, some children are not performing well on the tests. “Tests are not working.” “MCAS is not looking at kids as individuals.”
- The MCAS system is just not successful in developing problem solving skills.
- One participant noted that Common Core was written by business people and not educators. It was noted that money is offered to the state, and that “if you take the money, you must take the tests.” Test companies are profiting at the expense of our schools.
- One participant noted that the test is designed to have a 60% failure rate. It was noted that students need scholarship money in order to succeed, not tests, because various groups had different levels of savings according to a study that was done on savings. (“If Caucasians were at 100, African Americans were at 6, and Hispanics were about zero.”)
- Worcester public schools are a “minority majority” school system, (“50 plus 1%”), and how does race play into that?
- One participant identified herself as a mother of children who went through public schools. While testing may be an issue, we are hiding from Racism. We are afraid to talk about it. Racism affects both the victim of the Racism and the perpetrator. But we are stuck in this same conversation.
- When a child experiences racism, children know it and are hurt by it! It is also hurtful for parents who hear from their children that they have experienced racist behavior.
- How does it affect young people? It limits their interest in education, and children drop out of school; it limits the opportunity for further education; and it limits their job opportunities.
- Racism can also cause a child trouble with identity. When children feel racism, they wonder what is wrong with them.
- One participant suggested that we look at the number of black kids in special education. (Young people need to look at testing; schools need smaller class sizes.)
- With Racism, we have an unlevelled playing field. There is a big gap between Worcester and the suburbs.
- We should not be thinking our kids are “thugs”; we should counter that.

- Racism attacks children’s identities, confidence and ability to take best advantage of existing opportunities. Also, it limits future opportunities.
- Racism attacks children.
- Racism affects experiences of all children – it is even hard to identify yourself as a racist bully.
- One participant spoke of the effect of having police officers vs. truant officers picking up truant kids. It should be truant officers who bring kids to school, not police officers.
- Racism hurts everybody. Kids are children, not “thugs.”
- One participant spoke of the different experiences of her two daughters who are close in age but one daughter is more “white Irish looking” and the other is darker-skinned. She observed that her “white-looking” daughter got “white privilege” while her darker-skinned daughter was treated differently.
- Racism hurts kids by making them feel unworthy. Kids may get lost if they don’t have strong parents to advocate for them.
- How does racism affect young people’s educational opportunities and experiences?
- What can educators do to address different forms of racism within the educational system? What can students do?
 - Look at the cause of racism – it is inherent in an Anglo-Saxon society, which is “racist at its core” against many people, including Celts, if you look back through history
 - Do not shy away from racism
 - It is a systemic reality so recognize that there is not a level playing field
 - Bring in different cultures
 - For programs that require a recommendation from teachers where that recommendation is at the discretion of the teacher, the recommendation is not always going to students of color
 - There are low expectations for students
 - Sometimes this is in subtle ways, such as if there is a low bar to pass a class versus the higher bar for a challenging honors class
 - Some students of color may not realize that it is going on, but they may not be nominated for certain awards or classes or experiences
 - One participant, a young woman of color, said that she had not even considered taking an AP class when she was in school until her teacher suggested it to her
 - Raise expectations for all kids from the beginning so they start with higher expectations

- Look at the curriculum
 - One educator had said that he felt you should not shy away from racism in the curriculum and used *The Scarlet Letter* as an example where “the Black Man” is a euphemism for Satan
 - One participant said that he, as a black man, would not want to read something that would be upsetting to him
 - If he refused to read *The Scarlet Letter*, how would the teacher view him?
 - Learning needs to be fun
 - Find materials that are relevant to the students
 - Engage them
 - You can broaden what everyone knows
 - Pick books that engage them; think outside the box
 - For example, Hannibal for a story with an African American
- Participants were mixed on the term “colorblind” and whether people can be colorblind
 - One participant said that you can be colorblind if you treat everyone with love
- Kids need to be taught that first impressions are everything
- Students should take advantage of the opportunities that are available
- Students of color rarely see educators who look like them
 - Social media shows students of color as athletes and entertainers
- Consider the definition of racism – people with power hold others down
 - Most people in the dominant race do not see color as the problem
- Life is a rainbow
 - Need to recognize that everyone is different
 - It is good to celebrate who we are
- We have lost respect in schools
- Teachers are sometimes insensitive to the issues that kids have
- Disciplinary records can be problematic
 - The record travels with a student and that is the first thing a new school sees about the student – that is the first impression
 - How do we record what is reported?
 - Should these things that are recorded really be recorded and reported as part of a disciplinary record?
 - It feels like kids have criminal records
 - Encourage parents to talk to the teachers about issues that their child has rather than just making complaints
- Lack of resources/spaces

- When there is no playground, what do kids have to do at recess other than fight?
 - It just takes a football or a soccer ball to get kids engaged
 - Some parents said that they saw recess where there were 100 kids and 6 teachers
 - Unless there are things for the kids to do, there will be more opportunities for there to be problems
 - One parent brought jump ropes and other things for kids to play with
 - He also brought a flat basketball and used it to talk about the dangers of alcohol and drugs with the kids
 - Encourage the parents to come in and participate
 - They can support the teacher
 - They can play with the kids at recess
 - They can sit with kids in small groups in class and offer encouragement
 - Build better relationships with parents and teachers
 - This may happen when parents and teachers interact outside of the classroom, for example, at a soccer game
 - Teachers are not diverse in the Worcester Public Schools (“WPS”)
 - About 87% of WPS teachers are white whereas 33% of students are
 - This is out of proportion
 - School discipline statistics are also out of proportion
 - Need attention to hiring
 - Hire the best teachers who add to diversity
 - Do better recruiting
 - Talk to universities, perhaps locally
 - Get students to think about becoming teachers
 - But the “smart kids” can decide where they want to go to teach – a warm climate or Worcester
 - One parent reported that a teacher told him “sometimes I don’t know if I want to help your daughter”; he said he didn’t realize it was an option
- How does racism affect young people’s educational opportunities and experiences?
 - Worcester Public schools system is diverse, but the different neighborhoods and locations are bound to have a different percentage of certain races.

- Going to a school that is more populated with a certain culture, people are made known as to what/who they are. Students and teachers at different schools make your culture clear when you are the only culture there.
- Why are people filling law suites.
- Everyone believes Caucasian is the dominant race.
- Financial ability
- Many schools do not have meetings, maybe people cannot attend because variety of reasons. (School counseling) No rides, Working, busy taking care of family.
- Family needs to be involved to have a voice and making sure their kids can be heard.
- In order to learn more, you have to respect one another.
- If you care to work with people, you have to try and understand them.
- Global issue not a city issue, if you want it to change, Worcester has to sit together and talk about it.
- Teachers are surrounded with different cultures, why are they not exposed to an extent to make a difference.
- Kids know when teachers are invested in them or not.
- Kids don't have advocates at home to speak for them.
- You cannot separate race and culture.
- Just because it's not said, doesn't mean it's not there.
- Doesn't matter how much funding you have, portray your beliefs.
- Gateway cities—More funding
- How does racism affect young people's educational opportunities and experience
 - All aspects of racism can restrict opportunities
 - Example: In a group home of adolescent males a kid could gain privileges. One Hispanic male earned the right to go to Friendly's but said he couldn't go because it was all whites. He was proud he earned the privilege but was sad he couldn't accept. They got him an ice cream to go but it wasn't the same.
 - This shows how youth feel like they can't accept privilege and opportunities due to feelings of discomfort due to race.
 - Self Esteem and ability to communicate
 - They have the ability but when compared they feel inferior
 - Talking to youth one on one and being encouraging is better than talking to groups of 2 or 3 at a time
 - When a kid gets in trouble you should try to speak from a place of understanding and it helps if you can make a one on one connection to pick up their self esteem and encourage them to progress

be available to reinforce respect in and outside of the classroom.

- You can get lost without teachers to redirect you
 - If you do something wrong you should approach your teacher and say sorry to your teacher.
- Main points to present to larger group
 - There is a lack of challenging opportunities for children of color
 - Self esteem is impacted and sometimes prevents students from accepting opportunities
 - Educational material doesn't reflect varying cultural experiences of the students in the classroom
- how does racism affect young people's educational opportunities and experiences?
 - Denial that racism exists
 - **Cultural competence in the curriculum itself—excessive amount of standardized test, do not reflect the diverse experiences that youth come in with
 - Hidden biases
 - Instructors/teachers coming into minority communities thinking they know best
 - Ignorance on behalf of some teachers
 - Children experienced direct racism in public school system; administrators were surprised when those issues were raised... but the problems were not new
 - Participant's daughter shared: perceptions of the student (acting out/not being comfortable participating vs. being shy)
 - Expectations on school staff and on school age parents—what are the expectations beyond the high school level? (Focus on higher education needs to be institutionalized). Lower expectations may be a result of racism. In the 1980s this felt very much like a product of racism.
 - Cultural competence—should it be more focused on younger children?
 - Worcester public school system struggles to engage parents from diverse backgrounds. Levels of parent engagement. We need to do more to make parents feel welcome where they are.
 - Dual language learners—teacher staff are not ready for this. Implications. Especially concerned. Learning two languages can be fruitful and good opportunity; teachers may only see it as a negative (won't know English well enough). **considered a barrier, not an asset.

- Some feeling that these learners are impacting other learners.
 - Feeling pressure to “assimilate” into a dominant, hegemonic cultural paradigm.
 - City of Worcester right now is the largest resettlement city in New England. Diverse population with many different cultures. Teachers and schools need to understand what was the level of involvement for that family from their home community. We cannot assume that everyone will come in and join the PTO. Embrace the diversity and to do that there were need to be some cultural learning. We have a challenge with parental involvement.
 - Part of the solution is that there needs to be a workforce that represents the diversity of the communities served. Think: languages served for example.
- Impact of tracking—“vehicle by which racism is being perpetuated;” white participant shared experience of his children. They wanted music magnet so they were moved out of district. Became very clear that the children were being tracked in 6th grade into average v. college, general v. honors. And more of the children tracked for honors programs were predominantly white.
- De facto segregation. Cannot tell by 6th grade a child’s full potential.
- “Children are victimized by low expectations.”
- Teaching one way to all children does not work. We have to believe that every child can learn and the teacher needs to figure out how. This is not going on in Worcester.
- Central MA Stem Council—doing tracking research on SAT scores. Priority to raise interest in Stem and tracking academic/career success. Research last Friday: Worcester v. Commonwealth of Massachusetts (SAT scores; level of interest) doing well.
 - But performance levels for students of color not nearly as high as it should be, based on level of interest.
- What effect does racism have on the educational opportunities and experiences of youth?
 - It turns people off; has a negative effect on their self-esteem and motivation to learn
 - Alienates students of color from their peers and the learning process
 - Increases anxiety and tension in the classroom and school environment
 - Promotes marginalization, bullying, and violence toward students of color
 - Lowers performance expectations for students of color
 - Influences the percentage of white students enrolled in advanced classes

- Students of color have to work harder to prove themselves than white students
- Results in harsher discipline or unreasonable punishment toward students of color
- Assumptions about race override accurate assessments of a student's aptitudes/abilities
- Creates barriers to the learning process
- Reduces allocation of resources to schools with high concentration of students of color
- Eliminates availability of social and economic support programs
- Systemically constricts employment opportunities for teachers of color
- Reduces the availability of positive role models in the classroom
- Discourages teachers from caring or advocating for students of color
- Fails to take into account the unique socio-economic challenges of students of color
- Students of color must find sources of support outside the school system to succeed
- Allows white people to remain unconscious of their privilege
- Very individual question-some people want more police; some don't.
- Safety begins with public safety who "look like me"-that's a mindset too to know what it means to be a part of this community and what it's going through. Lots of levels to this conversation.-racial man of communities get locked up.
- mental health-men of certain age perceived as threat, see young people as threat b/c of dress, size.
- Worcester seems pretty safe for city this size. Need to work forward feeling safe as a community. Stop investing in crime. Being from places like GBV already implies somethings-Main South too.
- Social Media allows people to see more like TV during civil rights movement also women of certain age may feel targeted by police for different reasons-to get look of women ying +(picture of stick figure) being pulled over by police can be scary b/c of power dynamic-being pulled over and the outcome depends on mood of police.
- Poor white kids face some feel- pulled over by police and also subject to them. Bad apples even in best police departments and they need to be addressed. Group will protect individuals even if not good for group. Young men in poor neighborhoods have to be allowed to grow up in communities to help father raise and teach new youth in communities to help community feel safe. Police do better job of connecting w/ community and community organizations. Worc PD doing better than

what we see elsewhere on US on TV. Misperception that it's just not police misdirecting people of color. There's a complex web of issues-lack of economic opportunity of community not have a lot to gain and nothing to lose versus the community police who have control to lose.

- There seems no investment in community to gain job skills or economic opportunity.
- Housing segregation still exists and federal government redline certain communities from mortgage insurance. Everyone's car in neighborhood go broken into-who are they doing that?
- Don't see anyone protecting us. Also can handle yourself in ways to change how people treat you, hopefully younger officers don't grow up w/conscious bias of older officers. Some numbers don't tell the story- "gangs" overblow b/c not many of individuals actually affiliate w/ gangs "Kilby St" gang is basically free agency sometimes community tensions are complex. Family tensions from blended families even these conversations about racial dialogues don't happen everywhere this is positive paradigm shift should start at birth so it's not "us us" "them" but "we" and "us" in a community of Mother Earth. It shouldn't be people of color is white people.
- "Color blind" is not seen by everyone as negative. Some thought it was positive because comes from MLK.
- "we" has to include "me" and acknowledge each of our individual oppressions. We all come from different backgrounds and hardships. We need to work so everyone can overcome what they experienced. When you build house based on oppression you need to deconstruct it before you can rebuild it. We have to address our differences to move forward. Black people can drive nice cars; buying auto is easy way to start building credit and most is over looked. Police can stop making assumptions; sometimes public safety look at people in communities like they are no one even if they have worked their way up to important job. Police disrespect people of minority and gender communities even if worked important job.
- Worcester has racial but more economic challenges. Main South was home to more level 3 sex offenders than anywhere else in NE but not even a public safety topic people love police when they come to help them but not when they come to get them-group psychology- how can people boo "black lives matter" which is just a call to emphasize that all lives matter. We have to get to respect differences.
- How about police in schools?
- Bizarre to have police in school. Police don't always signal safety somethings will now be criminalized too soon. Not 100% bad if coming

w/ education and getting to know kids not as security force b/c too many stereotypes on both sides, every kind of race teens and gangs will have tension neither wants to be in school and the day can go bad.

- Gang cops from community helped establish multi-year relationships across kids families and cops. We have to teach kids behavior just like we teach men getting along, consequences for fighting not one rehabilitate not punish not keep keeps me safe-don't go right to police. Go to family home & neighborhood. Universal pre-K would go long way-
- Food and early behavior education have every child chance for education from earliest age. Quality of life and knowing your neighbors goes long way for est quality of life even if not w/police sometimes bad experiences by being followed in shops. Instills racial consciousness-feel intimidated and angry.
- Face of police brutality and black lives matter excludes women, white supremacy doesn't care.
- Young people of color ready now to demand and make change. Time is now to harness it constructively.
- What can we do in schools to welcome law enforcement?-We vilify police as mainstream media has done to community but community and police are made up of individuals and it's up to us individually to make a difference.
- Most of police working hard as part of communities.
- Police aren't experts in youth. What about school dept and youth agencies-use their expertise. Many community organizations can do any of this better than police or some other govt. organizations.
- Police should go thru training to understand youth, community dynamics and engagement.
- How does racism affect young people's educational opportunities and experiences?
 - Disproportionate students of color and discipline-"push out" kids. Kids of color are disciplined more harshly.
 - kids of color more likely to be retained.
 - physically and emotionally not represented in the curriculum.
 - not represented in staff, lack of teachers of color.
 - Teacher population-how much does seniority have to do with it? Why? Slots, seniority?
 - is system to blame? System part of it but nepotism.
 - Mayor's wife? Networking that other applicants do not have that opportunity.
 - Has Sup. Boone helped? Has it helped? Some, but not sure.

- Things teachers say TODAY, see handout from kids! For example, “the people in Ferguson are acting like savages. It’s such a shame”. “Your people should be indebted to Abraham Lincoln. He freed the slaves!”. “I can’t teach you guys black history. There’s just no time to fit it in the curriculum.”
- These are good kids.
- Sup. Boone was a milestone committee looked at her credentials. We have a role model.
- Should be more sensitivity, training. Same as twenty years ago.
- Friend did 14 week course=culturally competent program- self available.
- Should have culturally competent program as part as credential process. State level?
- Can’t wait for State-won’t happen. Make it through local schools.
- Husband is history teacher-new standards are stricter and no longer any discretion. Too prescribed. No room for Worcester history. No leeway!
- Let’s think creatively.
- Howard Zinn’s book at same time as regular curriculum.
- Plenty of good teachers but it are really difficult. Create our own curriculum. Find ways to do it.
- Intersection b/t race, poverty, and violence. Race is one of enduring violence and poverty.
- violence can impede your ability to learn.
- long term thinking through health care lenses. Preparing future teachers in the curriculum.
- Have to get parents involved!!! Can’t just come from teacher.
- How can we affect the parents? Harlem Children’s Zone example.
- Teacher work in communities they work in?
- Raise parents expectations for kids!
- How Does Racism affect young people’s educational opportunities and experiences
 - Systemic Racism
 - Neighborhood: where one lives factors into quality of his/her education, largely due to the economic resources of the particular school district.
 - Access to books at a young age: Many kids don’t have access to books at a young age, putting them at a disadvantage before they hit the school system.
 - Nourishment: students need breakfast. Need a start to their day at school that serves as a foundation for better learning. Many kids do not get this, putting them behind when starting the day, and

interfering with their ability to learn. The lack of nourishment can cause inability to concentrate, which may lead to them engaging in distracting behavior, causing their teachers to view them in an undeserved negative light.

- The 3 factors above are several of many ways in which systemic racism continues in our community.
- Economics plays role in Systemic Racism for kids with a diverse racial background and also negatively affects white kids who come from families with limited economic resources.
 - Socioeconomic background, in many cases perpetuates racism.
 - Many students are affected by socioeconomic disadvantage which places them, regardless of their racial background, at a disadvantage.
 - Kids may be struggling at home with issues outside of their control.
 - Living without electricity/lights
 - Living without proper nourishment
 - Dealing with family members/caregivers who may have issues with alcohol or other addictions
 - Lack of stability and consistency
 - Concern about the idea of economics and superiority. Participants observed that the class just above the other tries to stay on top of and/or push down those below them (\$150,000.00 > \$100,000.00 > \$60,000.00 > \$25,000.00 > etc...) This turns into a society where some individuals just don't want to help others and don't want to give up any advantage that they perceive that they hold.
- Individual Racism
 - Teachers may unknowingly perpetuate racial biases.
 - Teachers may knowingly perpetuate racial bias.
 - Teachers may label children from a diverse racial background or children from families with limited means as trouble makers, if the child acts up or causes problems, where white children or children from a higher economic bracket may be deemed to have learning disorders or other professionally diagnosed conditions, which enable them to avoid being labeled by teachers early on.
 - Concern that teachers label students at an early age as underachievers or troublemakers and do not help their students reach their true potential.

- Concern that teachers label kids with disabilities or other learning disorders and therefore, LOWER EXPECTATIONS.
 - Lower Expectations of certain students exacerbates the problem.
 - Concern that Teachers treat students differently when punished. When a more affluent/white student gets in trouble for the first time, parent is typically in school to advocate for the child, whereas a parent who does not have the time, resources and/or knowledge may not communicate with school administrators. What happens, at first, is that slightly different punishments are handed down, but as time goes on, and similar infractions occur, the differences in punishment and judgment becomes greater for the student from a diverse racial background, causing many students to be prejudged and punished, resulting in disparate treatment. Ultimately, there is a very CLEAR LINE when certain kids are caught doing the same thing.
 - COVERT v. OVERT Racism
 - School to Prison Pipeline
 - Kids from diverse racial backgrounds and lower socioeconomic backgrounds leave school underprepared due to the Systemic and Individual Racism.
 - These kids were not given the same opportunities, same expectations.
 - A lot of these kids may commit minor criminal infractions as they age, but are typically prejudged and sentenced harshly when caught. Not given a chance.
- HOW DOES RACISM AFFECT YOUNG PEOPLE’S EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES and EXPERIENCES
 - Facilitator defined racism for purposes of our discussion. Table 16 group was comprised of 10 people. 5 males/5 females ---- 2 under age 25.
 - drop out rates/lack of support/low test scores/obstacles & barriers
 - community sets the foundation - if not in place creates a domino effect
 - when teachers don’t realize they carry unconscious bias
 - ”I was a mediator at Burncoat and we experienced this - I instituted teacher/student mediations where both sides were equal without a power imbalance”
 - working with kids for a summer program - they know if they are being judged for who they are - major turnoff for kids
 - not presented with opportunities other kids are
 - may not think they have options after school
 - there are not a lot of minority teachers - lack of role models for kids

- more generally - as city manager said at 1st session - we have a lot of new immigrants in city - more resources have to be brought to bear - it's a social issue - issue of language too - more services have to be provided. Kids are starting off with some handicaps and that might not be clear to teachers
- struggling with question itself - it's not about racism - its if I walk into a room and only see the white kids - it's the prejudice there - but for me its seeing that some kids can't get ahead
- unequal opportunity
- race changes dynamics - student educational experience is watered down because race becomes a barrier for them - the educational experience even beyond race isn't always equal
- prejudice is there and occurs every day and affects the quality of education
- people need to be responsible for their own biases
- it's not always unconscious bias - some are aware and focus on the white kids only and let someone else pick up the slack for the other kids
- "there are a lot of white people here - I was a whiter person of color and experienced bias from it"
- some kids need to have the slack picked up elsewhere
- one reason is money - the percent of poverty by age in Worcester - it's creating disadvantages for others
- "I have some learning disabilities so in my younger years I was taken out of class and when in class I wasn't given the school packets - deliberately passed by because I was different"
- some kids are put in special end that don't need it
- ratio of students to teachers needs reform
- teachers need resources to do what they need to do
- teachers have lack of funding/resources
- How Does Racism affect young people's educational opportunities and experiences
 - Geography and location can dictate schools- Poor Schools- Lack of motivation?
 - Being made fun of your race or anything else can affect grades, homework, performance
 - Racism brings people down
 - School funding based on property tax
 - Poor communities cause poor school district- fair?
 - Isolation
 - Teachers and students treat students different if they are not like others

- Kids of Color
 - Treat each other differently between different minority or majority groups.
 - Even within different African groups
- Power Struggle
 - Who has power, which does not?
 - Not versed in Diversity
 - Hurts the development of a child
 - It can knock you down
 - Feel unwanted

2. A list of ways the education system intervenes or can intervene against racism as it educates young people.

- What can educators do to address different forms of racism within the educational system? What can students do?
 - What happens to young people if they say they're not being treated fairly?
 - There's no space to voice it. You see a problem, they don't help you. You internalize it – it wears you down.
 - My son challenged a teacher and now he's branded a trouble-maker. I go to the school. As a mother, you fight everything.
 - I was told the 3rd quote. I was kicked out of class. I was later switched classes with no consequence to the teacher. I want cultural competency trainings for teachers.
 - I had a similar dialogue between LGBTQ folks with Safe Homes. We need cultural competency for educators. I hear kids feel oppressed. Are there student advocacy groups?
 - Youth feel like they don't have much power. They do. Stage walkouts. How do we put power in their hands? You're supposed to feel safe and be able to learn.
 - Build classrooms around effective communication and critical thinking, not around tests.
 - I'm troubled by adversarialism. If you're shut down in kindergarten, you lose self-esteem. "Malpractice of education." We need to support youth. It's not the responsibility of children to advocate for themselves. The problem is at the top.
 - When I look at needs, our community has historically failed our community. We haven't really integrated. Part of building supports is identifying gaps. Abuse, hunger, sleep deprivation impact the ability to learn.

- In Framingham, we are building a pipeline for kids to get entry level jobs and connections to colleges. Kids from lower socioeconomic stances face more barriers than other kids. We need to eliminate barriers to increase their chances of success.
- Society is intentionally unequal. We assign value depending on your group, not our potential. Poverty and inequality are favors. The haves can't see how it benefits them to live in a more equal society. We don't support parents with addiction.
- It's too late to change the nation. We need to build here. People need to know you have their back. These conversations need to continue – every month – forever.
- Our participants came to a consensus and shared the following points at the report-back session:
 - Educators need to provide space for kids to share their opinions, advocate for themselves, and talk about the problems that they are facing.
 - Ongoing conversations and trainings regarding race, class, gender, orientation, history, and cultural competency need to happen at all levels, with accountability built in.
- What can community organizations and faith based institutions do to help address these issues?
 - Our participants reported:
 - Worcester has a lot of community organizations trying sincerely and competently, as are faith-based organizations. We should start with small local groups working harder.
 - We need more connections built. Everyone thinks it happens to them, so it's hard to see the bigger picture. LGBTQ groups should talk to students of color. This happens to all of us in different ways.
 - We need an educational series in white churches and synagogues. They have good intentions, but their true understanding is lacking.
 - Worcester does a good job working together, but the public schools are not open to accepting help from nonprofits. It's disingenuous to include GED students in graduation statistics. The schools didn't have anything to do with those students.
 - Churches and organizations should work together. They don't address racism. They're afraid to talk about it and are afraid of losing donors. We need to address the problems that minorities go through.

- Youth aren't educated on what they want to know, so they don't have language to talk about what they're experiencing. We need schools to let agencies reach out to youth.
 - Faith-based is a red flag for me. They should provide space, but what about a brilliant atheist? A higher power won't fix things right now. Keep the higher power out of it.
 - Community organizations need to challenge systems, not settle with what's going on now. We need to get at the core institutional racism.
 - Bring faith into the discussion. A lot of faith-based institutions don't approach from a godly perspective; they don't necessarily use their faith as a shield. [This speaker then gave an example of a pastor in North Carolina, who does work to show that you can use love and inclusion to chastise systems that don't do that for their kids].
 - This group does not seem open to the public. The teachers who said these things aren't here. There weren't any police here last week. There was a sign out front saying "no racist Tea Party allowed." Well, they might not come tonight. We need to talk to the people who don't agree with us.
- Our participants came to a consensus and shared the following points at the report-back session:
 - Faith-based institutions and community organizations should provide safe spaces (while recognizing people of varying belief systems and backgrounds).
 - We need to work together; leaders in the community must be held accountable and create avenues of communication
- What can educators do to address different forms of racism within the educational system?
 - One group member discussed how teachers can educate themselves in diversity
 - This could include sensitivity/cultural training
 - One group member discussed how celebrating black history a few times a year is not enough.
 - One group member gave an example of a way schools could increase awareness of black history: Schools should celebrate more heroes of black history and that the studies should be more in depth
 - One group member discussed how there is a lot of stuff being left out of history. Not just US history but a lot of international history as well.

- For example: the Ottoman Empire, the Great Zimbabwe Empire, or the Australian Aboriginal people.
- One group member discussed how cultural dexterity, being able to understand another person's culture without losing your own, is important, especially in stressful situations.
- One group member gave a personal example of ways schools could celebrate diversity: this member has a daughter with special needs who is in a diverse class with 25 students and about 15 different cultures. This member talked to each student about different traditions and celebrations in their culture and created a book for the students highlighting these activities. This member also reads to the students
 - This member stated that parents should be allowed to be more involved and that kids should interact outside of school more
- Members of the group discussed what is being taught and the equity of what is being taught
 - One group member discussed how teachers are not given enough time to teach and that educating young people about types of racism at younger ages would be good, but is often glazed over because it doesn't fit in well.
 - One group member discussed how there are different classes offered at different schools in Worcester. For example: some schools have in-school college prep. courses and others don't
- What can students do?
 - One group member discussed how students can be more open-minded
 - This member discussed how this must go hand-in-hand with other school changes
 - One group member discussed how kids already don't have enough self-esteem and it needs to start with how they feel about themselves
 - One group member discussed how we need to start building kids' self-esteem at a younger age
 - One group member discussed how we should be preparing students to be open-minded at a younger age
 - One group member discussed how combatting racism in schools shouldn't be the responsibility of the students
 - One group member discussed how young people are capable of doing amazing things, but they need support
 - For example: students can organize, inform, share their story, question

- One group member discussed how youth of color cannot get away with the things white friends could get away with.
 - For example: sass
- One group member shared personal observations about balancing cultures in families: this member noticed different punishment between cultures
- One group member discussed how students can use the internet to learn and that teachers can do this too and encourage this
- One group member discussed how teachers and students could work together for students to share culture, traditions, life experiences. This member discussed how it would be harder to be racist when someone knows the experiences of another.
- One group member gave a personal example: this member loves to read and has learned a lot from books. This member has loved reading about Martin Luther King Jr. and has learned a lot about his life that this member did not know before.
- One group member discussed how it is hard to be proud of your own skin when you aren't getting honored and don't feel worth it. When you don't see valedictorians of your color because you are starting at a disadvantage.
- One group member discussed how students don't have time to educate themselves
- One group member discussed how one thing students can do is promote kindness in school
- One group member discussed how every school aged kid should have internet access
 - Low-income people and people of color should have the basics including technology
 - This member discussed how cable companies should be providing free internet for students
- One member discussed how parents do not have time to navigate the internet with students
- One group member discussed how we should have faster internet
- At the end of the discussion on Question 2(a-b) the group decided that the two answers to report back were:
 - Teachers should provide resources for students and families such as technology and books and information on how to obtain these resources
 - Teachers should be expected to attend workshops on cultural sensitivity and attend community events
 - Schools should celebrate the cultural diversity of the students.
- What can community organizations and faith based institutions do to help address these issues?

- One group member discussed how people of color should get more scholarships
 - This member discussed how the percent of people of color in higher education is way low compared to white people
 - One group member asked where these scholarships should come from
- One group member discussed how students should have access to college prep. outside of school
- One group member discussed how students looking at colleges often look at whether there are students at the college who look like them instead of looking at the classes offered and opportunities offered by the college
 - This member discussed how students should be taught how get into better schools
- One group member asked who should provide these resources (college prep, teaching students to apply to schools)
 - Members discussed the YWCA and that colleges should be a stronger resource in college prep.
- One group member discussed how taxes should pay for college. When college is so important for a career and there are lots of fields that need workers. For example: the STEM fields.
- One group member discussed how local government should be more involved in paying for college prep.
- One group member discussed how in some countries getting certain test scores gets students free colleges.
 - One group member asked if this would actually take us back to teaching for a test
- One group member discussed how there should be partnerships between community organizations because it is hard for small organizations to tackle such big projects
- One group member shared a personal experience: this member works with a music organization that partners with the business community to adopt a school
 - This member discussed how this approach could be used in other areas as well
- One group member discussed how community organization and non-profits are strapped, but that there is money in the private sector. The private sector should be returning money back to the community
 - One group member discussed how we should force large businesses to give back to the city

- For example: when the city negotiates vendors for governmental services it could require that the vendor give back to the city.
 - One group member discussed how public officials should have the priority of citizens not businesses
 - One group member discussed how it is in everyone's best interest to invest in students. It is in the best interest of businesses to invest in the future workforce
 - One group member discussed how we need more safe havens for people of color who are gay
 - One group member discussed how historically the Worcester Technical Institute was started by a group of businessmen who wanted to build a better future workforce.
 - One group member discussed how businesses should provide internships, in addition to the other involvement of businesses
 - One group member discussed how tests, like the SAT and ACT, should be restructured
- At the end of the discussion on Question 3 the group decided that the two answers to report back were:
 - Everyone—colleges, the private sector, families, government (including taxes) etc. needs to pitch in with an understanding that some groups should contribute more. And that community organizations are tapped out.
 - Getting vendors who work with the city to reinvest in the city.
- What can educators do to address different forms of racism within the educational system?
 - Educators need to put students at the center over their own personal needs. They need to educate themselves on the intersections of race and class.
 - Solution- professional development system and personal responsibility. Need to open their eyes to the problems at home not seen in schools by teachers
 - Educators should reach out to the students 1 to 1 make connections and try to relate to them. Reach out and see a better growth.
 - Not just the role of a counselor but should be of the educators (to reach students)
 - Not just a “do your homework” mentality but see underlying problems of the students.
 - Model Philadelphia's approach to eliminating suspensions for K-3 and no out of school suspensions.
 - Engage guidance counselors directly into class activities.
 - Not just educators but all in school need diversity training- from the lunch lady to the front desk.

- Peer support groups. Peer review group that handles discipline. Restorative Justice.
- Focus on Keeping kids in School. Subset on students need support services
- Training in bullying is now law
- Interventions for support services need to continue.
- More programs/clubs for students of color
- All teachers in WPS have opportunity to take the course “Equality” free of cost.
- In-school suspension. Default from out of school to in-school suspension still is not a win (takes kids out of classrooms). More after school programs where students take initiative to run their own activities. Affirmative effort to see more teachers of color on staff at the school.
- Student: If there is not a teacher of color they do not understand what I am going through
- Creating more groups and programs for students. Find a teacher to stay after. Felt stronger and could recruit activities.
- Disconnect between culture and education. Have students organize professional development programs.
- Learned about racism through supplemental programs and social media. Don’t realize how important it is until it is too late. Teachers do not even know how to teach it.
- “Being of color I don’t need training”
- “You have field experience” (one person of color to another)
- Cycle of race, creed and color
- Celebrate diversity. Need time to celebrate it all and learn from each other. Give time to have it take place.
- Teachers need to understand about white privilege because they have it.
- Number of teachers of color is a huge issue. If not addressed structurally, training can only go so far.
- Training is not just an intellectual conversation. Raised outside of the US and taught at first not to see color. Now you have to see color to understand experiences. Neighbor called cops because her Hispanic child was waiting at the bus stop. Her kids continue to teach her about race relations.
- “You have to keep teaching us because we were not raised that way”
- Sometimes these conversations hurt.
- How to change demographics of faculty?

- Why would you want to grow up to be a teacher in this environment?
Need to make profession more attractive to students and say you can have an impact on the issues you care about.
- Public schools are looking for that type of person
- Small fraction of teacher turnover
- We do not have enough teachers. Two things that undercut issues on race are issues related to economics and education. Need to find resources and courage to make it happen. We are robbing from Peter to pay Paul. That is what is happening in our community.
- More money has been spent on jail construction than universities.
- Principals and curriculum decide everything. Teachers work with what they have.
- Schools should stop dividing students by level. This prepares students better for college. Students of color do not have access to information because not given same education
- Years ago North had a student of color who was #3 in Math in the whole city and no special attention was given to harness skills. What if he was white?
- Give students more control of setting curriculum.
- Educate workers about systemic racism
- Cooperative efforts between teacher & students
- Curriculum more balanced multi-culturally
- Encourage students to talk w/ parents about racist interactions w/teachers
- Utilize background of students to orient the teaching/lessons
- What can community organizations and faith based institutions do to help address these issues?
 - Let's not be afraid of each other. Get to know each other as a neighbor. Places of worship are not leaned on hard enough.
 - Police brutality- we are not attacking them they are attacking us
 - We have not put community organizing behind nonprofits. Mobilize to effect change
 - Non-Profit- limited resources for all of those who are interested. Money and funding is not there. Only able to hire limited number of youth for jobs
 - Job program had racism training as part of it's training. Raising awareness and consciousness to address issues.
 - Learn more about racism from job
 - Lost the moral imperative of the 1960's, develop it into specific actions and activism. There is a moral dimension to this. This is missing from the dialogue.

- A lot of white people do not realize racism exists.
- Continue to evaluate coworkers and keep up education.
- More Churches of color should be in Worcester interfaith
- Nonprofits and groups not working together. We are separating ourselves. More agency heads should be here because they are pillars of the community.
- Collective leadership moved group as well. Get into our silos because of money. Keep the vision and we will get there. Alone we are not going to get there.
- Funders need to look at who is doing what and not feeding to the same players. This is a disservice to youth, police, and the court system.
- Where's all the revolutionaries? Well they all got jobs
- 3 year strategic plan. Great start with conversation, now have to have an action group.
- Youth should be at the table to make decisions about their future.
- FBO's empower different stories
- More involvement by FBO in lives of children to strengthen sense of who they are
- What can educators do to address racism ? What can students do?
 - Teachers of color on staff?
 - Training educators on how to have the conversation
 - Unaware of their own bias
 - Transformative process
 - Teach more of accomplishments of people of color
 - Training and follow up
 - Conversations
 - Accountability
 - Awareness of the problem
 - Teach empathy, make people aware of how people live
 - University Park /Clark University
 - Required to talk about own personal bias
 - Residency requirement for teachers?
 - Racism isn't just about one person, it's a system
 - Residency requirement for Worcester city employees including teachers, fire, police – need their expertise, care and money to stay in community. Could implement in incremental way.
 - Need ability to provide mental health counseling in schools
 - Curricular changes so diverse contributions included in all lesson plans, not just in February.

- Transformative education needed – not just another training – long term, done right, with booster sessions and ongoing support
- What can educators do to address different forms of racism within the educational system? What can students do?
 - Educators can figure out how not to tolerate the racist in the classroom or school because that person is not value-adding to the educational system.
 - We need to address racism in a way that does not alienate people. We need classrooms where people can learn from each other.
 - Educators have to recognize racism in order to address it.
 - Some educators don't know they're being racist sometime. Teachers might have a bias for kids that look like their own children, and might treat children differently in terms of punishment for minor things.
 - Educators might steer kids to less challenging programs based on their own expectations. For example, a teacher might not suggest that a particular student apply to Worcester Polytechnic Institute, but instead that the student should apply to Quinsigamond Community College.
 - Teachers have power over race. We can celebrate peoples' differences. A course in different cultures should be part of the curriculum.
 - Teachers have said things like they don't have time for teaching "black history" when teaching "black" history should not be viewed as a separate subject – history includes the experiences of black people.
 - One retired educator stated that he had been involved with students from pre-school to high school. Kids get along fine – but there is a lot of agitation that goes on. Kids work it out.
 - Kids need more support and teachers need more recognition. He seeks teachers who are overwhelmed. If you have 28 kids in a first grade class, that is too many. There should be fewer demands on teachers and more diversity among teachers.
 - Schools should be neighborhood schools. There should be diversity training, and teachers would get to know parents.
- What can community organizations and faith based institutions do to help address these issues?
 - We should learn how to understand each other by living and being around people of other cultures. Worcester became more diverse over the last 60 years.
 - Where we have common issues, we have common understanding. One participant describes growing up in a neighborhood that was not particularly diverse, but "all of us were poor" and there were bonds of

mutual understanding. The more we are around each other, the more we understand each other.

- One participant talked about his observations of the Nativity School. Kids are made to feel safe. We should make kids feel safe.
- Another participant talked about good partnerships – including the Worcester Partnership between Bancroft School and Elm Park Community School. These were examples of good partnerships that start with young kids in a summer program. Good partnerships answer the question of familiarity. Kids collaborate with kids, and teachers collaborate with other teachers.
- We should get everyone working together.
- One participant submitted a paper* entitled “Stop Racist School to Jail Pipeline” which lists the following demands:
 - District Attorney, cops, and Court system out of the schools and more counselors in schools.
 - non criminalized resolutions for children/school issues
 - End “zero tolerance” with individualized resolutions
 - Reduction in the number of suspensions for minor issues like tardiness
 - No metal detectors in schools.
- What can community organizations and faith based institutions do to help address these issues?
 - Early education is important but it is “very poor”
 - Make Head Start or other early education easier to participate in
 - Head Start in Worcester may only have 600 slots
 - Get the kids used to sitting in a seat
 - Kindergarten may be the first time kids, especially from low incomes, are having to sit in a classroom or are seeing a blackboard
 - If issues come up with kids wanting to run around, maybe it is because the kids aren’t used to that environment
 - Get kids adjusted to the concept of being in a classroom with a teacher instead of just running around at home
 - “If you want to be a mechanic, you can’t learn that in the kitchen”
 - Need more money spent on early education
 - Also bring multiple organizations together at the same location to make it easier to get services

- For example, people who qualify for Head Start likely also qualify for WIC so make WIC available at Head Start
 - Also offer playgroups or other things there so that a family can come to one place to get many needs met
- Community support
 - One school in Dallas was the worst performing but it went to the third school in Dallas after kids would stand up in church on Sunday if they were progressing in their studies, and the congregation would applaud them for their work
- Interconnect schools and community organizations
- Have community organizations provide some education or support (for example, as a teacher's aide)
- There is a missed connection here – programs aren't advertised in schools
 - If we aren't telling the kids what is available, they won't know
 - Community organizations only reach out to students that they think will attend their programs but they are missing out on other students
- Sometimes schools are not welcoming even though the organizations are offering services to the students
 - Organizations need to build relationships with schools
- Have organizations work with the school, such as by having peer leaders come in to talk to teens as teens
 - Schools are limited in what they can say as a school
 - If faith based organizations come in, they may also be limited in what they can say, for example, in sex ed
 - But if we are working towards the goals of keeping kids healthy and safe, peer leaders may be a good fit to talk to teens
- Encourage grant givers to offer more support for “problem” kids
 - The attendance numbers may not be as high, but the need is there
 - Some organizations stop trying to help these “problem” kids and give up on them because they take a lot of attention and those organizations rely on the grant money – and the attendance numbers or other requirements – to fund their work
- Have all of the community organizations coordinate
 - You could have information overload with all of the programs available if information on all programs were given to people
 - Some of the organizations are competing for the same people to fill their programs for grant money

- But they also often feel lower expectations, so they weren't really expected to pass, but the kids still feel really bad that they failed
- The problem with bringing everyone together is that everyone thinks they are the expert
 - For example:
 - Teachers are the experts in education
 - Community organizations are the experts in the needs of the community
 - Religious organizations are the experts in religion, etc.
 - Someone needs to relinquish that control
 - Maybe you let the educators be the expert in education but let the organizations offer some space or other support
 - Or have the organizations come in to teach financial skills or sex ed or something else so there is more than just physical education and shop class offered
- Mentoring in schools
 - Identify kids who are in need of mentors – maybe even include this on their permanent record
 - Have mentors available in school, during school hours
 - Doing this during school hours is important for getting the kids to have a consistent opportunity
 - One participant said she served as a mentor while in college, but the mentoring time was often cut short because parents had to come pick up the student mid-meeting, which made the relationship harder to develop
 - Instead of having kids sit through a music class, let those who are in need of mentoring have time to meet with the mentors who are available
 - Look to creative sources for mentors
 - Perhaps they could be business people who work for a company that supports letting them go to mentor students for an hour a week
 - You could use volunteers from local colleges
 - Develop relationships between mentors and parents
 - Maybe have a kick-off dinner where mentors and parents can all meet

- Get the parents to see what the benefit is of the mentoring and get them to support it so that they respect that mentoring relationship
 - Teachers can reach out to employers to help support the kids
 - One teacher said that he developed a relationship with a supervisor at a McDonald's where some students worked
 - He would call the supervisor with positive feedback for the student
 - He would sometimes offer extra credit for students who got something signed by their supervisor acknowledging that the student shared the good feedback
 - The supervisor then would get invested in the student
 - Help the kids drive the mentoring that they need
 - Work on continuity of mentoring
 - If you have college mentors but no regular program to replace them, students may be less likely to engage because they feel like the college mentors will leave them
 - Make sure there is continuity by having a continuing program at a college so that kids know that there will always be someone there
 - Also consider what to do over the summer when there won't be support from college volunteers
- Make after school care available
 - This used to be available in some schools
 - After school care would avoid having kids in the streets when parents can't afford care and can't be home themselves
 - Hire high school students to lead the after school programs and serve as leaders and mentors
 - After school care can also reduce transportation costs
- Have summer programming
- Stress management for teachers
 - Offer mental health services for teachers
 - Teachers often worry about job security, especially when they are blamed for kids not passing tests
 - Teachers also support students with their struggles, and teachers then need support after serving as a support system for so many students
 - The teacher evaluation system takes away from teaching

- Offer some mental health or stress management to teachers at their regular staff meetings
 - Have cultural competency training for teachers
 - Summary of Discussion from Group 7/Talking Points to Report Back
 - How does racism affect young people's educational opportunities and experiences?
 - Restricting opportunities
 - Low expectations for certain groups
 - What can educators do to address different forms of racism within the educational system? What can students do?
 - Bring love back in
 - Teach to kids' interests
 - Hire more diverse teachers
 - Change discipline reporting
 - Have playgrounds
 - What can community organizations and faith based institutions do to help address these issues?
 - Mentoring
 - Support for teachers
 - Collaboration among organizations rather than competing for grant money
 - Early childhood education and after school care
 - What can educators do to address different forms of racism within the educational system? What can students do?
 - You have to attack racism like bullying. Heads on.
 - Racial comments can be silent
 - Kids don't understand racism
 - When you are part of racism you feel it, bullying is physical, racism is internal
 - Class on Culture
 - Teachers are great in their major but they don't take a class on cultures. Parents assume teachers automatically know how to identify racism.
 - We discuss but we don't address
 - Kids having a foundation in language; maintain culture
 - Be aware to racism, people will always make racial comments. You have to stop it once you hear it.
 - Kids will use racial terms to identify the "bad teacher"
 - Kids have the right to feel a certain way if they feel like a teacher doesn't like them because of their race, listen and talk to them don't tell them they're wrong.

- Comments being said at home affect kids at school.
- People who you look up to—kids get their comments from them.
- Start with Community Organizations
- What can community organizations and faith based institutions do to help address these issues?
 - Culture Communities
 - We are all human, love based, every should understand that we are all common
 - “Man exist for one another, educate each other” –We are not alone.
 - It’s about the kids, prepare them for life, education, career.
 - Sometimes we don’t understand what common is—when common is brought up, people think about the dominant.
 - Have a common attitude of saying, “No that’s not right”
- What can educators do to address different forms of racism within the educational system? What can students do?
 - There was a problem with the question itself. By saying “individuals” you do not look at the educational system as a whole. The system isn’t set up in a way to empower everyone.
 - What is it about the educational system that we have that is not empowering people equally?
 - Kids don’t see their own among them
 - If they raise their hand and don’t get called on and someone else that looks like the teacher gets called on they won’t try again
 - Teachers should be constantly involving parents not just here and there
 - What is the School system doing to represent the student body?
 - Active recruitment for diversity of teachers.
 - Think of who we are all our layers and get to know culture of students
 - More white teachers can understand cultures and will help serve students better
 - Professional development around issues of racism and classism
 - Is there a formal mechanism for teachers to convey need for diversity
 - Currently HR Director is African American and recruiting for diversity but they also want the best and brightest teachers
 - There is a new teacher evaluation system with cultural competence as part of the evaluation that has existed for 2 years. Is it working?
 - Do students groups meet with educators to voice concerns about teacher issues?
 - Student advisory counsel with every high school represented.
 - Do Principals handle issues the same? No, Principals handle things differently in every school

- Students should have a voice even younger than high School
 - New Citizens School
 - All white teachers
 - One participant has been at New Citizens School for 3 years and still struggles with her English.
 - She is being sent to North High and is being held back in 11th grade due to failed MCAS. She still struggles with speaking English
 - Teacher speaks to her in Spanish (assuming she's Latino) and student doesn't speak or understand Spanish. She has relayed this to the teacher
 - Not required to speak English outside of class. Every group of the same cultural background sits together and speaks in their own language
 - Her younger sister also in the group is at the top of her class and trying to get into Worcester Technical School but is reading English at only a first grade level and is in the 8th grade.
 - Books she is reading in school are inappropriate for school and her age (child's book) by one participant.
 - What is the school doing to help?
 - The older sister (Participant) has improved her English at her job as a cashier
 - One participant said it's like our children who take Spanish in school being able to go out and live in a Spanish speaking place is the only way to master the language.
 - New Citizen's School designed to help kids move into traditional schools
 - Layers and levels to racism
 - Discussions around programs to encourage students of color become teachers. Example: North High has Today's Students Tomorrow's Teachers program
- Major points to present to larger group
 - It's not necessarily about individuals as it is the education system as a whole
 - Active recruitment of well qualified diverse teachers
 - Professional development in cultural competency
 - Youth having a voice with a clear system for issues to be presented and addressed
- Question 3: What can community organizations and faith based institutions do to help address these issues?

- More ESL classes at faith based organizations and community organizations for both adults and kids
- ACE has after school and summer school reach out
- Teaching kids about brotherhood
- Address race on micro level
- Get organizations involved as schools can't do it alone
- Parents in tune with kids
- School department should have more partnerships with community organizations
- Volunteers to support teachers
 - Train family and faith groups to support teachers
- Convey Needs
- Major points to present to larger group
 - Using community groups and interfaith groups to build partnerships to support students
 - Community and faith organizations to work with teachers and parents. What things can be done beyond the classroom to help students be successful? Educate parents at community organizations in language (if needed), parenting, and how to advocate for child in school.
 - Dialog around how to recruit people of varying backgrounds because recruitment of diverse qualified teachers is an issue
- What can educators, parents, administrators, and students do to address different forms of racism within the educational system?
 - Parents—should know about tracking and advocate for children. Don't accept low expectations.
 - Why do these rankings exists in the first place? Is it a matter of class distribution size? Convenience? Sounds like a discriminatory tool.
 - School committee is not held accountable for this issue.
 - “Institutionalized racism... at its worst.”
 - Parent has to fight both the child and the school. Children may resist this because they do not want to be labeled as “smart” or different.
 - We need to go higher than local school administrators. Need to go to school committee, state, federal government. Need change from bottom and top—not the middle.
 - Parents are so overwhelmed with day-to-day living. If they are worried about paying rent, and getting by, hard to focus on issues like school. It is hard to put this additional thing on parents, straw that may break them. Need to be aware of what is going on in

people's lives. Parents need advocates, and students need advocates too. Sometimes it feels like nobody is listening on these points.

- Challenge for new parents: becoming comfortable asserting themselves in school system—need a space where this can happen.
- Teachers—there needs to be more cultural competence training.
 - Acknowledging racism where it exists.
 - Surprised by the level of racism communicated for educators. Example: using the term color blind is not appropriate.
 - 87% of teachers in Worcester School District are white.
 - Can be very, very hard to remove subpar teachers.
 - What if we had a “pipeline” for teacher training at local universities? For example, at Worcester State University. (Example: Teacher Residency programs.) Need more tools here.
 - We should recruit more teachers that actually live in Worcester.
- Administrators—need to recruit teachers of color. This has not been looked at as a true solution in the effort to improve outcomes for students of color.
 - Not saying that teachers of color teach better necessarily, but perhaps some of these challenges could be addressed by a more diverse teacher workforce.
 - Example—the student of color who is embarrassed to be “smart” might be less so if s/he has a teacher of color, with whom that student can more strongly identify.
 - There might be some best practices working well here in Worcester. University Park Campus School e.g.: good attempt to move away from lower expectations.
 - One parent shared that he moved to a different school district when his children were entering middle school, actually sold home and bought different one, but that is not a realistic option for many families.
 - Emphasize more professional development. Cultural competence not in the K-12 system yet. This does exist in the early childhood education system (understanding that social and emotional growth of children is enormously valuable—cultural understanding under that umbrella). Heavily integrated into the early childhood education training. This is just starting to arrive at the door of K-12 schools.
 - Participation in new, dynamic and innovative programs.

- Need to make sure that there are diverse teachers, but also need to make sure there are diverse administrators too.
 - Students—did not have input here. No students here in our group session.
 - What can other stakeholders do here?
 - What can community organizations and faith based institutions do to help address these issues?
 - Local faith based groups—help engage parents and families. Bring the kids in as well.
 - Question—do communities tend to live close to their communities of worship? Some, but not all.
 - In thinking of some of the other community organizations, as service providers, we need to go where people feel the most comfortable. Faith based settings are some of the areas where families feel most comfortable. Could be the local elementary school.
 - Meeting community members where they are.
 - Worcester Latino Ministries Alliance—engaging parents, but also understanding our role as clergy in the movement for social justice or social responsibility. Needs to go beyond the pulpit on Sundays. And there is an effort to try to spread this. Need to prioritize our social role in addition to our spiritual role.
 - On a clergy level, lay level, and community level—need to understand our responsibilities.
 - Organize parents and community members.
 - Organize these organizations around a few specific issues
 - Reading by 4th grade
 - 6th grade tracking
 - Confront low expectations/racial segregation of our tracking
- What can educators do to address different forms of racism within the educational system?
 - Provide anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multi-cultural training to existing and all new administrators, staff, teachers, and students
 - Institute and enforce an anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multi-cultural policy
 - Hire more teachers, guidance/mental health counselors, staff, administrators of color
 - Encourage teachers to become white allies to students of color
 - Advocate for more even distribution of resources to inner city schools
 - Develop a mentor program (role models) for students of color who lack support at home
 - Employ evidence-based models of discipline that work

- Assess, focus, and develop student aptitudes and assets
- Develop positive self-esteem among students of color
- Express confidence in the student's potential
- Don't allow failure to define student's of color
- Teach mindfulness to reduce behavior that leads to suspension
- Institute a variety of stress reduction techniques for teachers, students, and staff
- Provide after school programs that supplement skill development, social support, positive self-esteem, and ethnic identity development
- Educate, value, and celebrate other ethnicities in the classroom and in the community
- Teach the truth about the unique development of white supremacy in our nation's history
- What can students do to address different forms of racism within the educational system?
 - Pair successful students of color with students of color who struggle
 - Counter bullying with the support of the administration
 - Be mindful and raise awareness of white privilege
 - Become a white ally; resist; advocate
 - Listen to other people's stories
 - Move outside your comfort zone
 - Develop ethnic peer support groups with faculty advisors
 - Advocate for high school forums on racism
 - Empower one another to tell their stories
- What can community organizations and faith-based institutions do to address these issues?
 - Provide funding for afterschool programs in the inner city
 - Partner with area schools to provide mentor programs
 - Sponsor AR/AO/MC training to congregations and civic organizations
 - Provide professional support for recovery from trauma, domestic and racial violence
 - Provide affordable legal aid
 - Teach non-violent resistance, emotional management, stress reduction
 - Facilitate positive relational experiences
 - Explore sources of inner strength through a variety of spiritual practices (Tai Chi, Yoga, Meditation, Positive Affirmations, Journaling, Poetry, Prayer, Music, Aikido, etc.)
 - Provide opportunities to explore the world outside the inner city (Museums, Aquariums, Zoos, Amusement, State, and Historic Parks, Movies, Theatre, etc)

- Develop a sense of belonging
- Offer positive outlets for frustrations (exercise, team sports, outdoor activities, ropes course, etc.)
- What educators do to address different forms of racism within the educational system? What can student do?
 - Don't like that question-when we look at racism-systematic and institutional. Address systems rather look at system, policy, ad practices.
 - Point about testing/standards.
 - education that allows centered from own experiences is the most engaging. From different walks of life.
 - b/c of testing/standards focus...doesn't allow educators to help own. Teachers are hog tied.
 - implement a culturally relevant system!!
 - make more specific curriculum
 - we need to live in community. Side by side. Proximity.
 - Like police. Need to live side by side. See teachers that look like us. Parents need to be engaged with teachers in community.
 - Teachers can be scared b/c their jobs are on the line.
 - Broken system. System broken in a lot of ways, on both sides.
 - Worcester statistics. Suspension rates are troubling. Impact of color and poverty.
 - SRO in the schools. Can be traumatizing, conditioned in the school system.
 - No cameras in schools.
 - City Council decided no surveillance cameras. Good!
 - Focus on wrong things. Not creative solution.
 - Instead of police-focus on mediation- kids on kid's nonviolence conflict resolution.
 - Increase those programs- NOT police officer.
 - Community policing was successful but we do NOT have that- No resources.
 - Having police in school isn't a bad thing-builds relationship BUT depends on the individual officer in school.
 - NO metal detectors or cameras.
 - Good if role was community policing instead of policing...not primarily for discipline.
 - it's about perception of the increase in violence.
 - example North High- perception of increased violence.
 - North- increased after teachers were injured. Change public perception. Was it because a white teacher got hurt? Or b/c students?

- School should discipline. Police for community policing only in school. “Officer friendly”
- Do not want police having gun in school. Police refused.
- Media has exhausted problem. Sensationalized problem.
- Worcester under microscope. Turtle boy on Facebook. Created more problems and unrest.
- Worcester Telegram- kids were reading the comments.
- Need to discuss violence in our culture.
- Find common ground regardless of skin color. Look from that lens.
- how is security achieved?
- Now teachers don’t trust the students. One teacher said student was throwing over a desk.
- color doesn’t matter-kids need mental health services. Need to go deeper emotionally.
- Huge psychological needs. Kids in crisis.
- One doesn’t like “Afro American” does not identify as that. I am an American black woman.
- Everyone will identify differently. Won’t be uniformity.
- Implement culture competence, anti-race education for teachers.
- Important for all to understand each other
- What can community organizations and faith based institutions do to help these issues?
 - extracurricular activities
 - Peer to peer after school programs
 - combine efforts in community churches.
 - no one has reached out to mosques...need all faiths included
- Key Points:
 - Decolonize institution and curriculum-now are based on supremacy and no culturally competent programs.
 - Should come from the kids-what do they want? Have youth only dialogue night. Ask them.
 - increase faith based and community after
 - School programming.
 - Need short and long term plans.
 - nonviolent ways to deal with conflict. Teach kids and teachers.
 - cross training for educators.
 - mayor, educators, live in communities they work.
- Ways education system can intervene or can intervene against racism
 - Teachers need to Connect
 - Need to connect to their students

- Understand their students backgrounds
 - Go to Training on cultural competence
 - Once trained, they must PRACTICE the skills that they learn
- Communities Need to Connect with School and the Schools Needs to Connect with the Community
 - Schools need to welcome outside community groups in who can help educators learn
 - Schools need to welcome outside community groups in who can help students directly, at school
 - Teachers and leaders need to go to students
 - Go to the ball field
 - Go to the Basketball court
 - Go to and connect with students in the students' environment
 - INFORM students and young people about events, like Worcester Community Dialogues on Race, and ask them to participate, welcome them
- Want Teachers and Schools to be vigilant and help everybody
 - There is a concern that schools focus on the success stories and pat themselves on back and celebrate too early, the work is not close to being done.
 - The students are not satisfied with “tokenism”
 - To that end, they don't want teachers to settle once they reach a few students
 - The students want the teachers to reach out to the classmates that are struggling
 - BLACK HISTORY: When teaching black history, teachers should recognize that the history for all black people started before the civil war and reconstruction era. Also do not focus or put the black students on the spot or place unnecessary attention on them because the subject is black history.
- Have a Class or some part of the curriculum that frankly discusses the issue of race and racism. A forum that is comfortable, where students can freely talk about the issues that they may personally face or the issues that faces the local, regional and national community.
- STUDENTS can make efforts:
 - Be part of organizations
 - Meet different people from different backgrounds
 - Make sure that you are not a victim and not a perpetrator
 - Get engaged in sports

- LEARN how to NOT let the racist comments or attitudes of others bring you down
 - Connect with Teachers and get their support
- WHAT CAN EDUCATORS DO TO ADDRESS DIFFERENT FORMS OF RACISM WITHIN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM?
 - according to the numbers - the biggest student group is Hispanic - not white - so it's not the numbers it's the power
 - start with prejudices of the teachers
 - educators need training and coaching
 - I have to imagine every school has training and coaching - how is it different?
 - racism, prejudice, and bias are in a bottle - no one wants to talk about it
 - "I'm a woman of color and I've had my own biases"
 - cultural competency - how to relate to everyone's culture - bring it into schools
 - deal with it before it becomes a problem - like at North High
 - racism is the elephant in the room - we never talk about it but its there
 - we are having these sessions because the power in the city is antiquated - on a broad level with a newer population with other needs - the people in power are no longer the existing majority and that adjustment needs to be made on a political level
 - open and willing to be trained and coached
 - school cultures are racist - institutional racism - schools are racist
 - the police discussion was much clearer because of power/bullying - sense was police had to be part of community -- same for teachers
 - things start at policy level with school district. Someone has to be evaluating
- WHAT CAN STUDENTS DO TO ADDRESS DIFFERENT FORMS OF RACISM WITHIN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM?
 - examine their own bias
 - let them know that what's happening to them isn't right
 - student outreach / students having a voice in the community
 - in School now we have a mediator - to try to find out what solution works best
 - if teachers had cultural competency - it trickles down to them - model
 - drop attitudes/walls towards teachers -- get it before it happens
- WHAT CAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND FAITH BASED INSTITUTIONS DO TO HELP ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?
 - people are afraid to speak due to repercussions - empower individuals and communities

- churches have to identify problems in community and allow those discussions - not put them down to talk about them somewhere else - bring discussions out - these dialogues in a church setting
- get out the information - spread the word about what is going on
- community getting out information
- it's all tied in
- "my church isn't active - doesn't know there's a problem so doesn't address it"
- help the churches with issue awareness
- validate differences
- dialogue is important - recognize cultural awareness is key
- community organizations can provide education
- mixing different cultures together
- awareness of different cultures - mixing different cultures in group settings
- school sponsored rallies
- GROUP 16 SUMMARY TO SHARE WITH EVERYONE (top 2-3 responses as voted on by the group)
 - Question 1 - racism affects educational opportunities:
 - drop out rates
 - lack of role models
 - disciplinary action and suspension rates [added to list during vote]
 - Question 2(a) - what can educators do:
 - more training and coaching
 - deal with it before it's a problem /address the elephant in the room
 - teachers need to be part of the community
 - Question 2(b) - what can students do:
 - students having a community voice
 - student government
 - student examination of their own biases
 - Question 3 - what can community and faith organizations do:
 - get the information out
 - education by community organization
- What can a school district do to make school children comfortable?
 - Need teachers of different races
 - Role models in positions of power to make change in schools
 - Celebrate kids differences
 - History of people- accepts people of all areas- Worcester is melting pot
 - How do we teach the community to look at global tensions between groups

- What can educators do to address different forms of racism within the educational system? What can students do?
 - Acknowledgement: There is an issue
 - School Board and elected officials should take action on the problems-not the symptoms
 - Safe Space: No retaliation to students, make kids feel safe
 - Student suggested day of discussion and dialogue in every school on race, racism, and different cultures
 - Students and Parents have power.
 - How do they use that power?
 - Parents are not using their power to make change
 - Schools are political
 - Kids and parents are not as demanding as they should be to get change
- What can community organizations and faith based institutions do to help address these issues?
 - Support working class, support discussions and action on racism
 - Supporting and acknowledging communities ability to organize change
 - Faith based organizations- need to get clergy involved
 - Services ARE there. Educated and experienced people are there. We need to coordinate and work together to get to the root of the problem
 - Be Proactive, not reactive

City of Worcester Community Dialogues on Race

JUNE 22, 2015: MEDIA AND ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKS

The following is the compilation of notes received through July 13, 2015; we will post additional notes as they are received. This document has not been edited for typos or grammatical errors and content comes directly from the notes supplied by the note takers.

Desired Outcomes of this meeting:

1. A list of ways racism is perpetuated or dismantled through media.
 - How does the media (including social media) perpetuate or dismantle racism?
 - How the media perpetuates racism:
 - Way the stories are reported – there is no good news that highlights diversity and the bad news focuses on people of color
 - Geography – there are certain areas/neighborhoods where only the good things get reported and certain areas where only the bad things are reported
 - When stories come up with white perpetrators, the media portrays them as wholesome, but when you have a situation with a person of color, the media finds “hideous” photos of them
 - One participant noted that the family sometimes provides photos, as his did when his cousin was killed, even though that photo did not really represent who his cousin was
 - You can have two murder victims who live on the same street and the media will use a nice photo for the white victim and a bad or “gangster” photo for the minority murder victim
 - Before social media, people wanted to look tough so they would have that “tough” picture but now anyone can grab that photo quickly from social media
 - One participant, originally from Haiti, said that when covering news from Haiti, the media goes to the poorest places
 - It is the organization supporting the media that instructs the cameraman to go there

- You have to look at the person paying the media groups who are filming there or taking pictures there
- Media organizations will put up the “worst picture ever” to get the click throughs even if the words of the article don’t really describe what is happening in the picture or don’t really go with the picture
- In social media, information travels so fast and you cannot just post it and assume nothing will happen with it
 - For example, the picture of the perpetrator from South Carolina in the vest went from just being a picture of him being capture to causing an uproar over the vest
 - The media does things like this intentionally
- Because the media is where we get information from, we would hope that some media outlets tell the truth, but we have to question how loudly those media outlets are speaking
 - This is partly our fault because we want the drama
- We are a “sound bite generation” where sensationalism sells
- Media organizations do not have the resources for research and people want that sensationalism
 - BuzzFeed and Facebook are where a lot of people look but they are social media and not media that should be a news source
- Some of the media reports will not get into detail of what happened in a particular case, but if you do look into the details, you often find that it is almost the opposite story of what was being reported
- In the mid-90s, there were four times the number of people in every media outlet than there is now
 - People there now also don’t get paid as much
- Media has a public trust but now instead they are just trying to sell to stay alive
- Our system as a whole is flawed in how they identify issues
 - For example, with the judiciary, if you are seeking drug dealers in urban areas and not the suburbs, that is what people will report
- It is all about the money for the media
 - If we stop reading, they will stop printing it
 - “If people lead, leaders will follow”
- People behave like sheep
 - We don’t think anymore
 - The system is based on “divide and conquer”

- If the story involves a person of color in a negative manner, it is dragged out as a headline for months, but if the perpetrator is in the majority, the story can go away quickly
- More situations that are racially driven can go out/get disseminated faster, which can work toward dismantling racism
 - For example, when people take video
- When media is publishing something, there needs to be some person to make a response
 - What the media says now is accepted with few questions asked
 - We need an equilibrium in what is reported
 - If people are speaking out, it almost forces them to do something else
- How does the media (print, television, radio) perpetuate or dismantle racism?
 - One group member discussed how it is in the best interest of the news organizations to promote sensationalized news because it makes more money—if it bleeds it leads
 - With regard to racism: since Ferguson it has been a banner year for the media
 - We've seen many race related incidents that made national news: Philadelphia, Ferguson, NY city police, Cleveland, Baltimore, Charleston
 - This group member discussed how these types of news stories perpetuate racism but also dismantle it by bringing these conversations up
 - One group member discussed how the language used by news media perpetuated racism.
 - For example: Michael Brown is described as a thug but the Charleston Shooter is described as troubled
 - Another group member agreed and discussed how the term terrorist is used to describe a person of color who commits a crime but the term troubled is used when a white person commits a similar crime.
 - One group member discussed an example of the news media perpetuating racism when they were watching the news this morning and the news media was discussing gun violence and all the video clips they showed were of people of color using guns
 - One group member discussed how Fox News and some other blogs would say that talking about racism in the media is what perpetuates racism in the media—when you frame the issue as racism it is perpetuating racism.

- One group member discussed how looking at the history of media and television black people are often seen as the aggressors
 - This member discuss how it would be interesting to see how many white versus how many black people shot at police and lived to tell about it. Or it would be interesting to see how many white people have shot at police and the story does not get picked up by the media
- One group member discussed how in Ferguson the media unveiled bad government, but not it is up to the people to vote and get the bad government changed
- One group member discussed how racism in the media is not new
 - Racism is not coming back; it's just that now the media has found ways to sensationalize it because it produces better ratings
 - The media is exploiting fighting between races
- One group member discussed how this member has a TV show called Imagine Worcester and the World. This member is part of the anti-racism coalition which is built to show invisible racism/unconscious bias we have.
 - Many people, including this group member, have been looking at invisible racism in themselves and are committed to finding and letting go of the layers of biases and unconscious biases
- One group member discussed how the media perpetuates racism but how they frame the issues, but also through the absence of information.
 - For example: when white children are missing there is national coverage, but when black or brown children are missing there is no media coverage
- One group member discussed how the media does not think that people can learn and organize. This member discussed how the media was comparing Ferguson to the LA riots but not recognizing that the black community is not stagnant and unchanging but that there was organizing and discussion surrounding the issues raised in Ferguson before protesting started
- One group member discussed how there are stories in alternative media online that does have different information
- The facilitator discussed the study done in Ferguson about structural racism—this was an article in the packet you received on Monday 6/22
- The facilitator asked how do you find these alternative outlets?
 - One group member discussed Democracy Now

- One group member discussed how there are lots of alternative media sources out there if people are willing to watch and read them
 - One group member discussed how there was a period of 1.5 years in Cincinnati when 14-15 black people were killed and 14-15 police officers were killed. This stuff has been going on for a long time—but people have a choice about what they choose to watch
 - One group member discussed an incident in Atlanta when 15 black kids disappeared. This member discussed how this didn't become national news until 7-8 kids were missing, but how if it was a white kid it would be news with one kid missing.
 - One group member discussed how there are magazines that empower people of color but a lot of these are for highly educated people. Also, you have to really search for these magazines. These magazines should be more available; a person shouldn't have to go out of their way to find these magazines. They should be widely disseminated
 - One group member discussed how through institutional racism there are not enough people of color in the media or in board rooms
 - At the end of the discussion on Question 1 the group decided that the two answers to report back were:
 - Racism in the media is perpetuated and demonstrated by who the media focuses on
 - It is about implicit value which is based on race
 - For example: if a white child goes missing it is national news but if a child of color goes missing it would not make national news.
 - The media is selective about what people it sees as most valuable
 - The media perpetuates racism through its competitive nature which perpetuates discord among races since that is better for the bottom line.
- How does the media perpetuate or dismantle racism?
 - Images – fuzzy burr on white people, clear on black.
 - Focus on crime. This affects kids.
 - Reports (language) are slanted.
 - Reporters used to give facts. Now it's different. Fact? Opinion?
 - Media should give a balance.
 - Sensationalism – it's all about advertising – about what will sell.
 - “No paper in Massachusetts has a staff reporter at the State House.”

- Local print (Telegram) prints press releases directly from the police. The police narrative is used. “And it’s mostly Hispanic.”
- There’s a blurred line between journalism and editorialism.’
- “The narrative of bias is repeated and gets spun back.”
- There is a fear about crime because of the media hype. “White people beg out because of the scary pictured thug.”
- “When there shooter is white, we hear that he was a loner or there’s a mental health issue. When the shooter is black, it’s different.”
- We need more positive stories in the media. And more diversity.
- HOW DOES THE MEDIA PERPETUATE RACISM?
 - perpetuate when it reports the news as if racism were not a reality/as if racism doesn’t exist
 - stirs the pot
 - personal attacks/slander
 - print is different than television/radio
 - media has been supportive of South Carolina - but usually not strong supporters of dismantling
 - tone of suspects of persons of color different than white -- example: black male vs male (when talking about someone white)
 - Donald Trump had made a comment that the South Carolina referenced
 - Donald Trump said Mexicans are raping our women and destroying our country
 - schools aren’t teaching our students about race - critical responsibility
 - the media says things about interpersonal reactions - if a person beat someone up - but we don’t look at the institutional issues
 - 24 hour news cycle
 - media reports on sensational events - then onto the next
 - ”I don’t watch Fox” - warped misguided news by some stations
 - people believe what they are hearing on the news
 - media should give it right - be fair - only negatives on the news
 - the unsanctioned handout on media is important because we are being fed opinions - misfacts and lies as if it was news
 - not asking ourselves how to analyze what being fed - no analysis
 - news has to be spicy - on social media people talk about Worcester sucks/crime/dirty - express opinions - but because of social media...
 - ”I saw something today - city did press release - someone gave their opinion and it went down from there”
 - ”I can’t do it with T&G comments...”

- schools have a responsibility to provide higher order thinking - starts at home. "I put values out there for my daughter to follow"
- I have a right to my opinion - I could agree to some and not others
- "I put my comments/opinion on social media - people have a language that says let's do this - we have to be careful how we influence people. Especially our children. Children need basic values. My 7 year old granddaughter has to be more astute. If you go into certain stores you can't find a black doll - you don't see someone like you - my granddaughter wants long black hair - has to appreciate who we are - can't let the media influence our kids"
- How does media perpetuate or dismantle racism?
 - Stereotypes in media make everybody in the culture think that way, with negative impact. People will view you as negative. If African Americans are always portrayed as criminals, other people may see all African Americans as dangerous, and be afraid of me even though they don't know me.
 - News stories show a small snapshot of a bigger picture. You might see one story and think you know what is going on, assume that what is true for one person is the same for everybody in the town without giving time to both sides or to get a more complete picture of the context and history of an issue like racism. It can taint the way people see an area like Baltimore. For a couple of days after Baltimore hit the news, they only showed the same clip of looting, not the hundreds of people at peaceful candlelight vigils and marches. It took days for that side of the story to come out, and then because of social media, not mainstream media.
 - Instead they showed an African-American woman slapping her son in public, glorified it in social media, That's no way of showing your child how one should behave; you don't degrade your son on TV. They made it seem like everyone in a certain community treated their kids this way, or should.
 - There's a hockey series they have been showing where they used Native American symbolism, feathers and headdress, and a newscaster coming out in painted face with the flag in mockery of traditional flag ceremony. Those mascots are just as bad to us as KKK hoods and nooses.
 - Media now have an agenda to increase number of hits, amount of profit they can generate in advertising. No longer journalistic integrity, mission as fourth estate to cover all the news impartially.

- There's a tendency now to find the most extreme commentary on the most extreme events, with a dialogue that becomes a yelling match. That's what sells. Controversy increases views and therefore hits and profits.
- We refer to The Media as if everything was the same. I don't approve of everything in mainstream media but I can tell it's different from Fox News, which shouldn't be allowed to call itself News. It requires us to listen very critically to all of them.
- The line has been blurred between what is real and credible media and what is a blog. Some people could read completely false info and not realize it isn't true. The line is also blurred between news and entertainment, with more time being given to entertainment news every night.
- Supporting hate speech by advertising on a blog page is endorsing the message. If you're advertising to haters, that is the crowd you are looking to attract. Good people should avoid those places just to be safe.
- The President said today that this isn't new; they have been killing us since the beginning. We perpetuate racism because we don't want to look at it. Now the President is in hot water for saying it; you can't have that discussion because it might hurt someone's feelings. Well, people are dying, We should be able to have a discussion. My feelings won't be hurt. We have to be able to say what we think. People will make money off our suffering. Everybody suffers from racism. How long will we do that?
- What about good – how does it dismantle racism?
 - Black Lives Matter brought people together across the country.
 - Yeah, but so what. Black lives matter, Yes, they do. Nothing changes. What next? It sounds good but it doesn't do anything. Who will benefit from this violence?
 - We are all people and we have a lot in common.
 - After these conversations, the Telegram has run a story on the front page, above the fold most weeks. That's better coverage than I expected. I am more optimistic this round than I have been in other sessions where we didn't really talk about race. The breadth of coverage in all the papers has been encouraging.
 - Four names bring attention to the issues – Trayvon, Ferguson, Baltimore, Charleston. By bringing more attention to this issue, they could be bringing us closer together to having the real conversations we need about structural racism in this country.

- Media is definitely bringing more people to the conversation than ever before, and spreading news so much faster and with less censorship.
- People were afraid to have this conversation in the past. Now it's better. They are doing these conversations in Framingham too, and as people hear others with the same or similar experiences, they feel bolder to share their experiences and voice their opinions too. Face to face time talking this stuff out will make a big difference.
- When a terrorist took 9 lives in SC, he was trying to start a race war, but the families came out asking for God's help and then they forgave him. It's very inspiring and we should all follow that lead and be
- forgiving, not vengeful.
- We're consumers and we decide what to watch, what to read. Where do we spend our time, our money, our clicks? What are we going to do about bad media? Give them feedback, or stop giving them your money.
- This is different because Charleston is a different story than police brutality. It can be positive to talk about what happened to shine light on need for reform. But it goes both ways. All the coverage of the Trayvon Martin case led this guy to become hateful. Talking about things plants ideas for bad people. Maybe it's better not to talk about it.
- I am very pessimistic. The more we talk about it, the more supremacist groups use it. Is hatred was reinforced when he heard the coverage of Trayvon. Stories bring awareness but inspire others to do bad. Media makes a dollar on it either way. My kid had an incident where someone called the cops when his dad came to pick him up, because he's black.
- How do we make kids think critically?
- How does the media (print, television, radio) perpetuate or dismantle racism?
 - I am a part-time journalist (although I am not covering this meeting). Media writing includes stories along racist lines – the media purposely exaggerates details that can perpetuate racism. Example: Fox News. There is no accountability in the news media anymore.
 - There is an issue with lack of fact checking and not getting to the bottom of stories. Photo journalism can also perpetuate racism.
 - Media becomes racist by default; it's not intentional, but unconscious bias can come through in reporting. Local media may not have an agenda to be racist, but not of lot of care goes in, so sometimes things are published that are careless and are published with a lack of training.

- A lot of people go to the news for information, but they're not getting facts but not going elsewhere. They don't get the whole story from one station alone. Stations choose to leave out certain information. Leaving information out skews the story. This may be unintentional, but sometimes it's intentional, too. Audience members need to be aware of what we're watching and our own biases.
- I had a personal experience where it's hard to believe that the media's acts are not intentional. In Springfield, there was a young man who was bullied to the point where he committed suicide. I was working in Worcester. A show called Extreme Home Makeover hired my company. I'm also involved with a nonprofit that's involved with a community of Muslims. I got my nonprofit group to help. When we watched the show, those in Hijab weren't shown, even though they were there. We were edited out. Maybe we weren't palliative enough. We wanted to be a part because our youth get bullied. But they chose not to include us.
- There is an inherent bias in media. Mainstream media is generally owned by white people. There is an obsession with breaking news, which shows incredible bias and unsubstantiated facts. With crime stories, communities of color don't generally look good. Bad facts don't get retracted. The system is just a problem.
- For mainstream media, there's an implicit bias. Even tonight, white males represent media in this room.
- There has been a shift over the past decade to the news becoming sellable. News, especially morning news, is a little bit of news, then one big long commercial. Also, media perpetuates the idea that racism no longer exists. For example, Fox News. The coverage lately paints the recent attack as an attack on Christianity, rather than a racist shooting.
- Mainstream media is corporate driven. Even locally, excellent reports are laid off. We can't have and don't get in-depth reporting. There's a lack of attention on our parts by not demanding more from the media. Media literacy needs to develop in our schools so we know how to interpret what we see.
- Six years ago, my husband was ordained. There were 7 ordained that day, but I didn't see us in the video. The other couples were shown.
- I've been interviewed by the press numerous times for my job. So many times only one side is covered. Media needs to be accountable to all sides of a story.

- Competitive nature of news casts leads to an over-focus on the negative. “If it bleeds, it reads.” We need to get information from multiple locales.
- Sometimes racism is subtle. In Charleston, they highlighted the gunman’s mental illness instead of his being a terrorist. If it was a Muslim, the shooter would have been labeled a terrorist. If the shooter was black, he would have been labeled a thug.
- Media goes nuts for missing little white girls, not little black girls. There was a young Latino man murdered in Worcester. The Telegram & Gazette column dissected all the bad things in his life. This is an issue of racism – they wouldn’t have done that if he was white. Even Spanish language news channels feature the lightest skin Latinos. Dismantling racism would need to be intentional. This would make white people uncomfortable.
- Our participants came to a consensus and shared the following points at the report-back session:
 - Inherent bias and racism exists in mainstream media.
 - Conscious editing also exists, where the media leaves certain stories out.
- How does the media (print, radio, TV) perpetuate or dismantle racism?
 - Media perpetuates racism when it...
 - Promotes or focuses solely on the sensational aspect of a story to increase their ratings
 - Fails to provide unbiased, comprehensive, respectful news coverage
 - Dehumanizes or blames the victim to justify white violence
 - Humanizes/acknowledges the complexity of the perpetrator’s life and not the victim’s
 - Neglects to report on how the system may/not hold the perpetrator accountable
 - Promotes negative stereotypes with impunity
 - Labels the same destructive behavior of white people as “revelers” and black people as “looters” and “thugs.”
 - Employs a disproportionate number of white media reporters
 - Does not provide balanced news reports on all mainstream media
 - Channels that do are “preaching to the choir”
 - Examples: Focus on Community, Channel 4, 5, Urban Update, CNN, NPR, PBS
 - Dismantles Racism when it...

- Eliminates options for anonymous comments
 - Responds appropriately when held accountable for biased reporting
 - Prevents or holds sponsors accountable for the use of racist language and images
 - Broadcasts balanced news reports on all mainstream media
 - Examples: Atlanta News Media, Seattle, Tacoma, and New York Media
- How does the media (print, television, radio, web) perpetuate or dismantle racism?
 - “Negativity” – you see it every time you turn on the TV – raised as a principal factor in perpetuating racism.
 - Racial stereotypes are perpetuated through the media; and an increase has even been seen since Ferguson in the speed that this cycle runs. The way that these stereotypes run through media highlight how deep the divide is between communities and experience – when you realize there is a huge disconnect between what is being portrayed in media and what is happening on the ground.
 - Thinking about negativity – need to ask ourselves: what is the role and mission of media? The media is a business, and they need to do more than simply relay a story, they need to attract an audience. “Good” isn’t news, because it doesn’t draw viewers. So the media has come to rely on feeding on hate and spectacle.
 - We, the audience and consumers, need to push back and ask for a fuller story.
 - Negativity also impacted by the concentration of media outlets in the hands of very few.
 - How would we dismantle the system of negative news in the hands of the few – it does not seem in the best interests of the media giants to allow this.
 - Constant negativity stems from, or is closely related to, the failure to provide balance or a view of both sides. So when a news outlet reports on “riots” and “thugs” in Baltimore, they (purposefully?) don’t talk about the people’s anger over decisions to spend huge amounts of money on juvenile detention centers and not on underfunded schools. The media has already taken a side and chosen an image to promote.
 - And that image – of thugs, rioters, reflects back to society ideas that many have already adopted about people of color, and the fact that people of color do not have a place in our society. So this also

- perpetuates racism → reflects back ideas we have; confirms our fears.
- Part of solving this has to lie in education. If we show our young people – outside of media – that the world is not this way, then when they see these biased, negative images and stories they can call them out and refuse to reflect them/pass them on.
 - Other solutions: contact your news media; ask why “positive” news doesn’t feature.
 - Need to stop thinking of the network manager as the one in charge; we should be working to define the news and coverage we want to see.
- Social media/local media – think about the way that certain local media outlets – particularly those managed through social media: blogs, twitter, Facebooks pages – can have a very high impact on a dedicated following, and the way that these are used to perpetuate negative feelings towards people of color. These are free platforms to perpetuate hate, to attach racialized code words. We need to interrupt these platforms.
- How do we filter these and address the phenomenon of anonymity? Why does a blogger get to be a “source” of news?
 - Bloggers can find/target people who agree with them, they can make a lot of noise – and then the “real” media will report on the blog “buzz” and the antagonisms stirred up.
 - We should take back these same social media platforms. Call the blogger out.
 - Also need to think about the digital divide – access to social media is not equal for everyone – this lack of access is a barrier to open speech.
- Question to the college students in the room – ways that open speech and social media combine in a university environment. Is this good, bad?
- In some of these settings there can be an immediate feeling of you need to come out vocally in support of something, or you are casting yourself as automatically against it. But it shouldn’t have to be that way. This is influenced, strengthened by everyone’s ability to be commenting and communicating on any issue. But there should be a way that we can have our social networks and like and share things and use that to show our different opinions without creating deep divides amongst us. We can have different background and opinions and still find ways to be united.
- People need to be critical of what they consume on social media. We give power to what we pay attention to; just like voting with our dollars and

where we spend our money, what we read and what we share has an impact. All main stream media is owned, is a business – when we tune into this media, is it authentic, is it credible? Do we want our media to reflect our world back to us out of convenience, or do we want something that challenges us, a counter narrative. We need to speak through our readership and out networks to raise alternative and divergent voices.

- Youth and students – and particularly poorer students and students of color – at public schools are often taught to just absorb information and not critique it, while students from higher income areas – even if still in public schools – are taught to question, and feel entitled to critique. This needs to change in our schools and our approaches to teaching.
- Media nationally is not representative of all communities and lives locally – those perspectives are NOT reflected in media.
- How does the 24 hour news-cycle and the era of sound bites contribute to these problems – the aggressive need to be the first on the story, have the most sensational scoop.
 - Sensationalism of news belies the actual reality of things – example: plane crashes/accidents can take up a lot of space on the news cycle, but statistically speaking, you are much more likely to be hurt in a car crash than in a plane crash. Similarly – the stories we see conveying stereotyped images of people of color represent occasionally, sensationalized occurrences instead of the day to day reality.
 - Thinking about this brings up word and image associations. Plane crash > terrorism > picturing person of the Muslim faith. White shooters > discussion of mental illness. How do we filter these unconscious (because so heavily underlined by media) associations in order to have a productive conversation?
 - Part of the issue here is media literacy – we need to learn it. Main stream media relies heavily in video and electronic media - building a base on impactful imagery. If we increase video media in our society – become the media ourselves – we can counter these images with our own.

2. A list of ways media outlets can improve their reporting based on race

- Do the stories the media chose to report on reflect the issues and events going on in all communities?

- In Worcester media, you never see information about the whole area; the media covers the same area
 - In comparison, the Boston Globe covers everything – lots of the suburbs
 - In Worcester, the media focuses on where people are doing well
 - Instead, they should talk to random people so they know what is really happening
- The newspaper used to be free to every high school, but they (Telegram) stopped doing that a few years ago
- You need the media to go to every community to interview people; the entire community needs to speak
- One problem is that in some areas, the media has a bad reputation so people there can't assume that everything the media writes is negative (and therefore not speak to them) because then the media won't hear from everyone
- The media focuses on negative events
 - For example, in schools, the media talks about the kids in trouble but there is no focus on the kids doing well
 - Some recent North High graduates were upset that no one knew anything positive about their school when they would talk to someone and say they went to North High
 - The only coverage of North High's graduation was by Channel 13. There was no coverage on the valedictorian, his valedictory speech, where he is going to college or any of the other success stories from North High. You just hear about the bad things when there was a lot of good there this year
 - One participant said that he was at North High during the school day and 40% of what was reported was a lie
 - He noted that some kids need people to talk to when there is a problem and need to feel comfortable asking for help. The schools need people willing to help and not the teachers that "don't care" about the minority students and foreigners and just tell them "go read the book" when they have questions.
 - He asked what "cultural sensitive" means when the minority students and foreigners do not get the help that they need
 - Another participant added that kids need parents to help them. The teachers today will say that they have 35 kids in

the classroom and some kids do not pay attention. You need to educate the parents as well.

- Another participant noted that some parents can't be there to offer extensive help because, for example, they are working two jobs
- The media is not reporting the positive events, just the negative.
- Media never questions parents on the positive things that kids did – kids who are graduating and who did well and what their parents and the kids have done
- Kids aren't being praised when they do extra-curriculars on top of everything else that they do
- It is calculated – people want to report on the negative
 - Yet how are we still reading all of this? Why are we reading these awful, negative stories all of the time?
- You can't blame the parents – sometimes the parents don't speak English
 - Schools need to offer a place where they can get help from someone they trust
 - It comes down to community
- Just looks at the actions and you never find out what is the frustration for the kids/what is the cause of the problem
- Media is a business
 - They would not publish things that people do not buy – especially the big papers
 - Smaller papers, especially, do not have all of the resources to get all of the information
- There's social media and click bait now
 - Journalism is gone because people like that
- In social media, people know it is just someone's opinion, but the media needs to report both sides
- Do the stories the media choose to report on reflect the issues and events going on in all communities?
 - One group member discussed how the media has bought into not needing critical analysis; this is also our national mindset. We are willing to buy into what the media say without a critical analysis. We need to push for more critical analysis in the media.
 - One group member discuss how we need to discuss structural racism with basically any issues—education, economic development, employment. The media, however, does not talk about it at all.

- The Facilitator asked is anyone is familiar with media other than the big media companies (CNN etc.) such as Al Jazeera etc.
 - One group member responded that they are familiar with these media sources and that these stations have more time to investigate and analyze issues before reporting on them
- One group member discussed how people still need to talk to the media and have a dialogue with the media and editorial board. People need to raise their issues and concerns about the media to the media.
- We discussed media at the local level and whether the issues and events it chooses to report on reflect all communities:
- We discussed media at the local level and whether the issues and events it chooses to report on reflect all communities:
 - One group member discussed how they see the media mainly reporting on institution and about things that institution are doing and that most institutions are white
 - One group member discussed how it is hard to speak out and present a counter narrative when you will get targeted by the media for doing so
 - For example: North High School: institutional leaders pushing certain changes at the school such as more police and leaders of color stepped up and met with superintendent and others in response to changes. When the leaders of color spoke out there was backlash from the institutional leaders and the media
 - One group member discussed how this member felt that the North High School story was reported in a balanced way—reporters asked lots of questions and reported all of the answers
 - There was some disagreement in the group about the timeline of events surround the North High School story.
 - The group discussed the ACLU and how they ACLU could be useful but how people often don't remember the ACLU until they need it
 - One group member discussed how advertisements and websites for higher educations are not reflective of the student population
 - Images focus on diversity but misrepresent the student body as a whole
 - There are universities that are trying to promote diversity to get more money—but they may actually be doing it because the national media is focusing on diversity in higher education
 - It feels like tokenism
 - One group member discussed how bad incidents get pushed to the top. The member feels that the sensationalized news that is trying to make

- money does not fairly portray topics, but that this media does cover a lot of topics, just the negative topics are the ones that get the most attention.
- The media wants things to go badly.
 - One group member discussed how the question then is “who is it going to be bad for?”
 - For example: rarely do we hear stories about victims of people we killed in Afghanistan—if we did people would be outraged—the “who” piece in news is still about people of privilege.
 - One group member discussed social media and technology. This member discussed the recent shooting in South Carolina that was captured on a phone
 - One group member discussed how negative things have been happening in the black community since day 1 but that the media is just now figuring out how to sensationalize it. Instead of highlighting the negative things we should be highlighting the positive things that places are doing
 - For example: Dress for Success and Girls, Inc.
 - We need to be showing the media that we want more. That they should stop pushing silliness on us.
 - This needs to start with grass roots efforts—that were it has always started in the past
 - The Facilitator discussed how we are the ones we are waiting for
 - At the end of the discussion on Question 2 the group decided that the answer to report back was:
 - No, the media does not reflect the events and issues going on in all communities
 - We have to be the people who change this. We need to write these stories
 - Do the stories the media chooses to report on reflect the issues and events going on in all communities?
 - In black neighborhoods the stories are all negative.
 - You never hear about some areas until there’s crime.
 - “In my neighborhood, the blue lights and sirens start up every night at 9:30.”
 - “What’s going on in the immigrant and refugee neighborhoods?”
 - Media just prints press releases from groups and the court log – word for word.
 - Local media could have done better publicizing these dialogues. (There was disagreement on this)
 - We need to have local “beat” reporters and fact checkers.
 - “I’m tired of their excuses – that there’s not enough staff or money. The media should be transparent.”

- There's a disconnect between the press and the people.
- There was a concern expressed about the historical ownership of the T&G.
- Homogenous ownership affects the narrative.
- Need to have locally owned media.
- WHAT CAN THE MEDIA DO TO DISMANTLE RACISM?
 - give us context/data as part of story
 - if race is an issue - give us racial data
 - "we want to defend our public safety officer - but they react and display biases - some people if you're black - you don't have much recourse if you get stopped"
 - transparency/tell the numbers
 - we have an opportunity of being proactive. A town in Vermont voted a resolution that local media could only report good things. It helped the community
 - If we want to raise kids we must instill in them a sense of community
 - must accept/admit racial bias in Worcester
 - its brewing in Worcester - take positive steps - be proactive - take on leaders who express negativity
 - "horrible things I hear people say - and media plays right into it"
 - way back a school committee person said he feared nonwhite buying a house near him because property values would go down. But then about 2 months later - I was at a Harry Belafonte concert in Worcester and H. Belafonte must have heard about the story and joked that if he bought a house next to you - your property values would go up.
 - "I remember the T&G when Puerto Rican/Hispanic community was starting in the 70s - the arrest of a Hispanic person would be in bold - 4 Spanish surnames in bold in a newspaper article one - but other names not in bold"
 - it's not necessary to put names in paper when arrested
 - "I did something with my students -- look at arrest names in paper - mainly Hispanic/Black"
 - media should give honest/true story - do a series
 - "I went to T&G and met with editorial board when the 4 Hispanic names were bolded"
 - media should report the news - report what's important
 - report what's affecting us - what's evolving - so we can be more proactive or use it in a positive way
 - "we need to have a personal responsibility because people are reading this crap - don't read it/don't buy it"

- "I read the NY Times - I get good news - we need to not read the junk coming down on throat"
- the people writing newspapers - are they representing the community?
- DO MEDIA STORIES RELECT ISSUES/EVENTS GOING ON IN ALL COMMUNITIES?
 - No - we don't have people from different communities in media
 - do they know our story/interpret me
 - can't be tokenism - 1 feature article on a minority as if telling one person's store you are absolved and are telling everyone's story
 - media trying to make money
 - media is owned by corporations - not communities
 - the South Carolina paper was unkind to non-whites - even when paper sold and local people were supposed to won the T&G and they don't - it's from Florida
 - the paper is going to reflect those that pay them
 - "at my mom's social group - someone from Boston was asking about civil rights and the reporter on the news didn't mention them because the media didn't get the info it wanted"
 - story wasn't juicy enough - so even though media interviewed my mom's social group - they didn't tell the story
 - writing can get misconstrued
 - tv shows what it wants
 - people with guns/Dr Martin Luther King/fighting on bus or streets/ugly things - the community needs to be a better place
 - media does a lot of good things - all forms have a positive impact on people. There is good in all forms of media. Its important. As a black person - best thing for me was media. I've seen the change from no media/media.
 - media can shed light or cover up
 - crowds don't have leaders - who is the leader
 - time frame - what is a discipline then and what it is now
 - media can get info out first
 - what used to be good - add it back in
 - I have concern about what children are exposed to in the media
- Do the stories media tell reflect community? How can media better dismantle racism? What do you want them to cover?
 - Everyday racism, white supremacist groups that exist in our state are doing things, active groups. Tell us what they are doing. The media should look into that. Trump and his stories about Mexicans – someone should be

reporting on the history and the context and why his arguments don't make sense. People aren't getting the full story.

- We are looking for the truth. Come into different communities. Educate people about their own communities and the history. Social media is more timely, can get info faster and more accurately, better understand global context. We want you to take the national story and tell us how it will play out and affect us here. Show us places that are working toward solutions, or that have done things that work.
- Media makes the world smaller. We may not have seen as much 20 years ago. There's good and bad in that. Media are rushing to scoop the headline so may put out bad info then retract it, but people still saw the bad info and thought it was good.
- What are we supposed to do now? White people are coming and shooting at us. People are being provoked into violence by the media. White people are being violent. Whites need to teach other whites how to stop the violence.
- There's a national psyche that needs to be healed, a mindset since the Civil War, lots of bad people that need to be educated to see others as equal.
- I am tired of trying to explain the problem to white people. They need to step up and educate their own. There are 40 supremacist groups in Massachusetts. Sometimes racism is subtle, more than not these days, but there are still clear examples.
- Tonight we were told this handout was not sanctioned by the Coalition or planners. I am on the Coalition, and nobody asked me to sanction the questions or any of the other handouts, but no similar announcement has been made about anybody else's handouts. Why not this one? It's information to use in the conversation. When people tell you what is acceptable to talk about, it can be a problem.
- Looks like the city government is afraid of TBS, so much so that they made an announcement from the podium that they weren't the ones speaking out against TBS. Perhaps they are intimidated to talk about the hate speech threatening our young people and racial justice workers. DO they worry that the TB might cyber-bully their teenage kids, or put their private info online, or try to destroy their agencies?
- The City Manager or the Mayor could be a huge TBS fan, or even write for them, for all we know. It's easy to stand with the people of Charleston but we need to see them stand up for the people of Worcester by condemning the hate, calling out the perpetrators by name, having a hate crime investigation remove anonymity from those inciting violence against local protestors.

- Nothing should be handed out if there's no attribution. How are we to judge whether this is real or lies? It's a challenge when info is given or taken out of context.
- I'm told this was done with anonymity to protect people from retaliation by the TBS gang of thugs.
- It's on us, what we buy. We use our buying power to shape the media. Journalism should be driven by desire to inform public, by the content, not profit motive. We don't hold them to the same standard we used to.
- Media should show solutions in addition to problems, not just the problems. Find people addressing issues elsewhere that have found working solutions or improvements.
- If we can't rely on media, we have to do it for ourselves. When they first announced these talks, a lot of people cast them aside, said they wouldn't amount to anything. Well, I have learned a lot but I still don't know what I'm going to do about it. But I want to hear how get to action.
- There are so many copycats, and they are always showing murder on TV, we should just get rid of it. It permeates society.
- Local coverage – hard to get good stories covered. We have them every day at UMass, but you only see us listed when it's bad. North Hig example – we have inspirational story of med student returned to mentor some great youth at North, but it didn't get coverage. That should be front page. Also, when was the last time you saw coverage of a fight at school in Holden or Shrewsbury? They don't get covered, only at North or South.
- Read a book on White Privilege, learned to rethink the way I understood a lot of things.
- Not a new idea; white privilege work has been going on a long time.
- Workshop planned at UUChurch of Worcester writing racial experience autobiographies
- Witnessing Whiteness series being planned w Worcester Partnership for Racial and Ethnic Health Equity
- Do the stories the media choose to report on reflect the issues and events going on in all communities?
 - No. So many members facing barriers – reporters aren't a part of all communities. There is no comprehensive reporting.
 - No. In Charleston, 9 black people were shot to death. The judge said that another victim was the shooter's family. In the Boston bombing, however, the media went after the bombers' family members as no good. There was no sympathy there. Why, here, is the judge asking everyone to sympathize with the shooter's family?

- No.
- I think Charleston arraignment was strange. I do arraignments. The judge's conduct was strange. In Massachusetts, victims' families don't talk at the arraignment; only at the end of a case. I was shocked that the families forgave this guy so quickly. Does the media reflect all communities? No. Partly because most of the reporters are white people.
- No. I think that's obvious. Some is subtle. Some is blatant racism and bias. Some is who clamors the loudest. Some is what sells. Things will be this way until we have a diverse reporting staff and we're active about changing biases and make the news cover all communities.
- It's obvious that the answer is no.
- The media chooses what they want to report on. Obviously, the answer is no. What they choose excludes some aspect of the community.
- No. And it's not just about the lack of black reporters – look at the managers and editors. Is it unconscious bias? Or is it a mixture of unconscious and conscious? People want their world views validated. But if we call a white man a terrorist, it changes how people frame things and think about white men.
- Last week, 2 officers were killed. [Missed rest of comment.]
- Media has done a decent job covering the communities, but it needs to work harder. On a local level, we have 20+ languages in our schools. We're a melting pot with lots of immigration. Media needs to work hard to get to know our new communities. We need to find out about each other and get over our fears and barriers.
- No. We need to be more demanding of our media and challenge the status quo. I am uncomfortable giving credence to mass media. Independent films and radio need to be given more voice and focus.
- The “sell, sell, sell” emphasis is the problem. For example, the OJ Simpson case took over the media with sensationalistic and racist tones. The media won't cover it if they don't think they can sell.
- Our participants came to a consensus and shared the following points at the report-back session:
 - The overwhelming consensus for this group was no, the media does not reflect all communities.
 - We need to ask more of our media – and not just of the reporters, but also the managers, editors, and media outlets.
- How can the media improve on reporting issues related to race?
 - Offer incentives to sponsors and journalists for more balanced news reports
 - Identify media gatekeepers who can ensure fair news coverage

- Publicize or establish standards of accountability in journalism
- Media access vs right to free speech
- Hate speech can hide because it is no longer said face to face
- Black people get mad at everybody because you don't know who to trust
- Does the media reflect issues and events happening in all communities? [A sub question – are problems with portrayal due to poor coverage of the reality? Due to too much coverage of non-reality?] [see several points above re the lack of connection to local lives if you view only the national news media]
 - Is Baltimore only about riots?
 - No. Let's talk about understanding both sides again. And how when you don't report the truth – balanced between both perspectives – you will never see both sides of an issue. You also end up seeing everything – riots in Baltimore or against police use of force, or anything – as a series of “isolated” disconnected incidents, because you don't see the common history behind them, and only the acts of one side get reported on.
 - Another angle – the media highlights crimes in Wellesley, but not the same crimes when they happen in Mattapan. Is this okay?
 - What is being reported here – in terms of the words? In the instance of South Carolina, let's talk about racism, anger – what is behind the acts that are being reported. In the Wellesley/Mattapan example – let's talk about the way that stereotypes influence the words we use; let's talk about poverty and class and race and how that changes the way we view perpetrators and victims in each community.
 - Connecting to Worcester – we see these same phenomena with the ongoing issues in Worcester schools. When we see school fights and use words like thugs, we avoid talking about the problems with underserved schools and populations that underlie the fight that we see.
 - There is too big an emphasis on the national news. So people in Worcester don't know what is happening here; people are being terrorized here. When the story told is one closer to home, people find connections and care more, and then they get involved. We need more investigative reporting in Worcester to create opportunities to discuss race and disparity.

3. A list of ways readers of online media and participants of online social media networks can dismantle racism

- How do community conversation on the web and social media perpetuate or dismantle racism?
 - Media has a responsibility to find the other side but a lot of people do not want to
 - Have media commend people who do good things for everyone of all races
 - If media is a business, who is calling the shots? They report on what we want to hear
 - We need to stop paying for negativity
 - Someone on social media should do interviews of people doing good things
 - We are moving toward a generation that does not care about newspapers but cares about what is online because that is what they are used to
 - Kids don't need to bring a newspaper to school anymore
 - It is easier for kids to believe what they read online
 - There is always so much for kids to do and parents need to stop giving them everything and giving them constant access with smartphones. The responsibility is on the parents – the kids don't call the shots
 - But even if parents do that at home, kids have social media and everything available as soon as they walk out the door
 - People try to get their own ideas out on Facebook but one participant said that he didn't see the media taking that seriously
 - People get tough when on their own computer
 - They don't have to see anyone and can say what they want
 - People don't understand that what you post is out there forever
 - People don't realize that employers can see social media and people may blame not getting the job on their race and not realize it is because of their negative comments that the place they applied to could see
 - We need to educate ourselves that what's out there stays out there
 - We can't get angry if we keep giving the media ammunition
 - Kids rely on technology and calculators too much

- We set them up to fail by letting them use them too much
 - It needs to be in moderation
 - Facebook conversations have opened up people's eyes to things
 - Even the definition of racism on the handouts at this event can open people's eyes
 - You can explain (on Facebook) that saying you are "color blind" can be offensive to some people even though others think it is a positive thing
 - You can "Like" things about different cultures and learn from there
 - It is eye opening because you can get information faster, but you still need to do your due diligence
 - One participant reported that when he came to this country, he saw "facts" provided by a web site and he thought they were facts until someone said that they weren't
 - You need to question the source of information on the internet
 - Newspapers were reporting incorrect information about a church and its alleged problems with certain members of the community and the church leaders had to correct that by going out and talking to people because what the media was reporting was "the opposite of reality"
- How do community conversation on the web (online comments) and social media perpetuate or dismantle racism?
 - One group member discussed how there is a blog in the community that is filled with hate (TurtleBoy Sports).
 - This member discussed how TurtleBoy Sports is a cyber bully
 - This member discussed how TurtleBoy Sports mostly writes about people who are speaking up—he is trying to silence voices—he is going into Facebook and pulling out personal information about people
 - One group member discussed how he is terrorizing and scaring this member's colleagues and friends
 - One group member discussed how it is interesting that he is doing it in a way that is protected by the first amendment.
 - One group member discussed how it is difficult to combat this in a community—this is terror—it's insidious and the level on instability behind it is scary and this member thinks it could result in violence
 - One group member discussed how they understand that he has a right to do this but that cyber bullying is new and even legally it is new

- One group member discussed a personal experience: this member's mom has been getting attacked by TurtleBoy Sports. He takes bits and pieces of a person's life and is making this member's mom out to be a person she is not. Showing pictures of this member's mom smoking and taking pieces from this member's mom's Facebook page and saying she is not a good role model.
 - One group member discussed how it is frightening that TurtleBoy Sports has supporters in the community
 - One group member discuss how TurtleBoy Sports is playing into the racist and sexist narrative and creating an "us vs. them" mentality that is incredibly damaging to the community
 - One group member discussed how the more he is attacked the bigger he grows. He mixes facts with other stuff.
 - One group member discussed how there are a lot of groups in the community that have used social media to attack and it is hard to believe them and find them credible when they attack people as well.
- At the end of the discussion on Question 3 the group decided that the answers to report back were:
 - We don't see a lot of dismantling racism being done in social media. Instead we see:
 - Name-calling
 - Hate
 - Defamation
 - Cyber bullying
 - Attacking each other
- At the end of our discussion we talked about how we felt the discussion was missing a question about what we can do to change things in the media.
- How do community conversations on the web and social media perpetuate or dismantle racism?
 - Social media can demonize people.
 - Racist and targeted attacks hurt everybody.
 - Clark student found that the on-line postings in his community were more liberal. "There's anti-racist dialogue and everybody contributes."
 - People are talking about the issues. That's good.
 - On social media, people can say "anything" and it stays there.
 - "It's a show-case lottery."
 - The anonymity increases racist comments. There's no accountability.
 - "The computer screen is a mediator, and it's easy to dehumanize people." There was quite a lot of discussion about a blog by TurtleBoy. (Who apparently was at the dialogue and was spotted as people left the parking

lot. His presence aroused the ire of individuals who had been attacked in his blog.)

- There's trolling and stalking on social web. "People pretend it's a game."
- Blogs sometimes demonize people for caring or trying to make things better.
- "The internet can also bring back history. I've learned a lot, and it's fun to read about the civil rights movement."
- Telegram website has people's comments linked to their Facebook. "You'd think that would..." bring about some civility, but it doesn't always...
- Online anger can build up and inhibit people.
- It's important to have multiracial support when a bad thing happens – like in South Carolina. "Support is important."
- We need to address freedom of speech, and yet hold hate groups responsible.
- We need accountability and civility.
- Remember that the negative blogs are not the majority opinion. (One participant expressed concern that they could become the majority, if ignored)
- There are more opportunities to see "bright, intelligent people of color on TV - especially on WGBH."
- **HOW DO COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ON WEB/SOCIAL MEDIA PERPETUATE/DISMANTLE RACISM?**
 - comments/social media out of control
 - people can say anything they want
 - personal attacks/lies
 - pretend to be someone
 - out of control
 - if you have a wacky agenda - you are free to do it - how do you respond to that?
 - attention seeking
 - can anyone answer how social media dismantles?
 - someone is always going to have something negative to say
 - comments are ignorant - angers me to read about people of color/women
 - not face to face with people
 - social media - you have access to info you wouldn't see in mainstream media. Access to more local stories
 - no real accountability
 - dismantling racism is face to face discussion - courageous dialogue among people that may be uncomfortable - can't do it by writing

- "I have my prejudices - but I have an awareness about them and I try to overcome them. My prejudice comes from what people told me. My father from south didn't like white people but my mother from north did - be aware of prejudices"
- dismantling racism - must recognize prejudices
- some people don't have capacity to see from another's perspective what you take for granted
- our leaders who are responsible should step up when there are racist messages
- "I'm not sure about Turtleboy but understand he posts racist things - he's instructing young people"
- "Turtleboy - I think he's nuts"
- How can media dismantle racism?
 - Don't see how the media can help dismantle. It's so negative.
 - 90% of comments are toxic. Lots of trash. If a story is good, no comments. Make one typo and you'll get 50 mean comments.
 - Most commenters are really angry people. There's a saying about don't feed the trolls, and it's true. They want you to argue back. They just get worse. And they make money off the hits.
 - Why do comments have to be anonymous? Cant they make people leave names, sign in?
 - Anonymity gives false courage.
 - Internet can be powerful. Look at ice bucket challenge. Raised money for great cause with power of the internet.
 - I can control some media myself now – send out press releases, post and share on social media. I control what I write, and I push it out there.
 - It is a vehicle we should all use. Some use for better than others, like any tool. Media should be here with us. We are evolving as a people. Mentally, in the way we feel about each other, it feels like we're going backwards. You may be mentally advanced but not spiritually.
 - White people won't listen to a man of color. You have to do that education for us.
 - Intersectionality – some black people advance in class and then join oppressor group in attitude.
 - We are all stewards of the land together. All need to be involved in healing and living, to take ownership for the health of the earth.
 - Summary points:
 - Perpetuate: Spread stereotypes, business of making money over informing public
 - Dismantle:

- Media can improve by: reflecting good in communities, participating in these dialogues instead of reporting on them
 - Participants/ consumers can go to leaders or funders and demand better; eliminate anonymous comments.
 - Racism is perpetuated by the media through spreading of negative stereotypes of people of color as dangerous. Racism could be dismantled by the media bringing us closer to having the critical conversations we need to have, with such a range of different people, including whites. People are beginning to realize that racism is a white person problem, and that cation by white people is needed to create change.
 - Media can improve their coverage by linking national events to local, reporting on activity of hate groups locally, and reporting on good things happening at places like North High. Also, fights at Wachusett or St. John's should get same media coverage as those at North, but they don't. Reporters can attend and participate in these discussions to learn and improve their own understanding rather than just reporting from a distance.
 - Readers and participants in social media are consumers and have the power of the purse. Go to the leaders, funders, advertisers and ask them to change or lose you as a customer. Refuse to read anonymous hate sites. Eliminate anonymity in comment sections on established media sites. Tough balance – easy to say don't click on hate messages, ignore them, but sometimes silence can be seen as complicity. Anonymity means anyone who doesn't speak out against it could be one of the people writing it. Don't know if our city leaders are contributors to TBS or other hate blogs if they are unwilling to call out the haters and publicly shame people who refuse to take responsibility for what they say.
- How do community conversations on the web (online comments) and social media perpetuate or dismantle racism?
 - We (the police) get killed with blogs. People can say things without consequences, anonymously.
 - The web tends towards both ends. It both dismantles and perpetuates racism. Anonymity is a problem. Social media creates a great but horrifying ground. [Gives an example of a teacher getting fired for saying things on Facebook.]
 - I believe there's good discourse on blogs. Online comments should not be anonymous. People need to avoid vile hatred and stand by what they say.

- Anonymity is partly obnoxious and empowers bullies. A journalist puts a name to a piece, but a blogger without journalistic ethics doesn't have training. Social media puts everyone on an even playing field, but we need accountability.
- Anonymity is no good. People with names attached don't say racist, hateful things.
- Online comments show how our country deals with a lot of racism. This is not a post-racial society, as demonstrated by comment sections.
- When minority voices are in the media [references unsanctioned handouts], they get attacked. White allies get attacked. Minorities who speak out get attacked. We have professional haters in this country. The handout shows overt racism. Muslims have the most professional haters who get tons of money from foundations. The web perpetuates racism.
- I think that if a person has to hide to say something, that person is a coward. Media should be analyzed before it can be exposed. People shouldn't be allowed to be so offensive. Freedom of speech, yes, but you're not allowed to hurt someone. Every culture should have the opportunity to be heard.
- Anonymity is huge for me. Courts have not protected anonymity for hate speech. We need to compel names and force media outlets to pay damages.
- Part of what the web does is that it enables people to feel like they have greater numbers and take over a conversation. People gang up and falsely inflate their numbers.
- Anonymity doesn't work, but social media is empowering. We can use it to change the world and build community.
- Our participants came to a consensus and shared the following points at the report-back session:
 - Anonymity tends to perpetuate racism. On the other hand, social media also gives people the opportunity to have a voice.
- How do community conversations on the web and social media perpetuate or dismantle racism?
 - Perpetuate
 - Easy access to large audience
 - Through anonymous posts
 - Enable stalking of unsuspecting victims
 - Some bloggers get paid to write inflammatory articles; who pays them?
 - Through use of hate apps
 - Dismantle

- Elimination of anonymous posts to increase accountability
 - Opportunity to educate and respectfully engage negative rhetoric
 - Ability to report, block, or un-friend those who post negative rhetoric
 - Professionals who make public racist comments are held accountable
 - Provide a balanced perspective on racial issues
 - Vehicle to speak truth to power when a situation has been misrepresented
 - Enables parents are able to network with other parents when youth are involved
 - Post indisputable videos of racial violence
 - Through use of social justice apps
- how do comments on the web and social media perpetuate or dismantle racism.
 - We see a clear perpetuation of racism in online commenting. You read the comments if you want to torture yourself with the racism and vitriol of people. The comments section has become a safe space to be cowardly and hateful and to perpetuate stereotypes, racism. Although some people urge getting involved in online commenting to take back the forum and call out the racists, others of us tune out the comments – a way of self-preservation, or to refuse to give credence/space to those with racist views.
 - Pointed out that the lack of safety for women on the internet is a big contributing factor to how you might respond to hateful online comments. As a women, or as a member of any oppressed group, to take a stand on the internet, can invite very graphic and hateful attacks.
 - Can we (could we ever manage to) make the comments, or the action of commenting, productive?
 - Some sites now require that a name/Facebook account be attached to comments – removes at least some of the anonymity and therefore the ease with which someone can write something racist/hateful.
 - Many sites/social media platforms have a “report as inappropriate” function – Facebook, Instagram, blog platforms etc. But you still have people that anonymize their accounts, use a fake name, to create safe platforms for themselves.
 - Returning to the need for education – kids need to be taught not only about racism and calling out/halting racism, but kids/youth need to be taught about social media and the role of social media in perpetuating racism. People need to

be equipped to respond appropriately to stop racist postings on social media.

- We need to teach critical analysis of this things you read.
 - Need also to remember, on the converse side, that for people unfamiliar with a culture of free speech, or who fear retribution for expressing opinions on the internet (people of color, women) anonymity makes their participating more possible/less frightening to them. Don't want removal of anonymity to silence voices who speak anonymously with no hurtful intent.
 - It helps to have more youth voices, more "outside voices" – to contribute to counter narratives on social media and comment sections.
- We can and should comment sections as a way to "fill the gaps," tell stories not covered by media, make the coverage ours. If you only absorbed media coverage you can end up believing that a lot of things are not the way the truly are.
- If you're a kid who has grown up during the Obama presidency, and you watch mainstream news, maybe you are more likely to think that our society is "color-blind" or "moving beyond race" – you may not realize how big a deal his election was, and how much still needs to change – if you were observing society before his election, or watching the election, and thinking critically about it.
 - If you watch mainstream news, you might think that the only manifestation of racism that exists now is police brutality, because other acts of racisms don't get reported on.

City of Worcester Community Dialogues on Race

JUNE 29, 2015: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The following is the compilation of notes received through July 13, 2015; we will post additional notes as they are received. This document has not been edited for typos or grammatical errors and content comes directly from the notes supplied by the note takers.

Desired Outcomes of this meeting:

1. A List of perceptions for how economic development is or is not furthering people of color's needs

- What are your perceptions on how economic development is/not furthering the needs of people of color?
 - Two of the people of color led with comments about how promises are not being kept and money is not being invested in neighborhoods. “Redevelopment money is all downtown and is not helping the neighborhoods.” They said that as far as they can tell, low-income or minority candidates are not being hired by construction firms. “We don’t see them on the job site.” One woman said that she asked a construction site manager where all the African Americans were and he pointed out one guy. Neighborhoods in need are not improving. Section 3 requires local hiring and those are not being done. It’s not right. Feels they have no incentive. More firms are hiring only temporary and part time workers, avoiding paying living wages with benefits.
 - A white male who identified as working for fair jobs said that there is some progress. Bids are being done to include mandate for local hiring. But commitments need to be in writing. We have the local work force and they are being passed over. And the champions for this get vilified in the press.
 - A black male who has worked in higher education said that you need partnerships. “I see spirit and intent but time after time the city doesn’t act. And that leaves a chilling effect... We have a myopic view. Let’s use the new Diversity Officer to have a broad mandate and the power to influence.”

- The Chamber executive explained that 2,500 chamber members come from 32 communities, and 80 percent are small business. He said that partnerships are in place. The Chamber is advocating for specific job training to match the workforce needs of employers. There is skill gap. A black woman countered that “it’s a myth to say that we don’t have qualified workers here. Please stop saying that.”
- A white city councilor said that the youth internships do help and “it’s a rough road for youth” without adequate education. Others added that youth can’t get in the door and need job training. “My Grandfather ran the city’s first barbershop – it’s tougher now to start out.”
- A black woman asked, what are we doing to take down barriers to help people of color establish business? Are they being turned away for licenses? Do they feel welcome to join the Chamber? Also, absentee landlords are a huge problem making neighborhoods unlivable. “Nothing changes. I’ve been working on this for 55 years. I want my grandchildren to have it better here. It’s a nice city – we should be a potpourri and we can grow. But we will need to discuss the truth.”
- How many Chamber members are minority-owned firms? Answer: not enough. The Chamber does not actually have the specific data on how many such businesses exist and which are members. But it is working on projects that are aimed at the goal of equal opportunity. “Three yards forward every day. It takes a long time. We are staying at it.”
- A union advocate stated that unions have their own “minority problems” and are trying to improve their membership.
- What are the perceptions of how economic development is furthering or not furthering people of color’s needs? What are some stories to illustrate your perceptions?
 - We need:
 - Jobs,
 - Access to jobs, and
 - Training
 - It is obvious that we have a lot of unemployed people and this hits communities of color harder.
 - We need training. This has been cut back in the last five to ten years. Now some people do not have job skills – even entry level skills.
 - Two to three years ago, Worcester was receiving a million dollars more in funding for summer youth programs. Crime levels went down and it was good training opportunities for the youth.

- We need to make sure that kids know what they want to do after high school: Do they want to learn a trade? Pursue higher education? Or something else? Make sure they know the options.
- There is money to support youth jobs, and that helps, but we see the same problems reoccurring. Unemployment persists. People do not have access to high paying jobs.
- This is a deeper problem than just getting jobs to a few people. How can we/the city change the ways in which we think about the economy? It is more than getting/creating jobs. We need to think about other initiatives, kinds of jobs, self-determination, worker-owned co-operatives. Think in terms of cooperation instead of competition. In cities like Cleveland, there are large corporations that support worker-owned co-operatives where there is democracy in the workplace.
- Worcester Roots holds a co-operative academy every year. Worcester has a number of startups but we need more. We need an infrastructure to support them.
- On July 10th-11th, the Eastern Conference for Workplace Democracy is at Clark University. Friday night is free and there will be a showcase of community labor collectives there.
- When we use tax dollars to support businesses, do it with businesses that hire people in our local communities.
- Think about jobs but also think about where the investment is. What communities are getting the resources? People who control the funding should think about which communities get the resources, such as grant funding for beautification. We also need to think about the ability to bid on funds. Do people who get the funds know people or are we diversifying where the money goes?
- It is great for the city to grow the economy, but we need more private money. There are loan stipulations for private investment that may be too much for a mom & pop shop. How can the city exert its influence to appropriately help with this? Some neighborhoods need more help and others are not being improved or included.
- If Worcester did spread the wealth, it may encourage smaller businesses to thrive if there are nicer streets in all neighborhoods so that those smaller businesses can grow as the communities do.
- Larger corporations (big industry) have responsibilities. Hospitals are an example. They have an obligation. Worcester's poverty level is probably the lowest in the area. An article said that the City Manager is going to start a program with the Department of Public Works that could lead to full time employment. This summer, it is encouraging

that the city is going to be in 11 parks. In the past, all of the parks had activities and lunches available for kids, and now they are going back to recreation, food, and life skills. The key with the youth is hope and opportunity. Young people need the opportunity to learn the skills that they need to be successful.

- There are 13 colleges in the Worcester area. Clark and WPI are good partners and we need that for the youth to be successful.
- Sometimes the talk of training youth is to get them to be laborers, but for real change, we need them to learn leadership so they feel that their voice is heard. A co-operative gives them a chance to see how to run a business.
- We need to be realistic. Education is key. Not everyone can take advantage of that.
- Two years ago, Worcester Technical High School was a blue ribbon school. General Powell came here to look at the opportunities. President Obama spoke at graduation, and the principal was Principal of the Year. President Obama said that he could have spoken at any school but he came to Worcester Tech because he thought it could be an example for the country in a technical education.
- One participant agreed but stated that it appears we are dismissing the idea that kids can learn to run a business. At Worcester Roots, within a year, kids learn how to keep the books.
- Role models and mentoring are key for our youth to be successful.
- Speaking about the city investing money, not every school looks like Worcester Tech. The reality is that property tax amounts in certain neighborhoods are different as is the investment in schools in different neighborhoods.
- Young people have a lot of skills and we need to help them build off of those skills. How do we increase leadership? We can offer different coursework in schools, like economics, to help them build skills.
- We need independent investors – people who are motivated by incentives. How do we encourage people to go into schools and encourage their places of employment to give them credit for working all day when they do that?
- One participant asked about the grant that was mentioned earlier. A participant responded that it was an escalating federal grant for summer jobs that went down through no fault of Massachusetts or Worcester.

- The DPH has a summer jobs program and is doing a great job. It has allowed 11 parks to open and has a mobile library. Kids learn how to make decisions with their programs.
- Youth Center also does a good job with training.
- What are some of the common themes we've discussed?
 - These are all really important points that we've discussed but we need to think deeper and out of the box if we want systems change down the road. The wealth gap is increasing and we live in that context.
 - People think young adults aren't capable of doing work that needs to be done.
 - Worcester has good initiatives but that doesn't mean we don't have a problem. We're doing good but we aren't where we need to be.
- One participant raised concerns about white people who haven't been trained regarding racism because of institutionalized racism.
- Racism precedes the formation of this country. We have laws to support business and powerful businesses have gotten that support and have rigged the system. There is a profit motive – profits over people. This feeds into racism because we are trained to think that resources are scarce when we just have a skewed distribution system.
- Worcester does a lot that is right. When we evaluate how things are working, we also need to see who is being served. We want to see more partnerships to make things happen.
- Definition of Economic Development
 - Discussion
 - Community Development is a more inclusive term and Economic Development is less inclusive. Community Development includes training, jobs and participating in planning.
 - Example of Community Development vs Economic development is the debate over the courthouse. There were questionable subcontractors and the business community was scared of losing the courthouse so they did not advocate enough for the city or employ people from within the community.
 - There were some but should have been more working protections, community benefits and built in protections.

- Example a developer went to Littleton to get TIF. The town got \$300,000 to fix parks problem.
 - The city can negotiate to get in town people plus programs for in town services.
 - Worcester feels too desperate and vulnerable to negotiate so a developer can get a TIF in Worcester without having to give anything to the community
 - The sub-contractor for court house developer had sites shut down. .
- Most jobs in the city have subcontractors hiring very few Worcester people
- Economic Development caters to money and what's most profitable and Community Development goes beyond that
- There is a misconception that Economic Development is limited. All components not just business are involved. The increase of income and the tax base.
- Economic Development looks at earning potential and the tax base and services provided to the community and the area.
- One participant sees it as people at the bottom still making the same regardless of CEO's income. It doesn't matter about Worcester's city growth since nothing happened at the bottom of the scale.
- Economic side is worried about money
- Outsiders doing jobs in Worcester instead of Worcester workers
 - Side street poles going up to replace poles. Long trucks with big augers on participant's street. Company was from Tauller CT. Why is the city employing outside of Worcester companies and employees?
- Economic Development and Community Development go along with each other.
 - Creating jobs and businesses
 - It is hard to understand how it is implemented in Worcester
 - Who gives to what?
 - What are the tax incentives?
- Regardless of income we are a community of one and all have the same wants, same needs.
- There is a lack of strong leadership vs strong institutions
- Community gets left out and things go for personal gain

- We should look at which side needs roads, education, and police.
 - The city is going great but previously it was personal development.
 - We have to talk about race as a community of one.
- What are the perceptions of how economic development is furthering or not furthering people of color's needs? What are some stories to illustrate your perceptions?
 - Discussion
 - Participant lived here 25 years. Did city assists based on race and religion? Yes, they did
 - Of course they got money for economic development but where did the money go and how was it spent?
 - Economic development is to uplift people; homeless, in need of food, mental health issues. It is a human issue not a race or religion issue
 - Yes funds are allocated based on race and religion but people in power should be ashamed "you don't bit the hand that feeds you"
 - Leaders in our own communities taking funds for personal gain.
 - Need to be accountable for ourselves, leaders and organizations too.
 - There are 96 year old white organizations in Worcester but 30 year old black organizations don't exist.
 - o Where are the black organizations? Their leaders share funds with friends and themselves
 - o Hold minority/black leaders accountable for not making progress
 - When you read about business development and jobs and money being made that is economic development.
 - Worcester plans to renovate buildings and areas which brings employers into Worcester
 - -For a long time 5 families ran the city and did not make it easy for outsiders
 - Insider/Outsider mentality
 - Worcester didn't have a plan
 - Developers bring in business and encourage improvement
 - Seems that Worcesterites should be the focus of employment

- Businesses bring in their own people and they hire from around here
 - Employees brought in start paying taxes into community
- Have to be strong about employing people from the area.
- Participant thinks the question is awful
 - People of color are not asking to be oppressed
 - We should ask; what are the perceptions of how economic development affects white people in power?
 - People don't want to give up power
 - We could prove racism by looking into why companies call certain other companies
 - Stop looking at what black people need
- Question is not addressing the issue or addressing it all wrong
 - What person of color doesn't want economic development?
- Who makes the choices and selections and how to hold those people accountable?
- How to prevent new voices from getting shut down?
- Everyone has a story about how people of color are affected
- White people in power have a lot to lose if they release that power
- It is not just people of color that are poor
- Rewriting question one instead of people of color; Worcesterites or disenfranchised
 - This would unify more people
 - Don't single out people of color we are a people of a global majority
 - Wife works 2-3 jobs and has 3 children and not always enough but still goes out to work
- Power is very corrupt
 - Our own people are oppressing us
 - Black folks getting money for many years and have no paperwork to show what was done with the money
 - The powerful shouldn't choose leaders the people should choose
- Focusing on my community because other people are looking out for their own
- Bashing leadership without being specific is not fair
- Leadership is when people step in to fill a void.

- Participant started when he looked at nieces and nephews and said he has to do something so they can have better schools
 - It will continue to be hard for other communities to work with us until we deal with the issues in Worcester.
 - Talented people leave Worcester and the city doesn't work to keep them
 - We have to get over our jealousy of people.
 - Participant doesn't care who gets money as long as those people do what they are supposed to do
 - Participant was struggling with the question and something in the question
 - It's not about money but where are the opportunities going
 - It took a long time and missteps to figure out what need I could fill and make a niche for myself.
 - This is where the playing field isn't level because people in power have this down. Looking for people who go to specific colleges or are part of specific programs
 - Leveling the playing field and making opportunities equally accessible
 - Participant states he worked with privileged white students at Clark and even they have to leave Worcester for jobs.
- Before we started to answer the two discussion questions, we went around and had everyone introduce themselves and define Economic Development for themselves below is their answers:
 - The overall success of businesses.
 - For black people, sustaining a family and getting paid as well as contributing/working equitably, socially, and politically.
 - Young adults (18-24) need economic development because without it jobs are scarce and college is unaffordable. Skills and strengths are overlooked. More scholarships are needed, possibly through health care leaders who can help young adults do community health work.
 - Ying and Yang (economy- what happens to us.) Through economic development we have the ability to shape the economy to dismantle racism.
 - Workforce training and job development.
 - Professional opportunities for everyone. Increased job retention, education, and internship that lead to future jobs.

- Growth of tax base and economic opportunities.
- Economic development needs to trickle to the families who need it....
- Providing the tools to improve our quality of life.
- Reparations to fairly level the playing the playing field: wages earned for 400 years of slavery. Need to talk about the head start that has given whites the advantage before we discuss economic development.
- Attitude and language change.
- Job opportunities are disadvantage for people of color with names like Jamal instead of Johnny. Resume Example.
- what are the perceptions of how economic development is furthering or not furthering people of color's needs? What are some stories to illustrate your perceptions?
 - Attitudes should be reflected in decisions: whom you will hire or let into educational institutions.
 - Black People are not accepted or allowed to be apart if the system. "If you don't want us we can go...", "...We don't need a hat in hand... over criminalized..."
 - Why can't I get a job there, I see all those Rhode Island license plates. Let's buy from local and minority owned businesses. City needs to ask this.
 - A plan to put people of color to work- 1 MN reference 5000 people of color employed by 2015
 - Sometimes we think we're all aware of the same information, this is not true. Create lead-time to make equality work. Share information so it
 - City of Worcester reaching out to more people of color when jobs are opening.
 - Hire with in our communities.
 - Small business loans are harder to get if you're a person of color.
 - Don't hire a person of color unless they are equally qualified.
 - Asian ? coalition was called about upcoming employment opportunities.
 - Commonalities between agencies help a lot.
 - Perception- if you're an unemployed person of color it takes training. City government knows this but doesn't always do enough. The lens that you see issues through is key. Minority contractor procurement plans Worcester job fund: helps with pre apprentice job program. Two different types of Derdo
 - Wealth generation
 - Availability of life- housing, transportation, school

- Too much pacifying ?. Can't get jobs, returning from jail means no opportunities available given current policies.
- Education: everyone get free Pre-K. Education full time. Continue to strengthen schools- career pathways too many children waiting to get into Voc. Tech. programs bit still hard to get jobs.
- Education is unaffordable; state schools have tiny budgets, so this is good.
- Equal opportunities for all children are good, BUT curriculum needs to change.
- Attitudes need to change before anything.
- Being told "No you'll be a hairdresser vs. a Dr."
- If forums will be successful, then change your attitude.
- Financing for families is Key before you can expect people to stay in school.
- Slave psyche still affects us all as well as white superiority attitudes.
- People of color are tired of begging.
- Loving others, "It's whites that aren't feeling the love..."
- What are the perceptions of how economic development is furthering or not furthering people of color's needs? What are some stories to illustrate your perceptions?
 - I'm not sure I understand what economic development is. Is it job creation?
 - Yes, I believe that's one aspect of job creation.
 - So what is economic development? Can we define it?
 - Economic development is job creation, new industry, an opportunity for all to participate in economic growth.
 - But it's also meaningful jobs, not just minimum wage.
 - We need technical support for job creation.
 - There needs to be more equity in hiring and equity in pay for women and people of color. For residents, knowing there are meaningful opportunities is important. There are no jobs, for example, in Main South or in the Providence Street neighborhood. We need to reach at-risk kids who are not going to college or joining the military. We need to give them meaningful training so that they don't turn to activities that will send them to prison. Legislators need to make policies to support these ideas.
 - If we look at schools and at students of color, we need to look at where they live. Students need to have role models in their community. [Gave an example of a kid explaining that people in his neighborhood don't have jobs. The student was told to go to school, but he didn't see the point since it wouldn't help his future because there are no jobs available.]

- Economic development doesn't work because of structural racism. Barack Obama recently gave an example of two students: Johnny, and Jamal. If both interview for the same job, Johnny gets a second interview; Jamal doesn't . . . and the only difference are their names.
- We need to focus on bringing jobs to inner areas and to benefit people of color. MassWorks provides state funding for jobs and housing. We haven't created jobs in areas that need the jobs. Infrastructure development should be in Main South, Belmont Hill, and other areas of lower employment rates. We need focus from the City on where jobs are needed, not on areas that are sanctioned by the Chamber of Commerce.
- For people of color, it's different in Worcester. Really, it's a poor thing, not necessarily a racism thing. Kids in poor areas get locked up. This pulls more resources (like tax payers) out of those areas. There's no one answer. We need to fix a bunch of systems [like were discussed at prior Community Conversations] to support a community.
- 40 years ago, there were opportunities in Main South, such as factories. Then, starting in 1976, the medical school opened and the City's focus turned to medical care. There, there was a focus on caretaking. There was a shift so that more women were employed.
- Current manufacturing is computer-operated. Now, people need computer knowledge, not just knowledge on how to work a drill press.
- Is that a job training issue? Or engineering school? Can we teach these skills in technical high schools? We need to train for 21st century blue collar work.
- This is an equity issue: how do we replicate the technical high school all over Worcester?
- We need to close two high schools and make a bigger high school. Something modeled after Wachusett. Kids in small schools are not challenging each other.
- The perception is still there that there are no jobs.
- The elephant in the room is the global economy. Jobs are going to other countries, because that's where labor can be done cheaper. How to we make something in America but still make a profit?
- Isn't it about equity in pay? The managers versus the workers?
- In Conway, New Hampshire, store fronts are empty, not unlike Main South. There are limited job opportunities in those areas. [References jobs in New Hampshire like at camp grounds and ski lodges – jobs that are incredibly weather-dependent].
- The easiest jobs to get right now are overland trucking jobs. Those jobs are advertised all over the media. Can we teach truck driving?

- The problem with trucking jobs is that you need to be 21 . . . so some kids may have difficulty after high school before they turn 21.
- It's not easy to find a job in this economy. Minimum wage is going up in 2016 and 2017. In the meantime, people aren't switching jobs in this economy.
- There are different levels of employment requirements. Main South is making progress in education, as we can see from rising graduation rates. Economic opportunity revolves around educational opportunity. We are just not addressing the need to bring opportunity to immigrant populations. We aren't addressing old properties. Local jobs should be for local people. [References the old courthouse as an example of where jobs and money are leaving the community]. We should set quotas for apprenticeships and minority hiring. We need a community voice to push back against Chamber interests.
- Can we talk about incentives? For example, we could provide incentives to businesses to hire locally. What if we gave health insurance through meaningful work instead of just giving it out as free health care? We should give healthcare incentives to employers. Policymakers need to incentivize businesses to stay and hire locally. It's better to incentivize (a positive term) than do quotas (a negative term).
- Workforce Central might be able to train for trucking.
- Are there state and federal incentives for businesses to do retraining of folks? If so, we need to spread the word about these "carrots." It's capitalism with a social, not just economic, angle.
- Our participants came to a consensus and shared the following points at the report-back session:
 - Current economic development policies are not furthering people of color – or anyone, really. We are not meeting community needs.
 - We need jobs for the skills people have; we need to train for the jobs that exist.
 - We need to invest in communities that are failing, rather than focusing on where the jobs are. People want to work in their own communities. We need to invest more than just in downtown. There needs to be a balance with where we're creating opportunities.
- What are the perceptions of how economic development is furthering or not furthering the needs of people of color?
 - Perceptions
 - Difficult to start a small business
 - Small businesses need help with start-up loans
 - Red-lining based on loan security produces a closed feedback loop

- Employment opportunities depend on qualifications that depend in turn on educational opportunities
 - No opportunities for advancement; irrespective of ability to speak English
 - City needs to provide more transparency so local contractors can bid on projects
 - Proper training for minorities including English proficiency in technical terminology
 - Negotiate with contractors to hire a % of local employees
 - More focus on smaller to mid-size projects
 - TIFs (Tax Information Financing) and TAX Breaks are public
- What are some stories to illustrate your perceptions?
 - Stories
 - Ernst (electrical engineer with Master's Degree) wanted to start a math tutoring business near Lincoln Plaza where many of his ESL students live.
 - Rent of \$2-3000/month is cost prohibitive.
 - "Lenders talked over my head and I have a masters degree!"
 - See June 29, 2015 article in the Telegram and Gazette about challenges small business entrepreneurs face in Worcester
 - (Peter Cohan interviews Frederico Sotomayor, CEO of ISLA International)
 - Martha lives in her shop to reduce personal expenses so she can afford to pay high rent where her shop is located (dense business district).
 - Marginalized people are often employed during off-peak business hours
 - Open and close shifts
 - Often without benefits
 - Often paid less than minimum wage
 - Often paid under the table to avoid high payroll taxes
 - Police presence near these businesses makes undocumented employees flee
 - Courthouse project – City signed contract with an outside company (NH)
 - Unannounced to local bidders who hire minorities

- Local bidders were told, “Don’t say anything because the courthouse won’t get developed.”
 - Vacant buildings in Lincoln Square are evidence that Worcester needs to improve in the area of economic development.
 - Grandfather was a shoemaker who was able to support his family
 - Millworkers in Worcester also received living wages
 - Currently, we need to increase minimum wage for entry-level positions that do not require higher education
- The session started with introductions, a description of the ground rules (respectful dialogue; speak one at a time), and a discussion of how the group would define “economic development.” Group members offered the following definitions:
 - Growth of commercial tax base
 - Growth of jobs
 - Jobs with opportunity
 - Jobs with livable wages
 - Community-building
 - Get homeowners to live in neighborhoods/decrease in number of absentee landlords
 - Access to resources and capital
 - Development across the spectrum, from small entrepreneurship all the way up to large corporations
 - Financial literacy (hard to acquire financial literacy when family unstable—needs to be taught in school)
- The group then talked about whether any of these components has race implications:
 - When businesses do hiring, think about hiring goals—an example of success was Med City, when there was a push by the trades to hire females and minorities
 - Barriers to economic development as it relates to jobs include court involvement/CORI, which limits job opportunities—the collateral consequences of involvement in the criminal justice system
 - One group member pointed out the disparities in sentencing for motor vehicle violations between Worcester kids of color and white kids in Westborough—kids of color with a criminal record have a hard time finding jobs
- The group then discussed QUESTION 1—How does econ development further or impede the needs of people of color?
 - Instead of coming together as a business community and engaging with the Chamber, we break into smaller groups.

- We need to diversify business groups
- We need purposeful integration of businesses
- We need to reach out to different groups to ensure that we are recruiting in different sectors/parts of the city/populations
- Need apprenticeship programs—they were successful but were seen as too expensive by the state so they ended.
- One business leader noted that in other cities, business will not get a contract if they don't have enough diversity in the workforce; frustrated that this is not the case in Worcester.
- Local stores used to hire local kids. Now the jobs have left the city and stores are hiring fewer people—you can walk around Target “for half an hour” and never see an employee who can help you. Those disappeared jobs used to go to local kids.
- Leadership of companies and agencies needs to diversify—now it is overwhelmingly white. The same with city government.
- People in suburbs are scared to come into the city, so people don't want to develop in the city.
 - How does the group feel about whether people should respond and call out those who have misperceptions about the “dangers” of downtown Worcester?
 - Minds are hard to change. If kids don't go to school with kids who don't look like them, they don't learn to break down barriers
- Every agency in the city should commit to saying we will hire one young person
- The group then acknowledged that the group itself is not reflective of the community's diversity. When the group was joined by a woman of color, she observed that the room looked like her high school cafeteria. Other members of the group remarked that prior sessions had more diversity, and that the fact that the room was almost 100% white was surprising given that other sessions were not.
 - One group member expressed disappointment over the lack of voices who could tell the group what it's like to try to get a job, run for City Council, etc.
- The group then discussed how leadership could change:
 - Need to provide opportunities for communities of color to become leaders—one group member stressed the importance of giving at-risk youth the opportunity to learn and grow with mentors and teachers, and said that more organizations need to do that.

- Too little informal and formal dialogue among races
- Too few job opportunities
- Too little dissemination of what skills individual companies are looking for
- Lack of recognition of skills with which immigrants arrive or how these skills can be put to use here
- What are the perceptions of how economic development is furthering or not furthering people of color's needs? What are some stories that illustrate your perceptions?
 - Employment gap:
 - Workforce statistics in Worcester are being studied; gaps in the outcome data persist. In the schools there are learning/achievement gaps. The same is true that there are gaps in employment.
 - People of color have a tough time launching into a first job if the education opportunities have been limited
 - Participant reframing of first question (identified as offensive): How do race and racism impact economic development for people of color or intersects with people of color?
 - Employment discrimination is evident with people of color and the City and businesses are modeling discrimination and it is not being challenged. Nothing is done with employers about discrimination.
 - Real estate ownership is lower for people of color in Worcester. No education on the process & no incentives for these communities. No investment of resources.
 - There is inequity within the higher education system in terms of the requirements in the classrooms for the people of color. The root of the economic inequality starts in education opportunities; that is the root issue. People are exhausted by having to work harder in school from young through higher education. By the time they reach their first job they are tired and no energy to reach beyond for entrepreneurship etc
 - Job creation: Most jobs are granted through existing relationships so due to the legacy of racism individuals who are white are holding the positions of power; they send new job postings to individuals that are also white (friends/family)... its a natural occurrence but to switch this trend takes intention.
 - Story: In one example a qualified woman of color was hired to serve as the Director of an organization and the rest of the staff resigned. There needs to be some orientation so people can accept one another.
 - Youth employment:

- Worcester Interfaith works with youth job development funds from the state are dedicated for poor/low income youth. When looking for more jobs and when approached the largest companies in the City they indicated the children of employees, often white, are given the summer work as a perk, which perpetuates unfair employment practices.
- This year the City has established a youth employment program to match the State \$ with City \$ to hire youth that are not related to City employees so they can learn about the jobs and workforce and assess the fit
- UMass used to take the lead with hiring over 200 young people, mostly people of color, but now due to economics, 75% of the jobs are gone
- Perhaps some of the Community business groups, members of the Chamber, could be challenged to do the same thing with their constituents as UMass did previously?
- For 10 years in Worc we have been working with youth to help prepare them for jobs and the pipeline is not ready to establish new jobs where these youth can work
- Could we tap into the Jobs Fund to provide education and training efforts for young people to “grow our own indigenous pipeline” to meet the criteria of City jobs and then if that criteria is met to hire these young people into these positions?
- It all goes back to the pipeline and the need to identify the skills gap and how can the Chamber and City and others get the students in these areas
- Residents, minority and women are the priorities for this Jobs Fund to overturn “the old way”
- Business ownership does not usually have the contracts with minority owned businesses. The current general criteria for contracts will not overturn the current system of racism. Other communities have identified different criteria to support minority-owned businesses so they can be given contracts for more business.
- Provocative Facilitator Question: Is this just a Worcester issue?
- Job readiness:
 - If we are not addressing the job readiness factor then people are not qualified to obtain the opportunities that do exist. It all goes back to the pipeline and the need to identify the skills gap and how can the Chamber and City and others get the students in these areas.

- I have done a lot of interviews as an employee of the City... often comes back to job readiness... for many applicants perhaps there is no cover letter... the issue is do we look beyond the requirements to make exceptions for people of color?
 - In schools its important to promote what students are good at and provide support to help them know where they are going...
 - Pay teachers to go to the large employers to ask them what they are seeking/expecting in employees and then translate that to the education curricula to make sure its relevant.
- White affirmative action exists from people who get inside/additional support
- Story: I am an advocate for affirmative action as my whole life I have benefited from affirmative action as someone who has had jobs that I was not really qualified for... dropped out of college etc...
- Participant question: Is it possible to have a residency requirement for City positions so they are more local and invested and spending money in the City?
- This is a tough collective bargaining issue... people will need to petition City Council if this is an important issue for people.
- Participant question: In some cases there was a view that there were no enough jobs in Worcester? Are there enough jobs available and qualified candidates are being passed over or are there not enough jobs?
- Participant response: there are a lot of jobs but there is a gap for the higher, biotech jobs and these often higher out of state rather than local residents
- Qualified people are not getting jobs and there may be a perception or it may not be qualified training
- Story: Need to change some of the perception that manufacturing jobs are all bad... for example one manufacturer takes students out to the parking lot to let them see the quality of life that they may be able to afford base on the expensive cars. Shows that this work can be high skilled jobs in clean facilities etc
- Participant Question: Are there any CORI requirements for the City positions?
- Participant Response: There are varying levels of requirements dependent on the position.
- Participant Question: What % of these jobs may have a no CORI requirement for the youth who are subject to this form of racism?
- Participant Response: There are a lot of places in City government where there are available jobs without a CORI requirement

- Job incubation: It may be wise to look at incubating and developing new jobs from immigrants and New Americans.... Important to look at this population and provide some support to start new business...e.g. clothing line, music, food establishments
- Story: Recently at the adult/ESL graduation there was a Mexican immigrant in Worcester for a few years and just graduated the ESL program and began with a food truck and now has a brick and mortar restaurant open at the Greendale Mall with employees etc.
- Participant Question: Is there a way that we can break that communication barrier so people know how to access the available resources?
- Business Incubation: there is a lot of emphasis on how will we as a City bring in new people and that can send a message that the people here do not have what we need. This can be a dangerous message. It is more about the intentionally for what resources we have and how to piece them together.
- Worcester Tech
 - This school has become so excellent and popular that now the admission is limited so that the students that now want to attend and gain these skills do not have access. The school is not big enough to serve the needs of the school and the admission is very selective (top down). The trade off is when the expectations were raised for Worcester Tech that it now excludes other students. The tech component of other high schools has been lost but important to consider reintroducing these skills to increase access.
 - There is now also an exploration for how to use Worcester Tech after hours to provide more skills and training for more students to increase access and opportunities
- Recruit Retain and Incubate is an important mission of the Chamber
- Participant Question: What are the skills that people have and are we not marketing them correctly? How does cultural competency play into this piece?
- Need to make sure there is diversifying the workforce and not just pushing people of color to certain types of jobs (like becoming a Certified Nurse Assistant).
- Immigrants/Cultural Fluency:
 - Important to understand people who are coming from another country may not know the cultural expectations in terms of job seeking/applying
 - Credentials from other countries are not always recognized here in Worcester

- If they are aware of what is happening in the City than they can participate and respond appropriately
- We also have predatory institutions such as Salter School that prey upon people from other countries to enroll them and then promise them false jobs

2. A list of ideas for how we can dismantle racism by working together for a more equitable local economy for all residents in the city

- What should residents, businesses, and policymakers do?
 - Supportive services will be needed if you want to expand opportunity for economic empowerment. We have the systems and need to tap them and bring them together. There are plenty of models. Talk to the residents. They can help move this.
 - We need to assign responsibility. One person said “city hall is the answer.” Another said, “City government can’t do it alone. Partner with private business. It’s too discouraging to leave it up to one leader and then nothing happens. Develop ready partners. Sustain this by making it the work of institutions including city, colleges, and businesses. They say they want to help. Let them.” City Hall can anchor this work in one person who will serve as a focal point. That person must be empowered and help coordinate efforts. “If we don’t like how city councilors support it, then we can vote them out.”
 - It was noted that more businesses are occupied in Main South and Chandler Street that makes it feel like there is some progress in neighborhoods. Celebrate those policies that have helped -- e.g. parking overlay allowed greater ease for new businesses.
- What can residents, policymakers and business leaders do to help dismantle racism through economic development in our city?
 - Maybe focus on neighborhoods because Worcester is a city of neighborhoods – look at a neighborhood level to see what you can do for neighborhoods.
 - One participant noted that Worcester is a big city in the Commonwealth, and when he learned what happened in the city, he was shocked at how un-informed people were about what was available. People do not know what is happening; they do not know about Worcester Roots and YouthBuild and other programs. There are good things happening but not everyone knows about them. This participant stated that he grew up in the 60s and 70s where there was food in the parks and ABCD (Asset Based Community Development). They took all of the programs that were

working and expanded them. Now you have great programs that are only helping a small number of people and could do more. You need a forum or showcase of what is available.

- Another participant added that if you could highlight the good things, maybe it will resonate with a business leader who will volunteer.
- We need to get the word out there, and we may get more help from people when they know about the good things that are happening.
- Programs help to develop the youth – we need to inventory what is out there. The city has a lot of resources but we need an integrated plan of economic development. It is more than just communication. We need in one place information for people starting a business, looking for a job, etc. so that someone can find all of the information that they need for what they are trying to do. Those things may exist but they are not tied together in one place.
- Twenty states are considering legislation for state-owned banks. Philadelphia is among the cities having city-owned banks.
- How can we, the citizens, get our hands on the reins of power?
 - Boston had participatory budgeting where the youth decided on where the money went.
 - This empowers people to feel like they made a difference.
- One participant stated that YouthBuild changed her life. She stated that you get out of it what you put into it. The program offers test prep and carpentry skills among others. People are helping her to have a career in construction. She said that she realized that if she wants to see improvements, they need to start with her.
- Another participant asked, “Wouldn’t it be great if programs like this [YouthBuild] were already in schools?”
 - Gets back to mentoring.
 - If something like YouthBuild had been in place in school during school hours, it could make a difference. You can put kids on a different track to do this – and learn skills, like financial literacy – instead of going to gym or music class. This could be introduced at a younger age.
 - We need to extend mentoring.
- One participant noted that when she hires, if she is looking for bilingual applicants with a bachelor degree or higher, she can only get maybe one a year to come to Worcester because she is competing with Boston and other cities. There needs to be a way to entice staff to come here; funding is not the issue.

- One participant noted that 24 to 35 year old professionals need to go outside of Worcester to work; they do not see job opportunities in Worcester.
 - Young professionals want to work in the community but need to venture out for opportunities or salaries.
- If you have a child of color growing up in Worcester, are they going to go to college? One participant recalled knowing many who got stuck in high school level careers because they cannot afford to go to get advanced degrees.
- One participant noted that there had not been presidents of the local Universities at any of the community dialogues.
 - It was noted that Clark gives free tuition for any kid who graduates from Worcester schools with a certain GPA.
- It is great to train the youth to be mentors. You could have people in YouthBuild trained to mentor 14 to 15 year olds so that the 14 and 15 year olds can talk to someone who has been in their shoes.
 - One participant stated that she did not want her daughter to drop out and she did not want her to need YouthBuild. She is not going to let her do that so she needs to work twice as hard.
 - Mentoring is huge. We need to lead by example.
 - It starts with educators at schools. If students don't see educators who look like them, they don't think education is for them. Students of color see athletes and entertainers.
- Students from Worcester want to leave Worcester when they graduate. Most who get college educations – including those who grew up in Worcester and then went to Worcester colleges – see that education as a ticket to leave.
- Worker ownership is the attraction to someone with skills to get them to stay. You can have co-operatives in every sector of the economy.
- One participant noted that he went to Saturday school from third through twelfth grade. It was supplemental and skill development for what your interests and passions are.
 - Sometimes we put a lot of pressure on the existing structure, trying to pack a lot into the week, when we can think of alternatives.
- One participant noted the need for anti-racism training (like Undoing Racism) and noted that there are gatekeepers who are keeping the status quo and do not realize that they are gatekeepers. This is a huge obstacle. We have to work with gatekeepers to educate them. The participant said she was raised in a racist home and had to undo that as an adult. We need to work with gatekeepers or these suggestions will fall on deaf ears.

- One participant stated that he was not sure if any gatekeepers go to Undoing Racism.
 - Another participant stated that she had recruited them and some will go and others say they are too busy.
 - Another participant stated that for the top 20 companies, whether they are busy or not, the training won't go anywhere unless people go and are open. The top people need to attend the training or else it sends the wrong message to the rest of the company.
 - One participant stated that a lot of training that is called "cultural awareness" is superficial.
 - Another participant stated that regardless of what you want to call the training, you need to have the top people of the company go for it to be successful.
 - Undoing Racism is supposed to motivate you.
 - One participant stated that we should think about ways other than a class to reach people. He stated that he had done executive coaching with executives (rather than classroom training) where the coaching sessions happened a few times a month for three years over lunch. It wasn't until 14 months in that the executive had some breakthroughs. He also took the executive on field trips to really see what was happening. There are ways to get to people – you need to be meeting people where they're at. "The fish doesn't know the water is wet." A follow up session with coaching would be important.
- What can residents, policymakers and business leaders do to help dismantle racism through economic development in our city?
 - Wealth is in certain groups hands and it does accrue over time
 - Colleges and businesses in some places incubate startup businesses and ideas that come from the youth in the community
 - Empowering inner city youths
 - Figuring out how to create business and keep wealth local
 - Support black/latino/mom and pop businesses
 - Internalized racism is an issue
 - Seeing others in the paper or getting accolades and being angry or jealous
 - Not going to Walmart you may pay more for your neighbors services but it supports the community
 - Participant would like to see it taken a step further; rather than helping a person get a job she'd like to help a person realize a career.
 - Love to see where people want to be in roles they wouldn't traditionally see themselves

- Example black and/or female CEOs
- Leaders need to help raise the bar and go beyond
- In Worcester the Latino community supports each other and their businesses but the African American community doesn't
 - Another example of internalized racism
- People should get in with people who are doing it and not criticize
- There is no excuse for people not knowing what's going on in the community
- In general wealth is multi-generational
 - Court house project created some jobs but they weren't permanent jobs
 - Supporting local businesses is what generates wealth
- When you lead big there is a big target on you
 - People step up and criticize and it comes from your own folks
- Sometimes instead of waiting to get a lot of people involved you just have to move forward rather than hold back the whole community
 - Move forward with the people that are already there with you
- Sometimes you are focused on survival and you shop where you can afford even if it is Walmart
- Participant is learning how to go about elections in Worcester and what she can do to participate in the process
- Too many people work too hard with 3 jobs to make what others make on one income
- You have to be part of the decision making process
- You can't blame problems on one group.
- How do we get at it? What happens now? What are the rules?
- If people don't know how to get involved or vote because they are focused on survival
- This meeting is nothing it is all politics
 - There are elections
 - People in power are on one side
 - Poor people on the other side
- We need to elect our own leaders to fit our interests otherwise nothing happens
- Participant is more optimistic in broader sense because of smart growth
 - More people are moving back to the city
 - Store fronts will fill up as people start walking
 - Envisioning things more like in Boston/New York
 - Convenience will encourage and support local businesses

- The reason the question hasn't been answered in 30 years is because capitalism is about exploiting and keeping wealth
- These dialogs are very important and change can come out of this and from the discussion that comes after this.
- 30 years ago there were victories in affirmative action. Human rights committee was turned into a Human rights commission
- Until recently pre-vocational training slots were overlooked until it was brought to the attention of leadership
 - Chamber of Commerce and State Senator Harriett Chandler
- Let people know how and where to vote and how to get involved
- Suggestion for a "High 5" 3 discussions, 2 proposals and one Action Plan to come out of this meeting
- what can residents, policymakers and business leaders do to help dismantle racism through economic development in our city?
 - Policy makers and business leaders can work directly with local leaders so it's clear what local leaders can do to train their constituents.
 - People of Color are disadvantaged after high school because no one can afford the top schools they got into. They still have to work when in community college.
 - Policy: nobody should owe more than \$15K at the end of college.
 - Reparations need to happen.
 - Free Pre School.
 - Lending economic capital is a win for everyone.
 - Working with community stakeholders to identify barriers affecting communities of color. ↓ With Barriers ↑ with access.
 - Works with anchor institutions (schools, hospitals) to provide inclusion for diversity then create goals, accountability/collaborate.
 - It's no more us than them; It's a global economy.
 - Equity: people at top have a responsibility to make sure the wealth trickles down.
 - Is there a minority owned association to help minority owned business?
 - Build local capacity for the network here in Worcester. Nigel Belgrade started something a few years ago.
 - Worcester needs to structurally talk about race and racism. We need a process or system in place to do this.
 - Fact sheets aren't specific to us. Data like: People of color into jobs in 2015... Be honest about what your tracking.
 - Racial equity tools are used in a lot of communities and we need to adopt this here.
 - S.B.A has too many hoops to go through for people of color.

- Getting communities to trust us when we're doing small business recruitment is hard.
- Need to hire more people of color when recruiting if you want to give them a chance.
- Trust- once we change attitudes then we have to trust that those attitudes will stick. (i.e in a bank.)
- Individuals are responsible for making race relations better.
- African Americans have a lot invested here. Many native Americans/ African Americans have been here as long if not longer than others.
- "We/I want to work in a sustainable way."
- You show me you want to "kill me" or "lock me up" that's the attitude and it's hard to put yourself out there with this perception. We're not lazy, denial just repeatedly wears on you.
- I would support people of color to represent themselves in local and national government.
- Make Augustus stop using the word "minority" it makes people feel as if they are the lesser.
- Jobs rare filled through networking.
- Create a diverse network then share our access to others (job, housing, etc.)
- Minority vs. people of color terminology.
- Kwanzaa- Self-determination principle.
- "Minority communities are the "majority" start in Worcester. Change perceptions by being intentional when using language to cultivate equality.
- We are a people first, separation hurts and divides.
- What can residents, policymakers, and business leaders do to help dismantle racism through economic development in our city?
 - Hiring, hiring, hiring. Training, training, training.
 - We need to incentivize in Main South, like what Baltimore does with old buildings. We need to give resources in communal areas.
 - What about foreign competition?
 - Worcester and our food industry have a good geographic location.
 - We are close to several capital cities. We need to improve our pull on them.
 - As residents, we need to take pride in our neighborhoods. We need to get businesses to want to come back. We need to help the police. We need to get ride of prejudice. As it is now, the street on your resume impacts how you're treated.
 - What about the unions? How do they enter the conversation?

- The workforce needs to represent the community. Minority hiring in Worcester is down. Anyone who lives here should be able to work here.
- How do we provide a roadmap to understand the needs of employment now? Where do people find candidates? Who has needs? How do we connect workers with the right openings? Is there transportation? We need new resources for immigrants. What can we do to help them start businesses? I'm not convinced race matters if there's nothing in your neighborhood.
- In terms of economic development, Massachusetts is about to make billions off of weed (but we've been locking kids up for years for being a part of this industry). How many minority dispensaries will there be? For kids in poor communities, this was what they did for a living.
- Years ago I had two students who couldn't pass MCAS. They had business plans but couldn't graduate. They needed mentors.
- People need an opportunity to learn under the supervision of skilled people, such as master plumbers and builders.
- I think "educators" should have been included in the question prompts. Our leaders, and teachers, needs to reflect the community. It's not just people of color teaching people of color. We need to restructure the education system to be mixed, and have teachers who know their limitations. Teachers can provide outside role models from the community. We all need to learn about the cultures we identify with, as well as about other cultures. We're different, but that's a good thing.
- I saw the factories close in the 1980s. Somewhere along the line we devalued jobs like housekeeping and maintenance workers. We need to de-stigmatize these jobs. We also need educators in the mix who plan beyond high school. We need to market education correctly.
- For educators – can we teach entrepreneurial skills in high school? My daughter loves to watch videos about hair and makeup, but it's hard to make money in those skills. I want her to learn the economics that would be behind those skills. We need people who want to want their jobs. For example, a guy running a landscaping company likes to cut the grass because he wants to be in and own that business. The guy working for him may not have that same passion – he may just cut grass because he has to.
- Our participants came to a consensus and shared the following points at the report-back session:
 - We think the skills are out there – but we need to find a way to match people with the skills to the jobs.

- The area you live in, what you look like, and what your name is, can kill development in our communities. We need to get rid of stereotypes.
 - We acknowledge systemic racism and poverty. To see economic opportunity, we need to look close to home and have employees in Worcester represent Worcester itself.
- What can residents, policymakers and business leaders do to help dismantle racism through economic development in our city?
 - Residents:
 - Provide training and preparation for the work force
 - Civic program for Youth
 - Policymakers:
 - Inform local contractors about local building opportunities
 - Ie. On the corner of Franklin and Main Street
 - Economic Development Report
 - Released to public quarterly;
 - Available on-line (most people don't know this)
 - Provide access to resources and information
 - Educate public on how to start a business
 - Where to find financial resources
 - Create win-win opportunities
 - Business Development Office
 - Offers literature in accessible language that provides steps and resources
 - Many do not want to take advantage of it
 - They have their own vision and ideas or may be
 - Irresponsible entrepreneurs
 - Many small business fail
 - Business Leaders:
 - Bring small local businesses into vacant lots
 - Foreclosure income can be funneled to start-up small business through local banks
 - Get our city's money out of bank giants (ex. Bank of America) and into our local banks (ex. Commerce Bank)
 - Publicize success stories about how local public money is being used
 - Example: Crompton Collective – located 138 Green Street
 - Positive example
 - Lease out to little vendors
 - Antique shop

- Farmer's Market
 - Tree Bake Shop
 - Property Owner, Dino Larusso and Local Entrepreneur, Amy Lynn Chase
 - Use positive media sound bites to highlight these stories
 - Outside developers provide only temporary relief to the local economy (ie. Courthouse)
 - Counter Argument:
 - Courthouse will be used for residential purposes
 - Dense residential areas attract local businesses
 - Increase minimum wage to alleviate the conditions of the working poor
- Can econ dev dismantle racism?
 - Agencies should fill leadership positions with people reflective of the community's diversity and who look like the people they are serving
 - Another group member disagreed and said that hiring decisions should be completely colorblind instead of pigeon-holing a certain demographic
 - The response--We need youth and homeless people to have role models, to see leaders who look like them
 - Companies are responsible to make diverse people feel comfortable. It is important when the community sees itself reflected, and a relief when a young person of color realizes that she does not have to explain herself all the time because someone "gets her" without explanations.
 - Another group member noted that when he tries to market a product, he has no idea who the person in his target audience is as a person, so how can he sell something to him/her?
 - Another group member noted that the police department is civil service, and that the Boston police commissioner wants to hire more people of color but cannot b/c civil service rules require, e.g., that he only hire veterans right now.
 - Another group member noted that it's hard to find out how to get a civil service job, and that the process should be more transparent.
 - A group member noted that we need to start dismantling our own racist thoughts, and figuring out what's true vs. what we are interpreting—the notion of implicit bias, what are our perceptions, what does our "gut" tell us? We need to check in with ourselves every few months and see whether we have moved in our thinking. Then have conversations with other people who don't live where we live and don't look like we do.

- A group member noted that he advises young people who he teaches how to dress and behave on the job and while looking for a job—e.g., don't play the music so loud. Another group member responded that it is offensive and racist to tell young people "I don't like your music." The message is that they will never be able to meet the white wo/man's standards. She advised that we need to get to know each individual, and asked why the young man should have to fit into the culture of his teacher—why can't he just be who he is?
- Another group member suggested some concrete steps for how economic development can dismantle racism:
 - Change structure of property taxes so that wealthy communities are not funding their own schools—should be a per person structure statewide.
 - Restructure punishments for lesser drug offenses.
 - The Chamber should develop new leaders
 - There was disagreement in the group about whether programs to develop new leaders should be all minority or diverse.
- Another group member said that white people are born into white privilege even if they don't use it—just like she herself was born into the privilege of being able to walk.
- Suggestions for helping to dismantle racism through economic development: The general emphasis of the suggestions focused on improvement in all aspects of public education, especially in the teaching of English.
 - Create a well-thought-out on-going educational program for teaching English, business math, and financial literacy to immigrants, refugees, and anyone else who needs such learning.
 - Offer more vocational education which is not limited to a vocational school.
 - Have the city do an inventory of what skills and other educational foundations the large employers in the area require in their hires.
 - Create an economic mentorship program to teach workplace skills and to offer hope of economic advancement.
 - Secondary schools need to increase focus on spoken and written English, communication skills, listening skills, and vocational education.
 - Schools from k-12 need to emphasize the work ethic and self-responsibility.
 - City needs to provide many more opportunities for genuine dialogue about race
 - Schools need to provide many more opportunities for dialogue about race.

- Increase the number of advocates from the diverse communities in the area and have them dialogue to reach consensus on what would be most helpful in bringing the races together.
- Find out from the different communities what they need which is not being provided by downtown Worcester and offer these communities jobs providing what they see is missing.
- Increase mentorship programs by potential hirers for minority at-risk youth.
- Have the city showcase specific instances of racism having been dismantled, how it was achieved and the advantages to all involved of its having been achieved.
- City needs to racially diversify its leadership and work force
- Increase small business opportunities in Worcester
- Companies need to open more paid apprenticeship programs and to allow individuals to enter these programs while they are improving their English.
- There should be paid apprenticeship programs in many of the city government departments.
- “Mom and Pop” businesses should be encouraged and supported, particularly in downtown Worcester
- What can residents, policymakers and business leaders do to help dismantle racism through economic development in our city?
 - City as Role Model:
 - Can the City expand its base and take on initiatives that the private sector may not be able to initially pursue or find advantageous?
 - Maybe have the City be a role model and force for change around inclusion?
 - The City needs to make a concerted effort and model for the large private employers that are within the legal parameters (e.g. contracting, CORI issues, etc).
 - What we heard
 - Different criteria for people of color; need to be consistent
 - People may not have economic cultural fluency & how to access resources
 - Stories and perceptions are reality
 - Need to address how to overcome our racial legacy
 - We missed the issue of race in this conversation due to assumptions
 - Solutions
 - Acknowledge the existing history/system of racism

- Connect local residents to training
- Refresh, renew, re-brand the jobs that are available, including the trades
- Expand the “old boys network” so its more inclusive
- Youth jobs or other jobs all need mentors etc so they can connect to real stories/strategies