

A Call to Community:

## Healthy Integrated Public Schools

*"If every child were my child"™*

Over 50 years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, the promise of quality K-12 education in truly integrated schools remains unfulfilled. **Schools in metropolitan Richmond, like our neighborhoods, are largely segregated by race and socioeconomic class. Student education suffers.**

In 2004 Hope in the Cities called the metropolitan Richmond community into honest conversation:

***"What would I do differently, if every child were my child?"***

Hope in the Cities committed itself to a multi-year initiative to help metropolitan Richmond discover the answer to this question and build more Healthy Integrated Public Schools for every child.

**Healthy Integrated Public Schools lead to superior academic and regional performance.** See R. Kahlenberg, *All Together Now: Creating Middle-Class Schools Through Public School Choice* (Brookings, 2001).

**"Intellect plus character—that is the goal of true education."**  
*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

## OUR METROPOLITAN RICHMOND EDUCATION SYSTEM

Did you know that in Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico and Richmond:

- **We hold an entire generation in trust!** We have 150,000 students, 11,000 teachers, 200 schools and an annual operating budget over \$1 billion.
- **Most students are missing the benefits of a healthy integrated school!** 88% of our schools are segregated by race (i.e., they have over 60% white students or students of color). Also, 75% are segregated by economic class (i.e., they have either fewer than 20% or greater than 40% students eligible for federally funded lunches).
- **57% of Metro Richmond Schools underperform State SOL averages!** Predictably, schools with over 50% of students economically disadvantaged underperform their economically integrated peers. In Metro Richmond 36% of our schools are over this “tipping point”. Other regions that have created healthy integrated schools outperform Metro Richmond on various academic measures.
- **Japan claims the best educated society in the world!** Why? Japan’s students, on average, outperform every other industrialized country on standardized tests, because they have “the best bottom 50% in the world”.

Sources: 2004-2005 data for Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico, and Richmond from the VA Department of Education; [www.schoolmatters.com](http://www.schoolmatters.com); and Ford Foundation.

### A “CALL TO ACTION” FROM OUR SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

**Chesterfield County:** “Metropolitan Richmond is competing with the world. Every student, parent and educator must give their individual best effort to ensure excellence in education.”—*Billy Cannaday, Former Superintendent Chesterfield Schools*

**City of Richmond:** “Each of us has a pivotal role in making public education what we know it can and must be.”—*Deborah Jewell-Sherman, Superintendent, Richmond Public Schools*

**Hanover County:** “We need to bring [low income students who may struggle academically] to a level of achievement on par with other students.”—*Stewart Roberson, Superintendent, Hanover Public Schools*

**Henrico County:** “We ask our students to work together. We cannot afford to do less than we ask of them.”—*Fred Morton, Superintendent, Henrico Public Schools*

## FINDING OUR WAY TO HIP SCHOOLS™

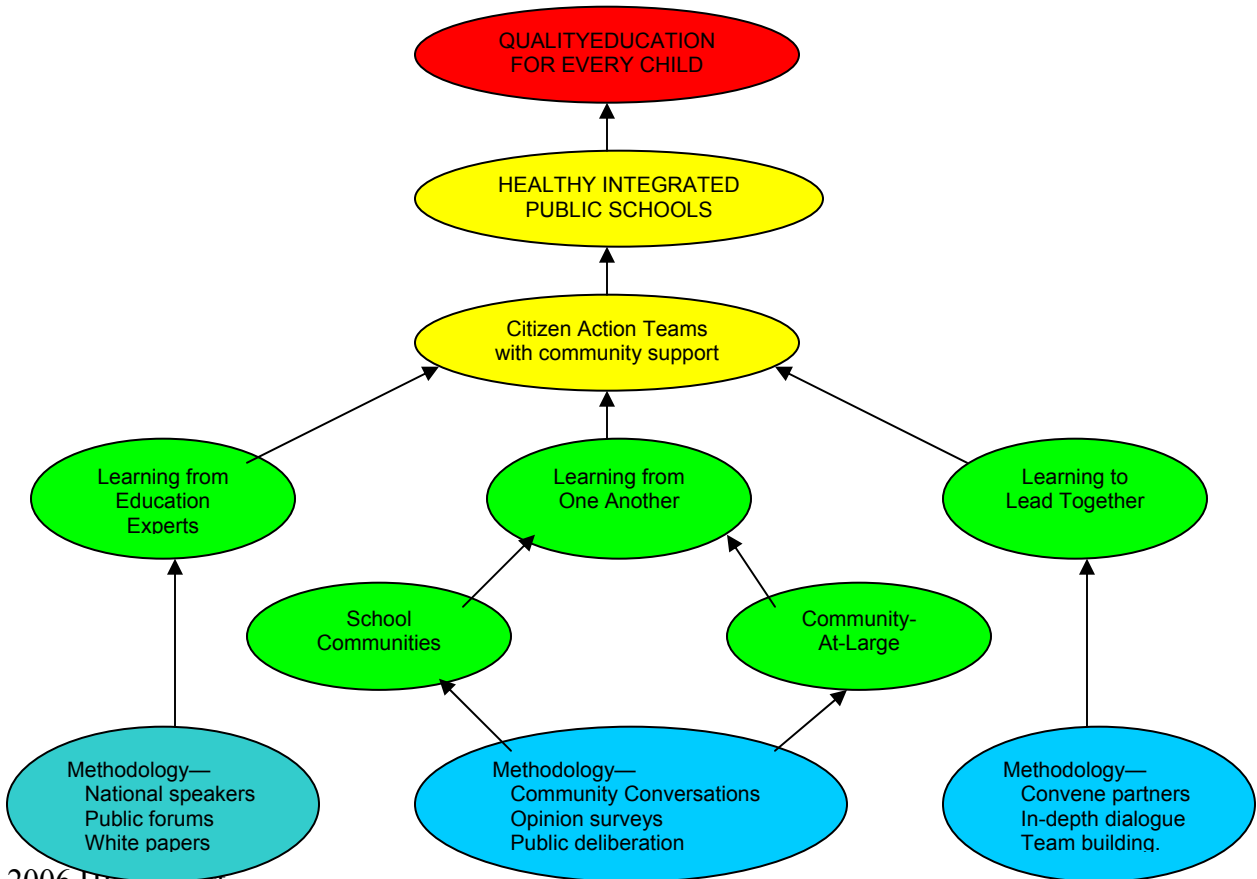
Hope in the Cities' goal is to facilitate the formation of citizen groups that pursue the vision of Healthy Integrated Public Schools for our children.

Our approach embodies three critical components of community learning:

- **Learning from Education Experts:** Why should metropolitan Richmond build HIP Schools™? What alternative approaches might we consider? What have other communities done?
- **Learning from One Another:** From diverse citizen perspectives, how important is it that our children experience HIP Schools™? How can we help create them?
- **Learning to Lead Together:** Who has a passion for building HIP Schools™? How can diverse groups of citizens work together to help the community fulfill this vision—in their school, their district, our region?

Hope in the Cities' proven “community building dialogue” methodology and its Connecting Communities Fellowship Program provide the basis for this learning.

### QUALITY EDUCATION: A COMMUNITY COMMITMENT



**IF EVERY CHILD WERE MY CHILD . . .™**  
**HEALTHY INTEGRATED PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

For two years Hope in the Cities has facilitated honest conversation across race, class, jurisdiction and other differences to **consider (a) how HIP Schools™ are a better alternative to our current segregated system and (b) what each of us can do to create healthy inclusive school communities.**

We are happy to report that **honest conversation on Healthy Integrated Public Schools** is spreading across metropolitan Richmond.

1. Over the past two years **thousands of citizens have attended Hope in the Cities' annual Metropolitan Richmond Day celebrations.** They have heard encouraging stories from national experts.

**In 2004** Sheryll Cashin, Georgetown Law School professor, reported on findings in her book The Failures of Integration: How Race and Class Are Undermining the American Dream. **In 2005** Bill McNeal, superintendent of Raleigh/Wake County Public Schools and 2004 national superintendent of the year, shared the remarkable Raleigh/Wake County, NC success story. **In 2006** Prof. John Powell addressed new approaches to "integrated education". Prof. Powell is executive director of Ohio State University's Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.

2. **Hundreds of citizens have participated in either two-hour community conversations or more in-depth six-part dialogues** on what we would do differently, "if every child were my child". There is growing interest in creating schools that are both "healthy" and "integrated".
3. **Hope in the Cities has engaged dozens of state and local educational leaders**, including superintendents, principals, teachers, PTA presidents and students. There is an eagerness to learn.
4. **The Richmond Times Dispatch ran a front page article**, highlighting our research on the impact of school segregation on the region's overall academic performance. The message is spreading.
5. Business, civic and grass-roots leaders are considering **various region and district strategies, school strategies and personal strategies to help create more HIP Schools™**. Possibilities are taking root.
6. **Several schools have engaged Hope in the Cities to help them build more inclusive school communities** among students, parents and teachers from different racial, economic and faith backgrounds. Hope is budding.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

Hope in the Cities invites you to help lead this important community conversation on HIP Schools™.

**Would you like:**

**1. To help plan Metropolitan Richmond Day 2007?**

The objective is to continue learning from outside experts about other regions' approach to creating HIP Schools™ and improving academic performance.

**2. To arrange a Hope in the Cities' facilitated conversation (1-2 hours) on HIP Schools™ for your school, faith community, or civic organization?**

The objective is to promote honest conversation in which all voices are heard and new possibilities discovered.

**3. To participate in an “inclusive leadership development program for parents and educators” (6-part dialogue, 2 hours each)?**

The objective is to experience honest conversation across race, class and other differences and to learn new strategies for building inclusive school communities.

**4. To become a “community change agent”, prepared to lead honest conversation across race, class and other differences (multiple weekend residential program)?**

The objective is to equip citizens to pursue their vision of healthy inclusive communities in ways that respect all persons and build trust across our region.

**For more information, contact Hope in the Cities:**

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Hope in the Cities does not take positions on matters of public policy; however, it does promote honest conversation on challenging moral questions:

***What would I do differently, if every child were my child?***