

CCR
3
Meet.
371
V.2

1 UNITED STATES
2 COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS
3 ILLINOIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4 IN THE MATTER OF:

5 COMMUNITY FORUM ON RACE
6 RELATIONS AND EQUAL
7 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
8 AT PROVISO WEST HIGH SCHOOL

COPY

9 REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS, taken in
10 the above-entitled cause, taken before MS. FAYE
11 LYON, Chairperson of the Illinois Advisory
12 Committee to the United States Commission on Civil
13 Rights, taken at Proviso West High School, 4701
14 West Harrison Street, Hillside, Illinois, taken on
15 the 1st day of December, A.D., 1994.

16 APPEARANCES:

17 CHAIRPERSON: FAYE LYON

18 COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- 19 STACI YANDLE
- 20 KENNETH SMITH
- 21 THOMAS PUGH
- 22 PRESTON EWING
- 23 JOSEPH MATHEWSON
- JAMES SCALES
- DORRIS ROBERTS
- HUGH SCHWARTZBERG
- CONNIE PETERS

MIDWEST REGIONAL
DIRECTOR MS. CONSTANCE DAVIS
STAFF: MR. PETER MINARIK

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INDEX

1		
2	PRESENTER	PAGE
3	Dr. Eric Eversley	274
	Nancy Kernan	284
4	John Marszaleck	290
	Anu Saini	295
5	Chevon Nightengale	301
	Sugar Wright	307
6	Henry Alexander Day	308
	Sandra Franco	313
7	Mara Pinedo	313
	Severin Richardson	317
8	Terrence Spencer	318
	Kim Lasky	328
9	Connie Jensen	338
	Beverly Malone	338
10	Alexis Palm-Wallace	349
	Gail Sufredin	351
11	Mona Johnson	360
	Doug Deuchler	364
12	Debra Thomas	370
	Linda Thompson	378
13	Rob Rosignolo	380
	Valerie Voss	390
14	Susan Gill	393
	Garland Robeson	402
15	Terry Blaine	409
	Andrea Routen	410
16	McArthur Robinson	419
	James E. Smith, Jr.	422
17	Michael Husk	432
	Leo Banks	445
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		

1 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: I'll call the meeting*
2 *to order. I have a statement I'd like to read.*

3 *For the benefit of those in our*
4 *audience, I am Faye Lyon, I'm the Chairperson of*
5 *the Illinois Advisory Committee. The other*
6 *members of the committee are Staci Yandle, Kenneth*
7 *Smith, Thomas Pugh, Preston Ewing, Dorris Roberts,*
8 *Joseph Mathewson is sitting next to Mr. Roberts,*
9 *but he's out in the audience at the moment, and*
10 *then James Scales. The committee acknowledges as*
11 *appreciates the support and assistance provided by*
12 *the administration of the Proviso Township High*
13 *School District 209, Dr. Eversley, the*
14 *Superintendent of District 209 and Dr. Rebecca*
15 *Montoya, Principal of Proviso West High School.*
16 *These individuals and their staffs have been*
17 *completely open and cooperative with the committee*
18 *in the planning of this meeting.*

19 *We are here today to conduct a*
20 *community forum on race relations on equal*
21 *education opportunity at Proviso West High School.*
22 *The proceedings of this meeting are being recorded*
23 *by a public stenographer. Information obtained at*

1 *this forum will be presented to the U.S.*
2 *Commission for its consideration.*

3 *This is a public meeting open to the*
4 *media and general public. Members of the public*
5 *are advised though that they are guests of Proviso*
6 *West High School. Contact with students, faculty*
7 *and staff may only be made during the course of*
8 *this meeting with the consent of school officials.*

9 *We have a full schedule of*
10 *individuals who will address the committee. The*
11 *time allotted for each presentation will be*
12 *strictly adhered to. This will include a*
13 *presentation by each participant followed by*
14 *questions from the committee members if time*
15 *permits. To accommodate persons who have not been*
16 *invited but who wish to make statements, written*
17 *comments may be submitted to the committee through*
18 *the Midwestern Regional Office of the U.S.*
19 *Commission at 55 West Monroe, Suit 410, Chicago,*
20 *Illinois, 60603.*

21 *Although some of the statements made*
22 *today may be controversial, we intend to ensure*
23 *that invited participants do not defame or degrade*

1 *any person or organization. Any person or*
2 *organization that feels defamed or degraded by*
3 *statements made in these proceedings should*
4 *contact our staff during the meeting so that an*
5 *opportunity for response can be made.*

6 *I want to thank all of the*
7 *participants for their willingness to share their*
8 *views with the committee. It's the committee's*
9 *hope that this dialogue and other such forums will*
10 *lead to an improved climate of racial and ethnic*
11 *tolerance in our nation.*

12 *The record of this meeting will*
13 *close on December 31st, 1994.*

14 *First on our agenda today is Dr.*
15 *Eric Eversley, Superintendent of Proviso Township*
16 *High School. Mr. Eversley, thank you very much*
17 *for coming.*

18 *If you will have a seat and just for*
19 *the record spell your name?*

20 *MR. EVERSLEY: My first name is Eric*
21 *E-r-i-c, last name is Eversley, E-v-e-r-s-l-e-y.*

22 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Thank you. You may*
23 *proceed.*

1 ERIC EVERSLEY

2 *Welcome to Proviso Township High*
3 *School. I'm sorry I was not able to be with you*
4 *yesterday, please don't interpret my absence as a*
5 *lack of interest in this activity. I think it is*
6 *very important and certainly we've been working*
7 *along with this process. I'd also like to begin,*
8 *before I do anything else, to share with you*
9 *something that I trust you probably already know*
10 *and that is that we have had I think throughout a*
11 *very good working relationship with Peter Minarik*
12 *and the Midwestern Regional Office staff,*
13 *Constance Davis, and that has been very helpful to*
14 *us as we've begun to work through this process.*

15 *I do have some comments that I'd*
16 *like to share with you. I do have something that*
17 *I'd like to hand to the committee, but I'd like to*
18 *do that at the conclusion of my remarks.*

19 *First let me state that the*
20 *publication of the New York Times article as I*
21 *trust you are aware, created quite a firestorm of*
22 *reaction and that reaction continues. Most of the*
23 *reaction centered around several racially*

1 *offensive comments which were attributed to*
2 *individuals and generalized by some to be*
3 *reflective of the attitude or perspectives of all*
4 *district employees.*

5 *That generalization or to the extent*
6 *that that occurred, that is wrong and it*
7 *misrepresents our school and our school district.*
8 *Whether those racially offensive comments were*
9 *made or not, as I trust you would know, I cannot*
10 *say. That's a matter known to the individuals to*
11 *whom the comments are attributed, to the author of*
12 *the article and to the Almighty. To the extent*
13 *that those comments reflect the feelings of any*
14 *individual in our district or to the extent that*
15 *they would lead to discriminatory behaviors on the*
16 *part of any individual, they are unacceptable,*
17 *they are intolerable and they will not be*
18 *supported by this school district. I stated that*
19 *position at the time of the article's publication*
20 *and I reiterate it here for you today.*

21 *In a letter to the District faculty*
22 *and staff about a week after the article and at*
23 *the end of the school year, and as you know this*

1 *article appeared just before the end of the school*
2 *year, I stated a position which is still a*
3 *position I maintain. I will leave copies of this*
4 *for you. I don't know if you have gotten this*
5 *already, but I'd like to read a portion of that to*
6 *you. This is partway through this communication*
7 *to the faculty and the staff of our school*
8 *district: "While we may all have our own personal*
9 *disappointments with the article, I encourage that*
10 *we not dismiss it. To do so would cause us to*
11 *miss an opportunity for personal and*
12 *organizational introspection, organizational*
13 *development, and personal and professional growth.*
14 *I trust that it is no surprise to you that I am*
15 *distressed by images of students not being*
16 *constructively engaged in instruction. I am*
17 *concerned about even any suspicion that our work*
18 *with students is driven by low expectations or*
19 *negative perspectives about our students as human*
20 *beings.*

21 *Clearly our school environment our*
22 *institutional operations and behavior of adults*
23 *and students must be free from the harmful effect*

1 of bias, including racism and sexism. We will
2 never be the school district of excellence if we
3 allow bias to place artificial limits on us. To
4 the extent that bias, prejudice, and
5 discrimination exists, the intellectual and social
6 development of our students as well as the
7 personal and professional development of our staff
8 will be needlessly restricted. We will all suffer
9 because of these restrictions and limitations.

10 While the Sunday magazine article
11 may in the short run affect someone's perceptions
12 of us, the real test of our character will be how
13 effectively we respond to the challenges the
14 article poses."

15 That's the position that we took at
16 the time and that continues to be our position.

17 I'd like to make a second point
18 about the article and that is for those without
19 experience and that is to say firsthand experience
20 with our school and our staff, for those who know
21 our school only through rumor and innuendo, the
22 article is unrepresentative of the full reality of
23 Proviso West. The author indicated the article is

1 *about 9,800 words which were selected from several*
2 *times that number which were written for the*
3 *piece. I'm disappointed that those words selected*
4 *did not speak to the district, faculty and staff*
5 *inservice initiatives in the area of cultural*
6 *diversity in 1992, 1993 and certainly it couldn't*
7 *have projected what we will do, but we have*
8 *continued with that through 1994. The article did*
9 *not speak to feelings of white parents who have*
10 *constructive things to say about our school.*

11 *The article grossly understated the*
12 *prospective of the current Board of Education and*
13 *certainly our staff to provide substantive*
14 *progress for all of our students, committment to*
15 *inservice training and other interventions. The*
16 *article failed to speak to the 26 percent*
17 *improvement in daily student attendance*
18 *experienced during the time the author was present*
19 *and that was one of the indications of seriousness*
20 *that we place on our need to improve the*
21 *performance of our students who regularly attend*
22 *there and that was the combined work of certainly*
23 *policy supported by the Board, the work of*

1 administration, faculty and certainly our parents.
2 And the article I think understated student
3 academic success. The hard work that many of our
4 students display, student activities that are
5 ongoing at this school that are designed to
6 promote a higher level of recognition and
7 understanding among our students. I'd like to
8 share just in passing, certainly I'll be glad to
9 talk about that more, I have several other things
10 I want to say.

11 I do have a couple of other concerns
12 about the article. The first is any implication
13 in the article which casts any doubt about the
14 interest of our students in learning or the
15 intellectual capacity of our students in general
16 or African American students in particular. That
17 is the kind of garbage, to the extent that that
18 implication would be drawn to which people of
19 color are subjected on a very regular basis, and
20 whether it's Jakes or Coleman or Murray and
21 Hernstein or other pseudo scientific approaches,
22 they do great harm. I want to make sure that the
23 New York Times article is not construed to make a

1 *statement about the intellectual capacity of our*
2 *students. Our students, regardless of their race,*
3 *have enormous intellectual capacity, we believe in*
4 *their ability to learn and we are working to*
5 *improve their performance.*

6 *The second is an implication that*
7 *one might draw from the article perhaps from the*
8 *title, when there's large concentrations of white*
9 *residents leave a community that somehow the*
10 *community is thereby flawed. I don't see our*
11 *communities as flawed. I don't see our parents as*
12 *flawed. I clearly don't see our students at*
13 *flawed either, but let's move on.*

14 *I read in the daily press and other*
15 *reports that yesterday several individuals shared*
16 *their perspective that any racial or race*
17 *relations problems we may experience in our school*
18 *are not widespread, no greater than in the society*
19 *at large and no more than any other school. From*
20 *my perspective of 30 months in the school*
21 *district, I would agree with those observations.*
22 *Schools tend to be reflective of their communities*
23 *and the society overall, particularly when it*

1 comes to problems. Let me illustrate. If a
2 school experiences a problem with student's use of
3 or possession of drugs, those controlled
4 substances came to the school from the community
5 at large. No school manufactures, sells,
6 distributes or allows the use of drugs on their
7 campus. A similar analogy might be drawn with
8 handguns or other sort of things. In a similar
9 sense, racism, bias and discrimination are not
10 produced at the school. They are functions
11 operating in our society at large that can be
12 played out in any private or public enterprise or
13 institution, including private or public schools.
14 Race-based bias and troublesome behavior that
15 springs from it is a tragic historic part of
16 American life. There is permanence to it and
17 Derrick Elks so eloquently and effectively stated
18 in his 1992 book, *Faces at the Bottom of the Well*.
19 Given that racism and bias exist in our society,
20 given that racism bias, and discriminatory
21 behavior which denies opportunities exist in our
22 communities, and whether that's housing or that's
23 access to capital or that's employment and given

1 *that all of us are subject to that, and we are*
2 *influenced by it to a greater or lesser extent*
3 *everyday, the challenge for our schools is to*
4 *determine a means, perhaps several means to rise*
5 *above that which is occurring in the greater*
6 *society and to create, if necessary, an island of*
7 *excellence where all individuals can feel*
8 *comfortable, respected, and flourish personally*
9 *and intellectually. That's the challenge for our*
10 *schools, for the Proviso West Township High*
11 *Schools and it's certainly one we are serious*
12 *about. That is not to say that that denial should*
13 *occur. That is not to say that our students or*
14 *any affiliated with us should be insulated from*
15 *the reality of racism or racial bias. We*
16 *shouldn't put blinders on and present like*
17 *everything's okay. All students and adults,*
18 *regardless of race need to understand that denial*
19 *of opportunity to any diminishes us all. An the*
20 *institute day activity that all of our faculty and*
21 *staff experienced this last August I think made*
22 *that point very effectively. Second point here is*
23 *that students of color and we can also say women*

1 *or we can say others need to understand that*
2 *racism exists. They will continue to confront it*
3 *and they need to be equipped to handle it.*

4 *That's philosophical, so let me*
5 *close with some things that are happening here.*
6 *Let me say that we are on a road, we're on a long*
7 *journey I believe. I believe we have much to do.*
8 *I believe we've done some things and I want to*
9 *bring that to your attention. I do believe in our*
10 *district that we have enhanced awareness on*
11 *several of the issues of concern to this*
12 *committee. The New York Times article certainly*
13 *was a piece of that inservice experiences that*
14 *have been available to our faculty and staff.*
15 *Certainly they're a part of that at Proviso West,*
16 *also Proviso East. Celebrations of diversity has*
17 *been ongoing activities at the school. Training*
18 *has been a bit fragmented in my view, but we are*
19 *working to bring focus to that.*

20 *As I indicated earlier, we have had*
21 *inservice programs relevant intervention programs*
22 *to these themes since 1992. We're doing*
23 *leadership training in this area in January,*

1 *building on some of past experiences. We are*
2 *working with ADL for a world of difference*
3 *training with our staff in January. We're working*
4 *on multi cultural competency with the State Board*
5 *of Education and the faculty. This has been*
6 *faculty and staff oriented and I think the growth*
7 *area for us and something that we need to work*
8 *towards is doing more with our students. We're*
9 *paying attention to school climate and I won't go*
10 *into all of that in the interests of time, problem*
11 *solving and conflict resolution.*

12 *We're work very hard to diversify*
13 *our faculty and staff. This past year a third of*
14 *the certificated staff was hired for our district*
15 *are people of color. Curriculum and materials is*
16 *another area in which it is important for us to*
17 *continue ongoing efforts in terms of textbooks and*
18 *materials. All of our students need to see*
19 *themselves effectively and properly depicted. We*
20 *need to be thinking about authentic history,*
21 *authentic instruction, so we need to continue to*
22 *look at that area. We will continue to look at*
23 *our practices to determine any unwarranted or*

1 *discriminatory effects and we also will continue*
2 *some of the connections that we have been making*
3 *and I'll just identify that one of those groups*
4 *for example is the West Cook County Leaders for*
5 *Fair Housing. We're involved with that*
6 *organization and I think that's a very important*
7 *thing for us to do.*

8 *So I guess in summary I wanted to*
9 *share with you that I think we are not at all in a*
10 *position where we can dismiss the information in*
11 *the New York Times article. At the same time I*
12 *think it's important for us through this kind of a*
13 *forum and through other kinds of forums to enhance*
14 *the picture so people can understand more fully*
15 *what we're about in the Proviso West Township High*
16 *School.*

17 *In summary I wanted to share with*
18 *you because it is our point of view that if we*
19 *have some things we need to pay attention to we*
20 *will in fact do that to become a school district*
21 *of high excellence and we continue to look at*
22 *training and inservice and curriculum work and*
23 *working in the educational arena to be really*

1 *critical to the success of our students and the*
2 *success of our school and our district. And with*
3 *that I would entertain whatever questions the*
4 *Committee may have.*

5 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Unfortunately we only*
6 *have two minutes so we have to -- I'm just going*
7 *to allow one question and Tom's had his hand up*
8 *first.*

9 *MR. PUGH: Thank you. Dr. Eversley, the*
10 *observations made yesterday by one of our panel*
11 *members that Proviso West may be a model high*
12 *school in the area we're talking about in race*
13 *relations the question I have and you pointed*
14 *towards it, the need to work more with your*
15 *students with regard to handling problems of*
16 *racism. Could you expand on that need and tell*
17 *me -- yesterday many of the comemnts made by panel*
18 *and others questioned whether or not before school*
19 *programs and after school programs and PTA*
20 *approaches to the problems were not as important*
21 *perhaps as putting it into the curriculum itself,*
22 *ways of dealing with problems of racism. I know*
23 *that you've thought deeply and I know your*

1 *district has talked about it, but I'd like to know*
2 *what those thoughts are?*

3 *DR. EVERSLEY: We have several different*
4 *kinds of things and I think in order to get this*
5 *job done well we can't hang our hats on any one*
6 *instrument or any one instrumentality. I do think*
7 *that we can look and need to look at how we bring*
8 *students together in a variety of kinds of*
9 *settings where they can, in fact, engage in*
10 *dialogue with each other about some of these*
11 *issues that are being discussed here over the last*
12 *day and a half. In addition I think we will*
13 *continue to look at places and will continue to*
14 *look for places in the curriculum where, in fact,*
15 *we can have all students have some direct personal*
16 *involvement with some of these issues. I did*
17 *speak before about some of our ongoing work which*
18 *I think is very important to see how in fact --*
19 *let me say it another way, to assure that in our*
20 *curriculum and within our materials that we are in*
21 *fact appropriately and accurately reflecting the*
22 *heritages, the cultures, the accomplishments, the*
23 *perspectives, even though we may not agree with*

1 *all of them, of the diversity of that is a part of*
2 *our community, that is part of our school and*
3 *certainly a part of our society. So I think we've*
4 *got some work to do there, but I think I would not*
5 *be encouraging about looking at one avenue by*
6 *which to do that. I think we need to look at*
7 *multiple avenues for doing that so that students*
8 *are provided with opportunities for an important*
9 *level of dialogue that they need to have as*
10 *emerging adults and also to make them feel good*
11 *about their heritage and the heritages of others.*

12 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Very good. Thank you*
13 *Dr. Eversley.*

14 *We appreciate your time here and I*
15 *don't want to impose, but if you're available at*
16 *all and you could come back at 5:15 and we talk*
17 *with school board members and talk with the panel*
18 *members.*

19 *DR. EVERSLEY: That would be great. I*
20 *was planning to be here at that time. Thank you.*

21 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: We have our next two*
22 *panelists, John Marszalek and Ms. Kernan. Would*
23 *you spell your names, please?*

1 *MS. KERNAN: Nancy Kernan, N-a-n-c-y,*
2 *K-e-r-n-a-n.*

3 *MR. MARSZALEK: John, J-o-h-n, Marszalek,*
4 *M-a-r-s-z-a-l-e-k.*

5 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: The purpose is to get*
6 *your opinions on the racial relationship here at*
7 *Proviso West and why don't we start with Ms.*
8 *Kernan and get her opinion?*

9 *NANCY KERNAN*

10 *Well I don't think there's a racial*
11 *problem at West. I've never heard any comments*
12 *from any teachers or any students relating to*
13 *racial problems. There is none. And I don't*
14 *think I didn't think the newspaper article did*
15 *justice because it just like wrote bad things*
16 *about West which were untrue.*

17 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: How old are you and*
18 *what grade are you in?*

19 *MS. KERNAN: I'm a Freshman.*

20 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: And are you on the*
21 *student council or have any type of a capacity as*
22 *student leadership groups?*

23 *MS. KERNAN: No.*

1 CHAIRPERSON LYON: *Okay, Mr. John*
2 *Marszalek?*

3 JOHN MARSZALEK

4 *I'm a sophomore here and I really don't*
5 *think there's any racial problems here. This is*
6 *my second year and it seems pretty fine. I mean I*
7 *like the school, everything is fine.*

8 CHAIRPERSON LYON: *Question from the*
9 *panel, and I'll start with Mr. Scales?*

10 MR. SCALES: *For either one of you or*
11 *both, could you define for me what you would*
12 *consider to be a racial problem?*

13 MS. KERNAN: *I consider it to be like,*
14 *like saying things about racist, I don't know,*
15 *comments, discrimination.*

16 MR. SCALES: *So you consider it only to*
17 *be verbal? Could you consider it to be anything*
18 *physical?*

19 MS. KERNAN: *Oh, yes. I don't know it*
20 *could be fights. I've never seen any, but you*
21 *know if there is anything like that yea, sure.*

22 MR. SCALES: *Just one short question.*
23 *Would you consider -- does it necessarily have to*

1 *be made from a person of one race or to a person*
2 *of another race or could it be made by two people*
3 *from the same race or between teachers?*

4 *MR. MARSZALEK: Yea, it could.*

5 *MR. SCALES: These are things you say*
6 *you have not --*

7 *MR. MARSZALEK: I have not seen, but*
8 *anything can happen.*

9 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Smith?*

10 *DR. SMITH: I'm interested, do you*
11 *participate in extracurricular activities at the*
12 *school so that you get a chance to interact with*
13 *students outside of the classroom?*

14 *MR. MARSZALEK: Yes, I'm in plays here*
15 *at the school and so we work with -- there's a lot*
16 *of, you know, different -- we work with blacks,*
17 *whites and everybody and we just come together*
18 *where you don't think about race. It's like one*
19 *big happy family, you know.*

20 *DR. SMITH: What about you?*

21 *MS. KERNAN: I was in volleyball and I*
22 *was in the Glee Club and I'm on the Journal and I*
23 *haven't experienced that.*

1 MR. MATHEWSON: Before you started
2 school here, did you or your parents consider the
3 possibility of not coming to Proviso West, that
4 you would have gone to another school, parochial
5 school, moving or doing anything like that to
6 avoid coming to Proviso West?

7 MS. KERNAN: Yes, my parents did at
8 first but then I had a brother that came here and
9 he didn't experience any problems and I have a
10 sister that's here and she never had any problems
11 with it because things were said about Proviso but
12 now that I come here I realize that none of it is
13 true.

14 MR. MATHEWSON: So in other words your
15 own brother and sister went through or have been
16 going through without problems, but you heard
17 people say things about the school that made you
18 wonder?

19 MS. KERNAN: Yea, but it's mostly people
20 that don't go here that say things about it
21 because they don't know what really goes on here,
22 so they think that it's bad because it's like a
23 lot of black people and Mexicans. But it's not

1 *bad at all.*

2 *MR. MATHEWSON: You're glad you came*
3 *here?*

4 *MS. KERNAN: Yes.*

5 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Schwartzberg?*

6 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: One of the things that*
7 *happens sometimes in a school of great diversity*
8 *is that people don't recognize what causes other*
9 *people to be upset. Let me give you two things*
10 *for both of you and ask whether you're aware of*
11 *any problems in there or aware of anything being*
12 *said because one a student's mother comes to us*
13 *and says my child is not used to being touched.*
14 *In this school that she goes to now it's usual for*
15 *some people to reach out touch people more*
16 *readily, grab ahold of them in conversation, be*
17 *more physically touching than she's used to. You*
18 *should tell people, she tells us that's wrong,*
19 *that's case one. Case two, some child, some*
20 *student finds it difficult to get to the school by*
21 *way of transportation. Maybe he's used to*
22 *arriving on the dot and find that the school doors*
23 *are slammed shut at exactly on the dot as the*





1 *school tightens it's discipline, perhaps in fear,*
2 *perhaps not and thereby puts those students into a*
3 *position where they're going to be unable to*
4 *effectively have an education for a week or two*
5 *and those students are not used to being called on*
6 *the dot feel it's directed against them by race.*
7 *One, have you ever heard either of these*
8 *situations? Are they ever discussed in the*
9 *school? What do you think is the proper way to*
10 *deal with the feelings on the part of both of*
11 *those that there may be something of race*
12 *involved?*

13 *MR. MARSZALEK: I don't think there's*
14 *any race involved because I live kind of far from*
15 *the school, I leave in North Lake, almost five*
16 *miles away, so it's kind of hard in the morning,*
17 *but I get here all right and I get a ride and next*
18 *year I'll be driving so it will be easier and I*
19 *come here okay and I get a pretty good education.*
20 *I don't think there's anything with racism*
21 *involved here. It's, I think it's just fine.*

22 *MS. KERNAN: I've seen students get here*
23 *by many different ways, by taxis and buses and*

1 *everything and if they want their education, I*
2 *believe that they'll come here on time, that*
3 *they'll get up earlier and they'll be able to get*
4 *here to school if they want an education. And*
5 *I've never heard any cases of people like touching*
6 *more in conversation and stuff like that. That*
7 *will happen at any school. That could happen*
8 *anywhere.*

9 *MR. ROBERTS: What area do you live?*

10 *MS. KERNAN: I live in Hillside.*

11 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: We need our next two*
12 *panelists, thank you for joining us. Would you*
13 *please state your name, for the record? Spell*
14 *your first and last name, please?*

15 *MS. SAINI: My first name is A-n-u, last*
16 *name S-a-i-n-i.*

17 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Thank you.*

18 *The purpose of the hearing today or*
19 *the forum is just to hear your opinions or*
20 *observations as to any racial problems that may*
21 *exist in the school. Do you have an opinion?*

22 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Have you made any*
23 *observations of racial problems?*

1 *MS. SAINI: I don't understand what you*
2 *what you mean.*

3 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: What grade are you*
4 *in?*

5 *MS. SAINI: Freshman.*

6 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: You're a Freshman?*
7 *What feeder school did you come from?*

8 *MS. SAINI: McArthur.*

9 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Where do you live,*
10 *what area?*

11 *MS. SAINI: Berkley.*

12 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Berkley, so this is*
13 *your first time in high school? Do you have any*
14 *older brothers and sisters here?*

15 *MS. SAINI: No.*

16 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Did you come here*
17 *with other friends from your school?*

18 *MS. SAINI: Yes.*

19 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Is that who you tend*
20 *to hang around with at school?*

21 *MS. SAINI: Yes.*

22 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Have you made other*
23 *friends here at school?*

1 MS. SAINI: Yes.

2 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Do you find it easy
3 to make other friends here at school?

4 MS. SAINI: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Do you believe that
6 anybody has picked on you because of your
7 particular race or culture?

8 MS. SAINI: Yes some boys in my class.

9 CHAIRPERSON LYON: What types of things
10 do they say or do?

11 MS. SAINI: They call me names and
12 stuff. They call me names and stuff because of my
13 religion.

14 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Do you think they do
15 it to be mean or just to be boys?

16 MS. SAINI: To be rude.

17 CHAIRPERSON LYON: And when this
18 happens, what do you do?

19 MS. SAINI: I just go tell the teacher.

20 CHAIRPERSON LYON: That's good. What
21 does the teacher do?

22 MS. SAINI: They get in trouble.

23 CHAIRPERSON LYON: What do you feel that

1 *the problem is resolved as far as the school*
2 *trying to help you with that problem?*

3 *MS. SAINI: Kind of.*

4 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Kind of? Do you feel*
5 *the school could do more to help you with that*
6 *problem?*

7 *MS. SAINI: Yes.*

8 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: What else could they*
9 *do?*

10 *MS. SAINI: They could talk to that*
11 *person and ask them why you do this.*

12 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: They could talk to*
13 *that person and ask why they do this. Does the*
14 *school have a dean and a counselor team that does*
15 *that, that talk those that person? Do they have a*
16 *system to do that?*

17 *MS. SAINI: I don't know.*

18 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: You've never seen that*
19 *happen?*

20 *MS. SAINI: No.*

21 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Is it primarily the*
22 *same individual that keeps doing this, the ones*
23 *that call you names, is it the same couple of*

1 *people that do this?*

2 *MS. SAINI: Yes.*

3 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: I'll let some of the*
4 *other panelists ask you questions. Staci Yandle?*

5 *MS. YANDLE: You, other than the*
6 *situation that you just described on occasions*
7 *you've had other students say things about your*
8 *culture, have you observed that happening between*
9 *other students involved with other cultures? In*
10 *other words, have you seen it occur with anyone*
11 *else besides what you personally experienced?*

12 *MS. SAINI: No.*

13 *MR. ROBERTS: Are the persons that*
14 *harrass you, are they black, Jewish or white*
15 *groups?*

16 *MS. SAINI: They're Hispanic.*

17 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Mathewson?*

18 *MR. MATHEWSON: Does the school or your*
19 *teacher give you any opportunities to talk about*
20 *your culture, your heritage in school, class*
21 *meetings so that you can tell other people about*
22 *your background and so that they can have a better*
23 *understanding of your background?*

1 MS. SAINI: No.

2 MR. MATHEWSON: No such opportunity has
3 been offered?

4 CHAIRPERSON LYON: You need to say yes or
5 no into the mike because we're writing down
6 everything you say.

7 MS. SAINI: No.

8 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay. We have Ms.
9 Nightengale with us.

10 Could you spell your full name for
11 the record, please?

12 MS. NIGHTENGALE: C-h-e-v-o-n,
13 N-i-g-h-t-e-n-g-a-l-e.

14 MR. ROBERTS: Could you say it again?

15 MS. NIGHTENGALE: C-h-e-v-o-n
16 N-i-g-h-t-e-n-g-a-l-e.

17 MR. ROBERTS: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON LYON: This is a forum for
19 opinions or observations you may have made with
20 regard to racial relations at West Proviso High
21 School. Do you want to comment? First let me ask
22 you what grade you're in?

23 MS. NIGHTENGALE: I'm a senior.

1 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: You're a senior, and*
2 *what area do you live in?*

3 *MS. NIGHTENGALE: I live in Bellwood.*

4 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay. Do you have any*
5 *opinions or have you made any observations?*

6 *CHEVON NIGHTENGALE*

7 *Well, I feel that people at this*
8 *school keep to themselves like different races*
9 *stay in different groups, you know. Like*
10 *different groups like Puerto Ricans and Hispanics*
11 *and whoever, blacks or what stay in separate*
12 *groups. So it's not really like bonding together*
13 *I guess.*

14 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Questions? Mr.*
15 *Scales?*

16 *MR. SCALES: Just to first Ms.*
17 *Nightengale, could you just kind of talk about why*
18 *you think that happens?*

19 *MS. NIGHTENGALE: I've witnessed it a*
20 *couple of occasions. For me myself I feel that I*
21 *make friends with all races and stuff because*
22 *that's the type of person I am. I feel that*
23 *everybody should give each other a chance, you*

1 know and I witnessed it because you can even walk
2 through the halls and notice that different groups
3 are within different groups with the same kinds of
4 people.

5 MR. SCALES: I just wonder do you have
6 any reason why that's happening?

7 MS. NIGHTENGALE: I guess it's because,
8 I don't know, I guess it's because if you're up in
9 the same cultural group, you have the same things
10 in common with the other people. So they just
11 stick together. I feel they can't open their
12 minds to other cultures.

13 MR. SCALKES: My next question is what
14 were either one of you told about this school
15 prior to coming here, good, bad or indifferent,
16 what did someone tell you?

17 MS. NIGHTENGALE: It was like a --
18 different people told me different things. Some
19 people told me it was a nice place to come, you
20 could meet new people and everything from
21 different schools and other people told me it was
22 like strict rules that you had to follow and you
23 wouldn't want to come here and stuff like that.

1 *MR. SCALES: The question was were you*
2 *told anything about this school prior to coming*
3 *here, good, bad or indifferent?*

4 *MS. SAINI: That it was okay.*

5 *MR. SCALES: They just told you it was*
6 *okay? Thank you.*

7 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Ms. Saini, when you*
8 *were at the feeder school before you came here,*
9 *were there any boys that would call you names?*

10 *MS. SAINI: Yes.*

11 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: So this is a problem*
12 *that carried over from the feeder school to*
13 *Proviso?*

14 *MS. SAINI: Yes.*

15 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Do you feel that West*
16 *Proviso is doing more about that problem than the*
17 *feeder school did?*

18 *MS. SAINI: I don't know.*

19 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Staci Yandle?*

20 *MS. YANDLE: I have a question for Ms.*
21 *Nightengale. I think you mentioned that basically*
22 *one of the things that you've observed is that*
23 *different races and ethnic groups tend to keep to*

1 *themselves and you attributed that for the most*
2 *part because that's the -- because they have*
3 *things in common with each other. Since you've*
4 *been here for four years, have you observed or*
5 *experienced anything that you attribute to a*
6 *prejudice a racial prejudice, either between*
7 *students or among students and staff or*
8 *administration?*

9 *MS. NIGHTENGALE: Excuse me, I don't*
10 *understand the question.*

11 *MS. YANDLE: Have you experienced or*
12 *observed or seen things that you felt were*
13 *motivated or had happened based on prejudice or*
14 *racial prejudice or racism?*

15 *MS. NIGHTENGALE: Well, yes. Like when*
16 *I was like in Freshman year I was like on the*
17 *softball team right and for some reason I don't*
18 *feel that, I'm not going to say any names, but the*
19 *coach of the softball team mostly played the white*
20 *students that were on the team instead of the*
21 *black. It was like one black that was playing and*
22 *I noticed that when I had tried out before for the*
23 *softball team. That's mostly it. Well they give*

1 -- I understand that some of the black students,
2 upperclassmen, some of the students are, the black
3 students are like disruptive some of them, but
4 they're not given a chance to the ones that want
5 to learn something. Like mostly they pay more
6 attention to the white kids. That's what I saw,
7 that's what I see.

8 MS. YANDLE: Let me ask you a quick
9 follow up question about that. With respect to
10 the softball situation and even things that you
11 perceived as being different treatment to certain
12 groups of students, is there a way that you feel
13 you can address that concern at the school and
14 have you done that? Have any students done that
15 that you're aware of; tried to address that with
16 the administration?

17 MS. NIGHTENGALE: The way that I think
18 it should been addressed -- I haven't addressed it
19 myself because it really didn't concern me -- it
20 really didn't bother me because I did what I had
21 to do to get by and I think that if you want, any
22 students wants to take it up, I mean they feel
23 they've been mistreated or anything, they should

1 *take it up with the principal or talk to the*
2 *teachers themselves to tell them that you're not*
3 *giving me the respect that I deserve because I*
4 *want to get by up in this classroom.*

5 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay. Very good.*
6 *Thank you, thank you both for participating.*

7 *Our next panelist?*

8 *Would you please state your name for*
9 *the record and spell it?*

10 *MR. WRIGHT: Sugar, S-u-g-a-r,*
11 *W-r-i-g-h-t.*

12 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: And what grade are you*
13 *in school?*

14 *MR. WRIGHT: 95.*

15 *MS. YANDLE: I don't even know if the*
16 *microphone is one, but could you speak up?*

17 *MR. WRIGHT: Class of 95.*

18 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: And what community do*
19 *you live in?*

20 *MR. WRIGHT: Bellwood.*

21 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: And the forum today is*
22 *to better understand or to collect your opinions*
23 *or observations on any racial problems that may*

1 *exist at Proviso West? So I'd let you go ahead*
2 *with your opinions.*

3 *SUGAR WRIGHT*

4 *The only problem I have, really I*
5 *don't have a problem, I mean with green or black,*
6 *the only problem I have, you know, is the school*
7 *rules. I feel you know black students make it*
8 *hard for themselves by, you know, doing bad*
9 *things. The rules like if you miss a certain*
10 *amount of days some students would like to*
11 *graduate on time and they're making it harder for*
12 *some students to do that. If you be late to first*
13 *period you can't get in the classroom, you have to*
14 *go to the cafeteria, you miss eight days, you be*
15 *late eight days, you won't be able to get no*
16 *grade. That's the only problem I have.*

17 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay. Mr. Day, thank*
18 *you for joining us. Would you please give us your*
19 *full name and spell it for the record?*

20 *MR. DAY: Henry Alexander Day, H-e-n-r-y*
21 *A-l-e-x-a-n-d-e-r D-a-y.*

22 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Very good, and we're*
23 *interested in hearing any opinions or observations*

1 *that you have that you may have made regarding*
2 *racial relations at Proviso West. Do you have an*
3 *opinion are there racial problems at Proviso West?*

4 *MR. DAY: No, not necessarily.*

5 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Could you be a little*
6 *more specific when you say not necessarily?*

7 *MR. DAY: Well some people think it is,*
8 *some people think it's not. In my opinion I*
9 *really think it's not because it's just in the*
10 *minds of certain people that there may be racial*
11 *in this school, but to me it's really not.*

12 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: What year are you in*
13 *school?*

14 *MR. DAY: I'm a sophomore.*

15 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: And what community do*
16 *you live in?*

17 *MR. DAY: Bellwood.*

18 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: I'll open it up to the*
19 *panel for questions and I'm going to turn it over*
20 *to Mr. Schwartzberg for that.*

21 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Mr. Wright, I'd like*
22 *to return to this question about what happens when*
23 *people are late. I gather that this question, for*

1 *whatever reason, happens to have centered around a*
2 *number of black students, is that correct?*

3 *MR. WRIGHT: Yes, it has.*

4 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: And I gather that in*
5 *some cases it's produced resentment because all*
6 *the people who happen to be involved are black, is*
7 *that correct?*

8 *MR. WRIGHT: Yes.*

9 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: What could the school*
10 *do about that attitude?*

11 *MR. WRIGHT: I feel, I mean really the*
12 *rule is being strict on the students, but like I*
13 *say, they put it on themselves. But some of the*
14 *students that want to graduate on time would like*
15 *to go to class, they couldn't because one out of*
16 *ten, nine will be on time, one will be late and*
17 *the other nine will have to go to the cafeteria*
18 *just like the other one would.*

19 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: One of the things that*
20 *apparently has happened is that there's a*
21 *tightening of the rules, for whatever reason and*
22 *for whatever reason the people who seem to get*
23 *caught in this are coming from certain schools,*

1 *are coming from certain backgrounds, how does the*
2 *school make it clear that it's going to enforce*
3 *the rules regardless of who gets hit and without*
4 *triggering that resentment? It's a difficult*
5 *question.*

6 *MR. WRIGHT: I mean I just feel you know*
7 *if the students would come on time, go to class*
8 *like they're supposed to do and stuff it won't be*
9 *as strict for the students like they would now.*

10 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Mr. Day, could you*
11 *comment on the same question?*

12 *MR. DAY: Can you please repeat the*
13 *question?*

14 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Sure. Here there's a*
15 *lot of resentment, as I understand that is built*
16 *up on the tough policy of you arrive on the dot*
17 *and if you're late you're going to go to the*
18 *cafeteria. You're going to miss a lot of classes,*
19 *you may not graduate on time. You will follow the*
20 *rules and come on time. As I understand it, that*
21 *concept built up a lot of resentment. What can*
22 *the school do about that resentment?*

23 *MR. DAY: Well they really shouldn't do*

1 *a thing because in my opinion they made that law,*
2 *I mean they made the rules because they wanted*
3 *more kids in class and things pertaining to that*
4 *matter, so they really shouldn't do anything*
5 *because kids ought to be on their way to class,*
6 *they shouldn't be doing what they're not supposed*
7 *to be doing and be on their way to class and*
8 *therefore, they wouldn't have to worry about not*
9 *graduating and getting on audits and this and*
10 *that.*

11 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Let me ask one other*
12 *difficult question. If you travel in different*
13 *countries you discover that people stand different*
14 *distances from each other. You go to one country*
15 *and there's right up close, you go to another*
16 *country, they're a little further away for the*
17 *same kind of conversations.*

18 *I see just look in the halls, and I*
19 *haven't been here very long, some things that are*
20 *obvious. One of them is that some students will*
21 *take a hold of you --*

22 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Schwartzberg,*
23 *we're running out of time. I've been given the*

1 *signal.*

2 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Sorry, I'll withdraw*
3 *the question.*

4 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Thank you very much*
5 *for participating.*

6 *Thank you for joining us. I'm going*
7 *to have you give your name, please spell your*
8 *first name and your last name, and while you're at*
9 *it, what grade you're in.*

10 *MS. FRANCO: Sandra Franco, I'm a Senior.*

11 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Could you spell your*
12 *name?*

13 *MS. FRANCO: S-a-n-d-r-a--*

14 *MR. ROBERTS: Speak up.*

15 *MS. FRANCO: S-a-n-d-r-a.*

16 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Franco, F-r-a-n-c-o?*

17 *MS. FRANCO: Yes.*

18 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Can I suggest you*
19 *switch those cards in front of you?*

20 *MS. PINEDO: Mara Pinedo, M-a-r-a*
21 *P-i-n-e-d-o.*

22 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Your grade?*

23 *MS. PINEDO: And I'm a senior.*

1 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay, we're here to*
2 *hear your opinions and observations on racial*
3 *relations here at Proviso West. So we'll start*
4 *with Ms. Franco. Do you have an opinion as to*
5 *racial relations here at Proviso West?*

6 *SANDRA FRANCO*
7 *I think for me I've never had a*
8 *racial problem. I think I've been already here so*
9 *I don't think there's a lot of racial problems*
10 *here, just for me.*

11 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Ms. Pinedo, what do you*
12 *think?*

13 *MARA PINEDO*
14 *Well, that's the same thing, I don't*
15 *see any discrimination or anything like that.*

16 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay. Questions from*
17 *the panelists?*

18 *DR. SMITH: I didn't hear them say what*
19 *year they're in.*

20 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Ms. Franco, what year*
21 *are you?*

22 *MS. FRANCO: Senior.*

23 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mrs. Pinedo?*

1 MS. PINEDO: Senior.

2 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Both seniors. Have
3 you been here all four years?

4 MS. PINEDO: Yes.

5 MS. FRANCO: No, since the Sophomore.

6 MR. ROBERTS: What area are you in?

7 MS. FRANCO: Hillside.

8 MS. PINEDO: Morris Park.

9 DR. SMITH: Ms. Franco, you came here in
10 your Sophomore year?

11 MS. FRANCO: Yes.

12 DR. SMITH: Where were you before?

13 MS. FRANCO: West Lyden.

14 DR. SMITH: What made you transfer to
15 Proviso West?

16 MS. FRANCO: We moved from that district
17 so I came here.

18 MR. ROBERTS: Did you hear any negatives
19 about Proviso West when you transferred in? Did
20 you have any fears of coming here?

21 MS. FRANCO: No, I'm happier because I
22 thought I was going to be the only hispanic but I
23 didn't feel I heard anything negative about it.

1 MR. ROBERTS: *What about you Ms. Pinedo?*

2 MS. PINEDO: *No, it's the same, you know.*

3 *I never heard nothing, you know, anything about*
4 *it.*

5 MR. ROBERTS: *You're both seniors now.*
6 *What do you feel if you had the whole thing to do*
7 *over again and you had to go over the last three*
8 *years, you the last four years, would you come to*
9 *Proviso West?*

10 MS. PINEDO: *Yes.*

11 MS. FRANCO: *Yes, I will.*

12 CHAIRPERSON LYON: *Any other questions?*

13 MR. MATHEWSON: *Could you compare your*
14 *experience at Lyons?*

15 MS. FRANCO: *West Lyden.*

16 MR. MATHEWSON: *Your earlier experience*
17 *there with your experience at Proviso West?*

18 MS. FRANCO: *I like it better here.*

19 MR. MATHEWSON: *You like it better here?*

20 MS. FRANCO: *Because I have more*
21 *opportunities and the other most of my classes*
22 *were Hispanic and we always speak Spanish and*
23 *everything, and when I moved here I start to speak*

1 *more English and I had more classes in English.*

2 *MR. MATHEWSON: Thank you.*

3 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: In the cafeteria do*
4 *students tend to sit separately, hispanics sitting*
5 *at one table, caucasians at another table, African*
6 *Americans at another table?*

7 *MS. FRANCO: Sometimes.*

8 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: What happens when*
9 *somebody breaks that, when they decide they're*
10 *going to try to sit at another table?*

11 *MS. FRANCO: Nothing, nothing happens*
12 *because we just move to another table or we sit*
13 *there at that same table with them.*

14 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: People don't talk*
15 *across the groups?*

16 *MS. FRANCO: I think there is.*

17 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Did you have try to*
18 *go over to one of the other tables and just talk?*

19 *MS. FRANCO: No.*

20 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Why not?*

21 *MS. FRANCO: I don't know.*

22 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: What if the school*
23 *set up some classes with some other groups and try*

1 *to have informal conversations; do you think that*
2 *might be reflective?*

3 *MS. FRANCO: Yes.*

4 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Any other questions*
5 *from the panel? Okay, thank you very much for*
6 *your participation.*

7 *Mr. Richardson and Mr. Spencer.*

8 *Thank you for joining us. Could you each give me*
9 *your full name and please spell it and tell me*
10 *what year you are here at Proviso West, starting*
11 *with Mr. Richardson.*

12 *SEVERIN RICHARDSON*

13 *Severin Richardson. I'm a senior,*
14 *S-e-v-e-r-i-n.*

15 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Richardson,*
16 *R-i-c-h-a-r-d-s-o-n?*

17 *MR. RICHARDSON: Right.*

18 *MR. SPENCER: Terrence Spencer, I'm a*
19 *senior, T-e-r-r-e-n-c-e S-p-e-n-c-e-r.*

20 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay, the purpose of*
21 *this forum is to try and understand any opinions*
22 *or observations either of you might have of the*
23 *racial relations here at Proviso West. Why don't*

1 *we start with Mr. Richardson. Do you have an*
2 *opinion or have you made any observations?*

3 *MR. RICHARDSON: The time I've been*
4 *here, I haven't seen any racial intercourse or*
5 *anything, nobody.*

6 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Nobody? So is it your*
7 *opinion there isn't a racial problem?*

8 *MR. RICHARSON: Well from what I've been*
9 *hearing, it's been racial conflicts, but I haven't*
10 *seen any.*

11 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Where have you heard*
12 *that from?*

13 *MR. RICHARDSON: From a teacher.*

14 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Spencer?*

15 *TERRENCE SPENCER*

16 *This is my first year here and since*
17 *I've been here I haven't seen nothing too much*
18 *racial anything going on, but that's about it.*

19 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: What school did you*
20 *come from?*

21 *MR. SPENCER: I was in Indiana, Ben*
22 *Davis.*

23 *DR. SMITH: Where?*

1 *MR. SPENCER: Ben Davis High School in*
2 *Indiannapolis.*

3 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: And how do you compare*
4 *this school with--*

5 *MR. SPENCER: There's more blacks and*
6 *Hispanics here than there is there, but there*
7 *ain't really no difference.*

8 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: As a newcomer you*
9 *found no problems meeting new friends?*

10 *MR. SPENCER: Unt-uh.*

11 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Having a social life?*

12 *MR. SPENCER: No.*

13 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay. Questions from*
14 *the panel?*

15 *MR. ROBERTS: Where do you live, what*
16 *community?*

17 *MR. SPENCER: Hillside.*

18 *MR. RICHARDSON: I live in Bellwood.*

19 *MR. PUGH: Have either one of you ever*
20 *experienced any racism anywhere.*

21 *MR. SPENCER: Yes.*

22 *MR. PUGH: Where?*

23 *MR. SPENCER: California.*

1 MR. RICHARDSON: *I had a run in with the*
2 *police and I was, out of five people, I was the*
3 *only one that went, they took me in because I*
4 *guess he had an attitude that day and I was*
5 *wondering why was he counting my money that I had*
6 *and he took me to jail. He thought I was getting*
7 *smart with him and I was looking back at him and*
8 *he was like don't look at me like that, and he put*
9 *me in the car and handcuffed me and took me to*
10 *jail for loitering and I was in front of my house.*

11 CHAIRPERSON LYON: *Okay, you know what*
12 *racism is and you haven't seen any of it in this*
13 *school?*

14 MR. RICHARDSON: *No, I haven't seen any*
15 *in this school.*

16 CHAIRPERSON LYON: *Mr. Scales?*

17 MR. SCALES: *Could you state for me what*
18 *community are the two of you from?*

19 MR. RICHARDSON: *I'm from Bellwood.*

20 MR. SPENCER: *Hillside.*

21 MR. SCALES: *First of all there were*
22 *several statements made yesterday and today that*
23 *students tend to hang together because of their*

1 *own kind. The question I have for the two of you*
2 *is okay, African Americans hang together, now in*
3 *the group of African Americans hanging together,*
4 *are all the African Americans from Hillside and*
5 *all of them -- and the other groups from Bellwood*
6 *or is that group mixed?*

7 *MR. SPENCER: Mixed because I don't*
8 *think, well seeing that I'm a senior right now,*
9 *not very many blacks live in Hillside and it don't*
10 *matter where you're from as long as you meet*
11 *people.*

12 *MR. SCALES: But the group of black*
13 *students that are hanging together are mixed in*
14 *terms of the community?*

15 *MR. SPENCER: Yea.*

16 *MR. SCALES: Why is it that they don't*
17 *mix with the other students?*

18 *MR. SPENCER: You talking about from*
19 *another race?*

20 *MR. SCALES: Sure, whites, Hispanics,*
21 *Asian Americans?*

22 *MR. SPENCER: It ain't like we just hang*
23 *along like black folks over here, Mexicans over*

1 *here, whites over there. If we feel like talking*
2 *to somebody, we converse with everybody. It ain't*
3 *like I don't like you because you're Mexican,*
4 *nothing like that. We talk to everybody.*

5 *MR. SCALES: So what you telling me isif*
6 *you feel like it, you move over there, you talk,*
7 *you do whatever you need to do?*

8 *MR. SPENCER: Ain't nothing wrong with*
9 *the black crowd. Like with the clique we hang*
10 *with, we just go talk to other folks.*

11 *MR. SCALES: Activities, what are you*
12 *two gentlemen involved in?*

13 *MR. SPENCER: Track.*

14 *MR. RICHARDSON: Before I came here I*
15 *was playing basketball at Lakeview High School.*
16 *I'm just finishing my last year here. I haven't*
17 *been playing any sports.*

18 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Ewing?*

19 *MR. EWING: Have either of you*
20 *received any punishments for any misconduct?*

21 *MR. SPENCER: No.*

22 *MR. RICHARDSON: I have.*

23 *MR. EWING: Why? You don't have to tell*

1 me what it is.

2 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Mr. Ricardson, when
3 you were at Lakeview, I just assume that there
4 were less than 20 percent black?

5 MR. RICHARDSON: About 20 percent.

6 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: And I assume that at
7 both Lakeview and here that in the cafeteria most
8 of the kids are sitting at tables that are all of
9 one race, is that correct?

10 MR. RICHARDSON: Excuse me, here or at
11 Lakeview?

12 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Both?

13 MR. RICHARDSON: Well, I haven't seen
14 during -- with the students, I haven't seen any
15 really racial conflict, but at Lakeview it was
16 like a gang problem at Lakeview and it was blacks
17 against Puerto Ricans and I mean Hispanics.

18 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: What about tables in
19 the cafeteria, equally separate in both high
20 schools?

21 MR. RICHARDSON: No.

22 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: What was it like at
23 the cafeteria at Lakeview?

1 MR. RICHARDSON: *Everybody sat together*
2 *really.*

3 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: *Blacks and whites*
4 *together? What about the cafeteria here?*

5 MR. RICHARDSON: *It's spaced out. It's*
6 *every -- it's different sections here.*

7 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: *There tends to be*
8 *different sections here?*

9 MR. RICHARDSON: *Yes.*

10 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: *Why do you think*
11 *there's a difference?*

12 MR. RICHARDSON: *I don't know. I guess*
13 *they don't have anything to talk about to each*
14 *other.*

15 CHAIRPERSON LYON: *Okay. Mr. Smith?*

16 DR. SMITH: *I wanted to ask Mr. Spencer*
17 *since you mentioned the racism in California, I've*
18 *got this thing about California, tell me about --*
19 *tell us.*

20 MR. SPENCER: *Well, I went to school,*
21 *Culverson High School. There were some prejudice*
22 *folks over there and I had got into it with I*
23 *guess with a little group, they had a little group*

1 *and they tried to burn down my house. So that was*
2 *about it.*

3 *DR. SMITH: You can't get more overt*
4 *than that.*

5 *MR. MATHEWSON: I just was going to ask*
6 *both of you since you'ved attended other schools,*
7 *compare the status of relations between people of*
8 *different races in this school versus your old*
9 *school; better or worse?*

10 *MR. SPENCER: Better.*

11 *MR. MATHEWSON: Better here.*

12 *MR. RICHARDSON: It's better.*

13 *MR. MATHEWSON: So it's better here.*

14 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Is there any*
15 *resentment of disciplining with respect to coming*
16 *late based on race? Anybody in the school tend to*
17 *say that they're in that position because of race?*

18 *MR. RICHARDSON: Some people have that*
19 *notion because one of my friends was saying that*
20 *one of the teachers didn't let him go to class*
21 *because he was like I think a couple of seconds*
22 *late, like right after the bell rung. He was*
23 *saying that some of the caucasian students, they*

1 *had their jackets -- we can't wear jackets in here*
2 *-- so they had their jackets, but he let them go*
3 *to class, but he gave him a hard time and made him*
4 *go to the lunchroom because he was late.*

5 *MR. ROBERTS: How long ago was that?*

6 *MR. RICHARDSON: It was like Monday.*

7 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: What can the school*
8 *do about that situation, what should the school do*
9 *about that, whether it's true or not?*

10 *MR. RICHARDSON: Whether it's true or*
11 *not?*

12 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Yes.*

13 *MR. RICHARDSON: I don't think the*
14 *school can do anything about it because some*
15 *people have different feelings, you know, some*
16 *people think everybody's out to get them or*
17 *something.*

18 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Do you think rules are*
19 *necessary for a high school to function, both of*
20 *you are nodding your heads.*

21 *MR. RICHARDSON: Yes. Everybody has*
22 *rules, you just got to accept them and try to cope*
23 *with it because at Lakeview they didn't have if*

1 *you missed eight days and you audit. That's why*
2 *when those tests they're having, that's why*
3 *they're ranked so low and here most people they're*
4 *better, they're better over here because most*
5 *people don't want to get kicked out of school. So*
6 *rules don't bother me because if you do what you*
7 *got to do, you shouldn't have to worry about it.*

8 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Other questions?*

9 *MR. ROBERTS: You're both seniors. Are*
10 *you planning to further your education?*

11 *MR. RICHARDSON: Yes.*

12 *MR. SPENCER: Yes.*

13 *DR. SMITH: Going back to California?*

14 *MR. SPENCER: Yes.*

15 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: I believe that's all*
16 *the questions for you two gentlemen. Thank you*
17 *very much for participating.*

18 *State your name for the record and*
19 *please spell it.*

20 *MS. LASKY: My name is Kim Lasky, K-i-m*
21 *L-a-s-k-y.*

22 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay, and you are?*

23 *MS. LASKY: I'm a senior.*

1 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: How long have you*
2 *been at Proviso West?*

3 *MS. LASKY: I've been at Proviso all four*
4 *years, since I was a Freshman.*

5 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay. You have some*
6 *opinions you'd like to express, go ahead.*

7 *KIM LASKY*

8 *I was interviewed by Mr. Buzz*
9 *Bissenger for the New York Times article and I did*
10 *say that wear all racists now. I'm not going to*
11 *deny that I made that comment, but Mr. Bissenger*
12 *took it out of context and didn't include the rest*
13 *of it which made all the difference in the world.*
14 *After I said that I went on to say that I wasn't*
15 *particularly talking about blacks, I wasn't*
16 *talking about whites, I wasn't talking about*
17 *Hispanics I was saying that everybody takes a part*
18 *in racism and there is racism at Proviso, but*
19 *there is racism everywhere you go and Mr.*
20 *Bissenger chose to ignore that fact and just*
21 *concentrated and made me look like I was saying*
22 *all white people are racist at Proviso and that*
23 *was not what I was getting at at all. I think*

1 *that everybody who knows me and all of my teachers*
2 *here will vouch for me that I am friends with*
3 *everyone, I'm friends with blacks, whites, I'm*
4 *friends with whites, I'm friends with Hispanics*
5 *and if I felt that way, I would not be attending a*
6 *school with such a diverse population as Proviso*
7 *West, I would be at a school that was completely*
8 *white. I wouldn't be going somewhere that's 60*
9 *percent black, 20 percent Hispanic, 14 percent*
10 *white I think it is, and two percent Asian. I*
11 *mean I wouldn't be going here. My parents gave me*
12 *the option of where I wanted to attend school and*
13 *I chose Proviso and if I were racist, I wouldn't*
14 *be here.*

15 *MR. ROBERTS: Where do you live?*

16 *MS. LASKY: I live in Westchester.*

17 *MR. EWING: Well what did you mean when*
18 *you said that we are all racist now? Who were you*
19 *including?*

20 *MS. LASKY: The whole student body,*
21 *everybody.*

22 *MR. EWING: So you were saying that*
23 *everybody in the school was a racist?*

1 MS. LASKY: I didn't mean it as racist,
2 I meant that people tended to separate in their
3 own groups and in doing so that they are in a way
4 racist because like everybody has said so far,
5 that's the way it is at Proviso, the blacks mostly
6 hang out with the blacks, the whites hang out with
7 the whites, hispanics hang out with the hispanics.
8 It's either that way or it's the students in the
9 honors classes hang out with the kids in their
10 classes. It's because it's the people you're
11 around the most and in my case is I know I hang
12 out with the students who are in my classes. So I
13 meet -- I'm with those students in the honors
14 classes and what I was trying to say, its
15 everybody, everybody takes part in it and at
16 Proviso there's just as many white people who are
17 as racist as there are racist against the whites
18 and hispanic who are racists against the whites
19 and the blacks. It's everybody, it's not just one
20 group.

21 MR. EWING: So when you say that
22 everybody is a racist, but you say that's not what
23 you meant and I still -- you're pointing out by

1 *giving an example of racial practices that*
2 *everybody seems to be showing or exhibiting. So*
3 *if you point out that all groups are doing things*
4 *that are racist, doesn't it leave in place your*
5 *statement that all of us are racist?*

6 *MS. LASKY: What you're saying is how I*
7 *meant it, but the way Mr. Bissenger made it sound*
8 *like I was implying that it was all white people*
9 *and I know that almost -- most of the people who*
10 *read the article implied that I was meaning white*
11 *people and I had to clarify it a numbers of times.*

12 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay. Well Let's say*
13 *that you didn't mean that it was all white people,*
14 *that you meant that it was every ethnic or racial*
15 *group within this school. So that everybody is*
16 *racist based upon the fact that theu may be in a*
17 *particular group at sometime, is that how you*
18 *defined racist?*

19 *MS. LASKY: That's not how I define*
20 *racism. Maybe I should have used the word*
21 *prejudice because everybody has someone they don't*
22 *like, everyone has different opinions about*
23 *different people, so maybe I should have used the*

1 *word prejudice because I know that racism means*
2 *hating an entire group of people, but maybe I*
3 *should have meant that people are prejudiced*
4 *against different types, maybe not racist.*

5 *MR. EWING: Okay. So in other words you*
6 *have -- you also believe that when they came to*
7 *the school they brought their racial attitudes*
8 *with them?*

9 *MS. LASKY: Do you mean the students*
10 *when they come in to Proviso?*

11 *MR. EWING: Yes, students, teachers,*
12 *anyone?*

13 *MS. LASKY: I think that's the way that*
14 *the students feel about the different races. It's*
15 *always starts like at the home I know that I was*
16 *taught, I mean I'm sure you've all read the*
17 *article, my parents are in the article, too, and*
18 *they taught me that everybody's equal and that*
19 *we're all supposed to be judged the same and I*
20 *know that's how I was raised. So I think that*
21 *when most people came into Proviso, they had their*
22 *minds set up, they had their mind set, either*
23 *they're going to keep an open mind or their mind*

1 *was already closed.*

2 *MR. EWING: Well, my final short thing*
3 *is as you are sitting there now, do you consider*
4 *yourself to be racist?*

5 *MS. LASKY: Not at all.*

6 *MR. EWING: But you did when you talked*
7 *to the reporter by saying that all we're all*
8 *racist?*

9 *MS. LASKY: I wasn't saying me*
10 *personally, I was saying the student population.*

11 *MR. EWING: But you included yourself?*

12 *MS. LASKY: I guess I included myself.*

13 *MR. PUGH: Let me ask a question along*
14 *the same line. We're all racist. I just made the*
15 *statement and I'm not talking about your high*
16 *school, I'm saying all of us. Is that the context*
17 *you were talking, in the same kind of context or*
18 *are you talking about this high school?*

19 *MS. LASKY: Yes, this high school.*

20 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Thanks.*

21 *MR. PUGH: That's what you mean,*
22 *different than another high school?*

23 *MS. LASKY: It doesn't matter about*

1 *another high school, this is the high school we*
2 *were talking about.*

3 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Staci Yandle?*

4 *MS. YANDLE: Whatever the basis and I*
5 *think you sort of described the behavior that you*
6 *felt was behind your statement, that behavior that*
7 *you've observed. Is there any other behaviors or*
8 *incidents that you would attribute to prejudice or*
9 *racism, do you feel that that's a problem, that*
10 *those things pose a problem here?*

11 *MS. LASKY: Are you asking me that if I*
12 *think that's what contributes to racism as a*
13 *problem here?*

14 *MS. Yandle: The things that you*
15 *consider racist or prejudice, you said maybe you*
16 *should have used the word prejudice and you gave*
17 *us examples. I'm saying do you think those type*
18 *of behaviors playing out in the school here pose a*
19 *problem in this atmosphere? Do you think it's a*
20 *problem?*

21 *MS. LASKY: It's not a big problem. Mr.*
22 *Bissenger made the whole article out that that was*
23 *the only problem we have here and that there were*

1 *no good things about Proviso and I know that when*
2 *we talked to him, my family and I, we made sure*
3 *that he knew that we were like the biggest*
4 *supporters of Proviso. My parents have been so*
5 *involved and they were the founding members of the*
6 *PTO and he just chose to ignore all that and he*
7 *chose to ignore all --*

8 *MS. YANDLE: And let me say this, and*
9 *again I was just wondering if you felt this was a*
10 *problem and I would recognize your feeling in*
11 *terms of what was pointed out in that it was all*
12 *negative and certainly we can read the article and*
13 *please indulge me for a second Faye and I, as we*
14 *all toured the school this morning and there's no*
15 *one sitting up here that would say there are not*
16 *positive things going here at Proviso West. I*
17 *mean we definitely acknowledge that, so again and*
18 *I'm relating to you this way because you're very*
19 *upset and I understand that and I'm glad that you*
20 *presented yourself here today to this committee*
21 *and gave yourself an opportunity to explain what*
22 *you wanted to explain about your statements.*

23 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Smith?*

1 *DR. SMITH: I think the last speaker*
2 *touched on it. I think you shared an insight*
3 *about the nature and character of our society in*
4 *our nature. It's not just Proviso High School,*
5 *it's what happens in our total society and I think*
6 *you were insightful to be able to pick up on it.*

7 *MR. MATHEWSON: I want to thank you for*
8 *coming here today. I think you were very brave*
9 *and I appreciate it, and one further thought and I*
10 *subscribe very much as to what Ken Smith just said*
11 *about America today because in your explanation of*
12 *what you were talking about in the context of that*
13 *conversation seems to me what you're talking about*
14 *was more of the tendency of groups to relate to*
15 *their own racial groups rather than any overt*
16 *aspects of discriminatory or prejudicial treatment*
17 *of other people, am I right in that respect or do*
18 *you see racial discrimination and mistreatment*
19 *based on race?*

20 *MS. LASKY: No, you were right the way*
21 *you said it.*

22 *MR. EWING: I'm curious and you don't*
23 *have to answer this, whether or not you have*

1 received any negative attention as a result of
2 your article and the quotes that were attributed
3 to it?

4 MS. LASKY: Yes, I have.

5 MR. EWING: Here at the school?

6 MS. LASKY: I did until I was able to
7 explain myself and they were able to believe me
8 and take what that I was telling them the truth
9 and I hope that you guys can do the same today.

10 CHAIRPERSON LYON: I need to move on to
11 the next panel. I want to thank you. That was
12 brave of you to come back and confront all of
13 this.

14 Our next panelists, would you please
15 state your full name and spell it for the record?

16 MS. JENSEN: Connie Jensen, C-o-n-n-i-e
17 J-e-n-s-e-n.

18 MS. MALONE: Beverly Malone,
19 B-e-v-e-r-l-y M-a-l-o-n-e.

20 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay. And you know
21 why we're here to hear your opinions and
22 observations on racial relations. Why not go
23 ahead and let Ms. Jensen start?

1 **CONNIE JENSEN**

2 *Okay. I guess I just want to state*
3 *initially that this is my 9th year at Proviso*
4 *West. When I applied here I was fully aware that*
5 *this was a culturally diverse school. I don't*
6 *think I would want to work, and I've stated this*
7 *to many people, in a district high school that was*
8 *not diverse. It's exciting to work with all kinds*
9 *of different people and I think in general the*
10 *kids and the staff get along quite well.*

11 **CHAIRPERSON LYON:** *Okay, thank you.*
12 *Mrs. Malone?*

13 **BEVERLY MALONE**

14 *This is my eighth year here at*
15 *Proviso West. I've taught for many, many years*
16 *and I've always worked in school settings where it*
17 *was a variety and a multi cultural population. So*
18 *that's the type of population that I'm used to*
19 *being around and I grew up in that kind of a*
20 *setting so -- and I feel that what I get out of*
21 *Proviso is a very supportive setting to me. I've*
22 *been very happy here for the past eight years.*
23 *People are helpful to me here and as a black*

1 *female I don't feel that, you know, anyone has*
2 *ever been unfair to me and if I've ever had*
3 *problems, I feel that there's always been someone*
4 *here that I can go to to be able to get support*
5 *and to get my needs met, so.*

6 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Very good. Questions*
7 *from the panel? Mr. Mathewson.*

8 *MR. MATHEWSON: What do you both do here*
9 *basically?*

10 *MS. JENSEN: The same thing, we're both*
11 *counselors and I'm currently the acting*
12 *chairperson of the counseling department.*

13 *MR. MATHEWSON: And what does that*
14 *encompass? Does that mean disciplinary or problem*
15 *situations or --*

16 *MS. JENSEN: No, I will briefly say that*
17 *last year we went to a team concept for pupil*
18 *personnel services where there is one dean and two*
19 *counselors in each pod, as we call them, and we've*
20 *moved to this new type of situation to help the*
21 *students because the disciplinarian is there, the*
22 *counselor is there, and you have more*
23 *opportunities to work with the same student at the*

1 same time. The deans work with pretty much with
2 straight discipline and the counselors are the
3 people that are to do the enrolling, you know, do
4 a lot of attendance, checking, making sure that
5 each child is prepared for college or whatever
6 that child wants to do and meets the graduation
7 requirements so hopefully they can graduate in
8 their correct year. Does that answer your
9 question?

10 MR. MATHEWSON: You both said that you
11 haven't had any adverse experiences personally
12 based on racial differences here. How would you
13 describe the clients among the students in terms
14 of relationships of people with different races;
15 faculty, staff, and students?

16 MS. MALONE: I think from my experience
17 I think basically on a whole I would say that what
18 I see {hear\here\her} is basically what I see in
19 society. There are people that get along here and
20 there are people that don't get along here. But
21 that's based on the fact that maybe that's a
22 personality type situation and not necessarily
23 just because it's a racial situation. So

1 *sometimes we have situations where people are*
2 *under a lot of stress, they're under a lot of*
3 *pressure because we have our own problems in terms*
4 *of kids with emotional problems with the kids and*
5 *just trying to help 2,400 students and to do a*
6 *good job with everybody that that is a lot and it*
7 *takes a lot from everybody to have to work*
8 *together. Some people have one idea of how to do*
9 *it, somebody else has a different idea of how to*
10 *do it. So sometimes those ideas don't always*
11 *mesh. But I think everybody feels as though they*
12 *can express their opinion here and when they do, I*
13 *think that that information that they give is*
14 *taken and is done constructively.*

15 *MR. MATHEWSON: To the extent that do*
16 *you see problems that you feel are based on racial*
17 *misunderstanding or racial prejudice, do you think*
18 *the school is doing enough to strive to alleviate*
19 *or amelorate the situation or could you suggest*
20 *anything the school could be doing better or more*
21 *of?*

22 *MS. MALONE: I think that because it's*
23 *multi cultural setting, I think that this school*

1 *has done an effective job in going about the*
2 *business of trying to help each individual student*
3 *meet their individual needs, whether it's because*
4 *of a learning situation or because their cultural*
5 *situation. We have all types of programs here*
6 *that can help everyone. So I think that our*
7 *school is on top of that situation. I think that*
8 *they work to try to come up with new trends and*
9 *they do the best job that they can to provide*
10 *students with the best programs that they can.*
11 *Sometimes I feel that maybe if we had more money*
12 *sometimes that would help us to be able to do*
13 *other things if we had more time. It's not so*
14 *much the racial component, sometimes we just don't*
15 *have enough time to do a lot of things we'd like*
16 *to do.*

17 *MS. JENSEN: Each counselor has 400*
18 *students on their case load so we cannot as*
19 *counselors be nearly as effective as we should be*
20 *in all areas of a student's learning and emotional*
21 *stability with 400 students to be responsible for.*

22 *MR. MATHEWSON: When you say 400 as a*
23 *case load, does that mean that situations have*

1 *arisen that require counseling or individual into*
2 *400 situations or just that you're assigned 400*
3 *people in case anything develops with those?*

4 *MS. JENSEN: So it's not even that we're*
5 *assigned 400 each and we're responsible in one of*
6 *our main capacities is we are responsible to make*
7 *sure that those 400 students follow the correct*
8 *plan to get to graduation. Now whether, you know,*
9 *we've been very lucky that each one of the 400 in*
10 *each case load hasn't had a crises.*

11 *MR. MATHEWSON: You're talking about*
12 *academic counseling as well?*

13 *MS. JENSEN: And then we also do*
14 *personal counseling if we have time.*

15 *MR. PUGH: You actually talk to 400*
16 *students?*

17 *MS. JENSEN: Yes, not everyday, but we*
18 *do during the school year talk to --*

19 *MR. PUGH: Only 200 a day?*

20 *MS. JENSEN: Yes, right.*

21 *MR. MALONE: And each day is a*
22 *completely different day because you'll have*
23 *different problems that are going to arise on a*

1 *daily basis with each student. As I say, each*
2 *student is an individual person here and you have*
3 *to meet individual needs.*

4 *MR. SCALES: It's obviously something*
5 *going on here that is good and is positive. Now*
6 *we've heard from the students yesterday and day*
7 *basically state they're comfortable here, yes, it*
8 *has problems, it's like any other high school and*
9 *I wouldn't doubt that, but they're comfortable*
10 *here. They look forward to coming here. You just*
11 *stated that they feel free to speak their minds*
12 *here, to state their opinions. So something is*
13 *going on here that created that type of an*
14 *environment. I talked about this last night with*
15 *my colleagues and I'm going to ask you folks, but*
16 *that's just a commentary for Dr. Montoya since I*
17 *can't get her up here, I'll give it to you. Why*
18 *hasn't someone, and since you're the counselors*
19 *and you're able to look out there and see what's*
20 *going on, why hasn't someone done some writing or*
21 *something to publicize what is going on here?*
22 *Because I go back to what you said, you got a*
23 *multi cultural environment here, the percentages*

1 *show that you have got a real good mixture of*
2 *students here and things are working, but no one*
3 *knows why. But yet yesterday listening to the*
4 *students today, listening to the students and*
5 *today walking around this building on the tour I*
6 *could see a lot of things that are going on, but*
7 *no one knows that these things are happening. Why*
8 *hasn't that been done? Why don't you publicize*
9 *it?*

10 *MS. MALONE: I think we spend more time*
11 *trying to amelorate all of the negative publicity*
12 *that we get, which we get a lot of that and people*
13 *want to hear more of the bad things than they want*
14 *to hear the good things.*

15 *I work on several different*
16 *committees here. I sponsor the clubs and both of*
17 *my clubs are multi cultural. I sponsor scholastic*
18 *bowl and I have students of all cultures. Now no*
19 *one ever comes and says I'd like to sit and watch*
20 *your group, you know, and see what they do because*
21 *we're working on scholastic academic subject*
22 *areas. Nobody wants to see that. There are two*
23 *females, a black female and a white female working*

1 together with these students. They only appear to
2 want to hear what's bad about our program and
3 there are many good things about our program, but
4 no one wants to hear that because that's dull and
5 that doesn't sell newspapers.

6 MS. JENSEN: Tonight we're having, the
7 counselors are sponsoring a financial aid workshop
8 night for their seniors and their parents. I'm
9 not even sure if it's got into the paper. It was
10 sent into the paper. I'm sure if it did, it was
11 probably this big and you know how big the other
12 articles are in the paper yesterday and today
13 about what's going on here. I think part of our
14 problem is getting the press to do the good
15 things.

16 MR. SCALES: But let me back up. Forget
17 them, no press. Now they'll print it because I
18 told to you forget them, but what I'm asking you
19 to do is go about your professional journals. If
20 you can get this information out to the public in
21 a professional journal, you're going to start
22 getting people's attention and if you haven't
23 heard it, I'll say it again, you're doing some

1 *dynamic things here that are working and people*
2 *need to hear about it and if the local press*
3 *doesn't want to print it, to heck with that, go to*
4 *your professional people, and my closing, my*
5 *recommendation to you two would be I'm going to*
6 *maybe leave words for you. I think the two of you*
7 *should volunteer to Dr. Montoya to work on*
8 *something like this. Let's get it out to the --*

9 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: I'm going to cut you*
10 *off this because we don't know for a fact that*
11 *Mrs. Montoya is not working on it.*

12 *MR. SCALES: I can't get her up here,*
13 *so.*

14 *MS. JENSEN: I will tell you in her*
15 *defense the principal's office sent out a*
16 *newsletter every quarter.*

17 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: I think our question*
18 *needs to be posed to the individual that's*
19 *handling that and not let other people make*
20 *assumptions. That's probably what got us here in*
21 *the first place and we're here to alleviate that.*

22 *MR. SCALES: With the professional*
23 *counseling organization, I think they'll be glad*

1 to hear that.

2 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Scales, we've got
3 other teachers hear.

4 Our next two teachers -- thank you
5 for participating.

6 Thank you very much. Could I ask
7 each of you to state your name and please spell
8 your first and last name for the record, please?

9 MS. SUFREDIN: Good afternoon, Gail
10 Sufredin, Gail, G-a-i-l, last name
11 S-u-f-r-e-d-i-n.

12 MS. PALM-WALLACE: Good afternoon, my
13 name is Alexis Palm-Wallace, A-l-e-x-i-s P-a-l-m
14 like the palm of your hand, P-a-l-m, Wallace,
15 W-a-l-l-a-c-e.

16 CHAIRPERSON LYON: And real quickly,
17 could you tell me what area you teach and what
18 other extracurricular activities you supervise?

19 MS. SUFERDIN: I teach in the special
20 education department and the only extra activity
21 that I currently do is the commencement service.
22 In years past I did the school yearbook, but as of
23 this point just commencement exercises.

1 CHAIRPERSON LYON: *Thank you very much.*
2 *Ms. Wallace?*

3 MS. WALLACE: *Yes. I teach in the*
4 *English Department. I teach English, drama, most*
5 *of the literature classes. Sometime I've taught*
6 *the communications class. In the past I've been*
7 *sponsor of the African American History Club, I've*
8 *been class sponsor for the Class of 94, I*
9 *presently and in the past I've done the talent*
10 *show. In the past I've been in a play, spring*
11 *play director. I'm lead coah for the individual*
12 *events and sponsor for the Multi Cultural Club.*

13 CHAIRPERSON LYON: *Thank you very much*
14 *Each of you know why we're*
15 *here, so Ms. Wallace, if you want to begin?*

16 ALEXIS PALM-WALLACE
17 *Good afternoon to our distinguished panel*
18 *of Commissioners. I have taught at Proviso West*
19 *High School for 15 years. I have seen in this*
20 *time the change or shall I say this shift in*
21 *population in this school and in this community.*
22 *I sit not to indict, but to ask for help for our*
23 *school, for our community, and ultimately for our*

1 *society. In this community the school community*
2 *of approximately 2,400 students of many cultures,*
3 *I would honestly say that maybe 95 percent of the*
4 *young people have learned to peacefully coexist,*
5 *either by tolerating, accepting or even*
6 *assimilating each other interculturally and*
7 *intraculturally.*

8 *I think and I emphasize the I that*
9 *the young people can serve as models for all. In*
10 *this same community are approximately 300 adults*
11 *or shall I say older people. I have worked with*
12 *some of these adults for as long as the 15 years*
13 *that I have been here or for as briefly as the one*
14 *or two years that they have been here. Whereas I*
15 *respect a great majority of these individuals*
16 *because I feel that they truly and sincerely serve*
17 *the student population in earnest, I cannot blind*
18 *myself to the certain individuals who are bias,*
19 *self-serving, self-righteous and ignorant. As the*
20 *ethnicity of the school changes, I have seen the*
21 *proliferation of rules, rules not to evoke change*
22 *in behavior or to teach appropriate behavior, but*
23 *to serve the lack of desire to make these certain*

1 *individuals that I speak of either do their jobs*
2 *as society changes or to make these certain*
3 *individuals learn how to deal with students from*
4 *differing background or to make these certain*
5 *individuals accept differences in others.*

6 *I also contend that if this*
7 *distinguished panel wishes to know some real*
8 *truths, maybe you should talk to former students*
9 *and former employees. Walk the halls, sit in the*
10 *classes, sit in the faculty washrooms, faculty*
11 *lounges and faculty cafeterias as certain*
12 *individuals discuss and degrade the students and*
13 *the communities from which they come. We have an*
14 *excellent school with superior academics, but wear*
15 *not in a perfect world and like people who are*
16 *flawed, so too does this school have flaws. A*
17 *person who has the flu is not bad, just sick, he*
18 *can be cured. I solicit your help.*

19 *GAIL SUFREDIN*

20 *I'm in my 9th year at Proviso West*
21 *High School so I have seen several changes in the*
22 *make up of the student population and I can*
23 *honestly say that I feel that the students are*

1 *being served well. There are always going to be*
2 *in any given group of people people who are*
3 *tolerant, people who are accepting, people who are*
4 *understanding, and there are always going to be a*
5 *few people that are not as tolerant, accepting,*
6 *and understanding.*

7 *Because I teach in the special*
8 *education department, I think that the background*
9 *that I must have just by virtue of my chosen*
10 *profession, I do understand the need for*
11 *acceptance of individuals, the need for acceptance*
12 *of individual situations, disabilities, things*
13 *like that. And so I feel real good that the job*
14 *that the people that I work directly with is a job*
15 *of concern, care for all students, regardless of*
16 *their background, their disability, their*
17 *limitations, their strengths. We have learned*
18 *through our preparation as special educators to*
19 *look at individuals, assess individuals, do what*
20 *is necessary for personal growth and help students*
21 *excel to the best of their abilities.*

22 *Within our regular education*
23 *programs I have seen students that have gone on*

1 through the college ranks and have come back to
2 visit the teachers here at Proviso and they have
3 said how well prepared that they have been from
4 the programs that they took advantage of at
5 Proviso. And I think that the key here is that
6 the students have taken the choice into their own
7 hands. The programs here are excellent, if the
8 students are willing to commit their personal
9 time, effort to accomplish and to meet the
10 expectations that are set for them. Unfortunately
11 there are students in our school that are not as
12 motivated and I think that the teachers as a whole
13 do their best to motivate the students. There are
14 teachers that are not quite as skilled at
15 motivating some of our students, but I believe
16 that as a faculty member that the faculty as a
17 whole is committed to helping students achieve
18 their personal best. But I still think that the
19 student has the ultimate responsibility for
20 working up to his or her own potential.

21 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Thank you. Ms.
22 Yandle?

23 MS. YANDLE: I'd like to ask Ms. Wallace,

1 *if I understood you correctly, you mentioned some*
2 *individual I guess the faculty or professional*
3 *staff that you felt were bias, self-serving and*
4 *ignorant and I'd like to ask you in your tenure*
5 *here have those not necessarily individuals, but*
6 *those problems been addressed to the*
7 *administration and if so how have they been*
8 *addressed? In other words, have they been made*
9 *aware of this problem with these people and what*
10 *has been the response?*

11 *MS. WALLACE: Mostly, definitely I*
12 *believe I know there have been times that these*
13 *problems have been addressed to the*
14 *administration. I do know of times when the*
15 *administration acted upon them. There are other*
16 *cases that I have no knowledge of what might have*
17 *happened.*

18 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Any other questions?*

19 *MR. PUGH: I just wanted to complement*
20 *both of you on your presentation.*

21 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Mathewson, when*
22 *you ask us to help, you flatter us because we're*
23 *learning a lot about what a school can do, as the*

1 gentleman commented previously, but what kind of
2 help would you be looking for from outside from
3 anyone and what help could a government or quasi
4 governmental volunteer group like ourselves
5 provide to you?

6 MS. WALLACE: I thank you for asking
7 that because I think that you have more resources
8 than we. There are several programs that we have
9 tried to institute and we've been told by the
10 administration that we did not have the funds or
11 the means to carry them out. Possibly if your
12 group saw fit then you could help us to find the
13 funds or the means to impelement those necessary
14 programs.

15 MR. EWING: As classroom teachers, do you
16 play a role in the implementation of the eight
17 tardies, no grade situation?

18 MS. WALLACE: Eight absences.

19 MR. EWING: Absences.

20 MS. WALLACE: Yes.

21 MR. EWING: Could you briefly explain to
22 us just what is the rule as you understand it?

23 MS. WALLACE: As I understand it, a

1 *student is absent without authorization, the*
2 *counselors are at liberty to give authorization if*
3 *the parent contacts the counselor and gives either*
4 *a doctor's note or some circumstances, I do not*
5 *know the full list of circumstances that they have*
6 *to present.*

7 *MR. EWING: This is for tardy now, not*
8 *absence. We've heard testimony that you can be*
9 *admitted late and you have to go to the cafeteria*
10 *and once this happens eight times you lose your*
11 *grade for the whole semester.*

12 *MS. WALLACE: Yes, that's for the first*
13 *period. There is different disparity between what*
14 *happens first period and what happens the rest of*
15 *the day, yes. A student who is tardy one minute*
16 *and in some cases 30 seconds will lose privilege*
17 *to enter the class first period.*

18 *MR. EWING: Is that also true of special*
19 *education?*

20 *MS. SUFREDIN: This is true of special*
21 *education students, but there's one thing that I*
22 *would like to clear up that is that the eight*
23 *absence rule and that happens to apply to first*

1 *period is on a nine week basis. So if a student*
2 *misses eight classes in a nine week grading period*
3 *without authorization, then the student audits the*
4 *quarter. That does not mean that they*
5 *automatically fail the semester, what that audit*
6 *means is that that one grading quarter of audit is*
7 *averaged with the other grades that was earned by*
8 *the student for the matching grading quarter of*
9 *the semester. So students who have chosen to miss*
10 *school for any of the reasons, whether it be the*
11 *first hour tardies or for other reasons,*
12 *unauthorized, if they do have that absence problem*
13 *for one quarter, they do not automatically lose*
14 *credit for the entire semester necessarily.*

15 *MR. EWING: So grades is not based*
16 *exclusively on academic performance?*

17 *MS. SUFREDIN: Correct.*

18 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: You said there's great*
19 *disparity, how do know there's great disparity?*

20 *MS. WALLACE: Well, students who are*
21 *tardy first hour are sent to the cafeteria.*

22 *Students -- from place to place it may vary.*

23 *Students maybe tardy by 30 seconds, 30 minutes at*

1 *another class period during the day and be allowed*
2 *to go into class. So we can keep numbers on the*
3 *number of students who are tardy first hour.*

4 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Do you keep those*
5 *numbers?*

6 *MS. WALLACE: I'm sure that someone can*
7 *contact the principal and see because they do have*
8 *students to sign in, yes, if she has those numbers*
9 *available.*

10 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Are those numbers used*
11 *in any kind of review as to how to modify*
12 *programs?*

13 *MS. SUFREDIN: I think the union*
14 *discipline committee just recently published a*
15 *comparative analysis of first hour Fs, first hour*
16 *audits and the combinations and variations within*
17 *those numbers. Our union discipline committee*
18 *would probably be able to provide that document to*
19 *you.*

20 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: We need to move on to*
21 *the next panelists. Thank you.*

22 *Thank you very much for joining us.*
23 *Will you please state your name and please spell*

1 *your full name, for the record?*

2 *MR. DEUCHLER: I am Doug, D-o-u-g*
3 *D-e-u-c-h-l-e-r.*

4 *MS. JOHNSON: My name is Mona Johnson,*
5 *M-o-n-a J-o-h-n-s-o-n.*

6 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Will you briefly tell*
7 *us what grades, what classes do you teach and any*
8 *extra curricular activities you supervise?*

9
10 *MR. DEUCHLER: This is my 27th year in*
11 *the district. I taught English for 175 years at*
12 *Proviso East, the last ten years I've been at West*
13 *as Chairman of the library. I have been a class*
14 *sponsor for five years and I -- not currently this*
15 *year. I'm also involved in a group called the*
16 *Teens Need to Talk a get together group during*
17 *lunch time. They talk about problems, and issues.*

18 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Very good. Ms.*
19 *Johnson?*

20 *MS. JOHNSON: I'm the school social*
21 *worker here. I've been here 16 years, so I've*
22 *seen diversity, no diversity as well as diversity.*
23 *I wear many hats here. I originated the multi*

1 *cultural group, the Tennes Need to Talk Support*
2 *Group, our crises intervention tema, I dealt with*
3 *the Students for Success Program, I'm coordinator*
4 *of many other programs that assist our students in*
5 *the social capacity.*

6 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Since you have the*
7 *mike, why don't we let you start with your*
8 *prepared comments?*

9 *MONA JOHNSON*

10 *Well, it's really not prepared, but*
11 *in the sense that there are several issues that I*
12 *think is important to note here. In my tenure as*
13 *a faculty member or member of Proviso, I've seen*
14 *many changes. When I first arrived here as a*
15 *minority or African American it was very difficult*
16 *to be in a setting where it was predominantly*
17 *white. Even though I went to schools that were*
18 *predominantly white or I've also worked in other*
19 *settings it was very difficult to see how a person*
20 *of a minority could really relate to other staff*
21 *members. And I guess what really disturbed me was*
22 *that if you would go to the mailbox and would*
23 *speak to someone, they would not part their lips.*

1 *And I guess I became immune to that and as they*
2 *begin to know me and not look at me as for my*
3 *color, but look at me for who I was, then I think*
4 *the reception was a lot better.*

5 *Then as we moved into different*
6 *administrations, we had other, I would say*
7 *interventions with administrations and more hiring*
8 *of other African Americans, other minorities which*
9 *assists in us working with the students because*
10 *the student population tends to change. But what*
11 *we were finding is that a lot of the students were*
12 *not coming from Westchester, they were not coming*
13 *from Berkley, they were not coming from Hillside,*
14 *they were coming from Bellwood and the Bellwood*
15 *community was changing drastically. In that*
16 *capacity I think some teachers and staff members*
17 *did not know how to deal with those issues that*
18 *were brought to the school and if I guess in any*
19 *capacity. As the school social worker I had the*
20 *opportunity to deal with some of those social*
21 *issues. Because of our administration and the*
22 *policies and the disciplines that they have*
23 *implemented, sometimes those policies and those*

1 *disciplines do not assist the families in working*
2 *through a problem or a crises, so I think as a*
3 *result of that they saw racism, they saw biases*
4 *because as a group, a minority group, they were*
5 *becoming the target. I was concerned about those*
6 *issues and in my concern I would talk to*
7 *administration about changes and I must say that*
8 *our administration has been very avid in working*
9 *towards changes, especially towards sensitivity of*
10 *all cultures.*

11 *I had an experience whereas one*
12 *white student came to me very upset because they*
13 *were becoming the minority. It was very difficult*
14 *for them to be in an environment where they were*
15 *walking through the halls and it was like they had*
16 *no ownership. Whereas before they felt that they*
17 *had that ownership. And then I had an opportunity*
18 *to speak to an African American who expressed the*
19 *same concern but that I have been talked about, I*
20 *have been ignored in classroom, in the classroom*
21 *what I've said is not considered as assertiveness*
22 *or debateable but I was militant. I was addressed*
23 *as that of someone who was confrontive and the*

1 *mixed feelings that that brought about. And then*
2 *I had hispanics who were saying that they really*
3 *didn't even acknowledge me, my culture. So I*
4 *spoke with our principal who was at that time Mr.*
5 *Melano and I said we needed something that*
6 *would -- a sensitivity group that will address*
7 *these issues because what was happening, these*
8 *students were going through the halls day after*
9 *today to the classroom ignoring their feelings,*
10 *ignoring who they were, ignoring their culture and*
11 *that disturbed me. I've seen situations where our*
12 *African Americans have had to be arrested here in*
13 *our building with handcuffs and taken out. To*
14 *them that was demeaning. Now maybe that was*
15 *procedure, but for an African American that was a*
16 *form of slavery which they in turn felt that that*
17 *was a bias, felt that that was racism.*

18 *I think that so many times as we as*
19 *staff members or administrators, we enforce policy*
20 *and discipline that we really don't see what it's*
21 *doing to the culture dealing with the sensitivity*
22 *of different ways of dealing with people and human*
23 *beings that we lose that thought and that's why I*

1 think a lot of people, minorities are feeling like
2 they have been wronged in some way, especially a
3 bias.

4 It's so sad whenever only two
5 African American male teachers in our school and
6 I've been here 16 years, that's sad. It's sad to
7 see that we have maybe 15 African Americans, maybe
8 two or three Hispanics in the tenure that I have
9 been here and I know that I'm taking up the time,
10 but as administrators I hope that this committee
11 will assist them in working on things that will
12 help us to provide sensitivity to our staff, to
13 our student population, and to our community, our
14 parents, our parents are alienating themselves
15 from us. Thank you.

16 DOUG DEUCHLER

17 During my ten years here at Proviso
18 I have seen an incredible number of people who
19 have valiantly and very positively worked for
20 positive dealing with a lot of the issues that we
21 have been discussing. There has always been a
22 minority of people who just do not feel ownership
23 of our students and we've talked about culturally

1 *diversity. Some people don't see it that way,*
2 *they see it at a sinking ship as each year we've*
3 *got an increasing number of African American*
4 *students. They perceived that as the end of*
5 *Proviso and I actually stopped going to one of the*
6 *lounges because the gentleman in there keep*
7 *referring to the urban barbarians and some of the*
8 *animal behavior that they would discuss, it was*
9 *very offensive to me. We do have these kinds of*
10 *issues that need to be dealt with.*

11 *Initially ten years ago when our*
12 *black enrollment was small and when I first came*
13 *over from East, there were people who would admit*
14 *to being totally color blind and the old thing*
15 *about you know I don't see black, white, red,*
16 *green, purple, like we have purple students and*
17 *they rather than admitting that there might be*
18 *problems here, they would say there's no*
19 *diversity.*

20 *I don't see the kids in any kind of*
21 *issues at all, especially in terms of black or*
22 *African American male students. We have a thing*
23 *called student of the quarter where each month*

1 *there's a small televised bit on our closed*
2 *circuit t.v. on each department nominates students*
3 *for recognition and even with Dr. Montoya spoke*
4 *with us at department chairman meetings to really*
5 *look to kind of nudge some of our African American*
6 *males along and nominate them, month after month*
7 *there might be out of all of the departments*
8 *representing, one or two African American boys and*
9 *they would usually be out of the P.E. Department,*
10 *you know. It really it's very painful to witness*
11 *this kind of thing. The boys especially are often*
12 *perceived as a problem to be dealt with and nobody*
13 *cherishes them, not nobody, but a minority of*
14 *people deal with them in a positive way at times.*

15 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Very good. Questions*
16 *from the panel? Mr. Roberts?*

17 *MR. ROBERTS: In terms of just both of*
18 *you, in terms of support staff, we have the*
19 *figures that there are only ten percent minorities*
20 *and only two black males. In terms of support*
21 *staff, what do you see as being enhancing to*
22 *getting your program or getting your message out*
23 *that hey, we're trying to push these students*

1 *ahead, we're trying to give them the best*
2 *education and involvement in the total society?*

3 *MS. JOHNSON: I think one of the things*
4 *that we can do is I think Alexis stated it in*
5 *regard to money is very important. We have I*
6 *think our staff has a lot of ideas that*
7 *minorities, not necessarily minority groups that's*
8 *willing to work, but I think it's more than a*
9 *minority, that's willing to work with our students*
10 *here, but we need the money, we need to be able to*
11 *implement programs that are going to assist our*
12 *students and if we can have the inservices that we*
13 *need, and I'm not talking one time a year, I'm*
14 *talking more than that. See our inservices is we*
15 *come when there's a crises, we deal with a crises*
16 *and then after the crises is over, then we go back*
17 *into our comfort zone and we need to be consistent*
18 *on that because that's the only way that we're*
19 *going to change with the changing times of our*
20 *school.*

21 *MS. YANDLE: I'd like to ask the*
22 *example that was given about the comments being*
23 *made in the staff lounge of urban barbarian, how*

1 *has that type of attitude or those instances when*
2 *that attitude is expressed, been dealt with by the*
3 *administration or is it dealt with?*

4 *MR. DEUCHLER: I don't believe it has*
5 *been dealt with. We've had people come in and*
6 *talk, we've tried to sensitize one another. I've*
7 *made statements. Everyone who has been now*
8 *feeling badly about this has dealt with these*
9 *people, but as a district we have not probably*
10 *dealt with it as we probably should have. That's*
11 *one of the problems. We're all so busy here, I*
12 *mean I'm on the floor of the library all day long*
13 *and I replaced two people actually when I came*
14 *over from East. We have little time to deal with*
15 *anything else.*

16 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: I have just a quick*
17 *question. A comment you made, Ms. Johnson, you*
18 *said we need more black teachers and if given,*
19 *let's say we're looking for a math teacher and we*
20 *have a caucasian and an Afro American applicant,*
21 *but the caucasian is more qualified, for whatever*
22 *reason, do you feel that it is still necessary to*
23 *have the Afro American just because of the rapport*

1 *with the children?*

2 *MS. JOHNSON: Definitely not. I want*
3 *you to know that the quality of education is far*
4 *most the important one, but in order to have a*
5 *quality education you must have a positive sense*
6 *of image and if you can find, and I'm sure people*
7 *can find African Americans that are more than*
8 *qualified, but what will happen is that the people*
9 *who are looking for these candidates will actually*
10 *have to work towards looking.*

11 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Now do you know for a*
12 *fact that they haven't actually looked for --*

13 *MS. JOHNSON: I think that they have.*

14 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: The question wasn't I*
15 *think, do you know?*

16 *MS. JOHNSON: Okay. I was asked on last*
17 *year to be a part of a committee to look for*
18 *faculty for the new school year. We had two*
19 *meetings with the personnel manager. Out of those*
20 *two meetings I think, I'm pretty sure they went to*
21 *one was Iowa and another town that was a very*
22 *rural town. My concern was that after those two I*
23 *heard nothing else about it.*

1 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Good afternoon, would*
2 *you please state your full name, for the record*
3 *and spell it?*

4 *MS. THOMAS: Debra Diana Thomas,*
5 *D-e-b-r-a T-h-o-m-a-s.*

6 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: And would you please*
7 *tell us what you teach and if you supervise any*
8 *activities?*

9 *MS. THOMAS: I teach within the special*
10 *ed department, Class of 96 sponsor, Sophomore*
11 *level basketball coach.*

12 *MR. ROBERTS: How long?*

13 *MS. THOMAS: I've taught here for four*
14 *years. I've been coaching for three.*

15 *Not only do I teach here, but I live*
16 *in the district also. I've lived in the district*
17 *for 15 years. As a taxpayer and a teacher I have*
18 *some real concerns that many of our teachers have*
19 *lost sight of the reason of going to school to*
20 *become a teacher. As others have stated, I feel*
21 *many of them fail to motivate many of our kids and*
22 *then they get labeled Special Ed or I end up*
23 *having them in my classroom. Because I'm in the*

1 *Special Ed Department, I have limited contact with*
2 *the general population in the sense of a classroom*
3 *teacher. But being a sponsor and a coach, my door*
4 *is always open and sometimes my room becomes the*
5 *crying room. If someone is having a problem, they*
6 *tend to seek me out. Not to side with them, but*
7 *just to listen to them.*

8 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Questions from the*
9 *panelists? Mr. Smith?*

10 *DR. SMITH: We've heard, maybe you heard*
11 *the comments made earlier about the recruitment*
12 *issue, the recruitment of more African American*
13 *people of color for their faculty. Do you have*
14 *any comment on that, how recruiting ought to go*
15 *on? Where we ought to go look for people?*

16 *We don't find all those people in*
17 *rural Iowa. We go to centers where they are and*
18 *where they're being trained and they're across the*
19 *country. You know as well as I do that there are*
20 *certain centers you go to. There may be five or*
21 *six colleges there with lots of people studying to*
22 *be teachers.*

23 *MS. THOMAS: I agree. I do think we*

1 *need to try and recruit more minority teachers,*
2 *African American and Hispanics being the make up*
3 *of our population. However, I don't feel that*
4 *only African American teachers can teach African*
5 *American children. I think our feeling on the*
6 *recruitment has been made known to the*
7 *administration. It's just a matter of them acting*
8 *on it.*

9 *MR. EWING: Since you're in special*
10 *education, have there been any allegations that*
11 *blacks, hispanics are over represented in special*
12 *education?*

13 *MS. THOMAS: Not to my knowledge. There*
14 *has not. To my knowledge there hasn't been, but*
15 *our population is in Special Ed is either African*
16 *American or Hispanic, yes.*

17 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Schwartzberg?*

18 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Is there any*
19 *deviation among the faculty in terms of what they*
20 *support? Do African American teachers tend to*
21 *show up at sports events and white teachers not?*
22 *Are each of them equally active in extracurricular*
23 *activities? What are those spreads?*

1 *MS. THOMAS: Neither support the girls*
2 *activities, honestly but I can't speak for the*
3 *boys because I don't support the boys activities*
4 *being that the girls get no support. But as far*
5 *as sponsors, one good example out of four classes,*
6 *three of the class sponsors are African American*
7 *females.*

8 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Is that*
9 *self-selected?*

10 *MS. THOMAS: Well, I became a sponsor*
11 *after my first year and I was a non staff member*
12 *and it was a very delicate situation to say no, so*
13 *that's how I became a sponsor. I can't speak for*
14 *others, I'm not sure, but they were asked to be,*
15 *they didn't volunteer.*

16 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Is that viewed as an*
17 *additional burden?*

18 *MS. THOMAS: Yes, it is.*

19 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Smith?*

20 *DR. SMITH: Several people have said now*
21 *if we had more money we could do X, Y and Z. Has*
22 *anybody ever approached foundations, do you know?*

23 *MS. THOMAS: Not that I'm aware. I*

1 *don't know, I can't speak to that.*

2 *DR. SMITH: I happen to sit on one. The*
3 *sort of things that you're doing here at this*
4 *school is exceedingly interesting to many*
5 *foundations.*

6 *I don't want you all to run, but I*
7 *know foundations that would be excited about a*
8 *proposal for the development of a model here. So*
9 *I leave that up to you.*

10 *MR. ROBERTS: You indicated that you*
11 *live in the area and have lived in the area for 15*
12 *years, Hillside, Bellwood, Westchester?*

13 *MS. THOMAS: Maywood.*

14 *MR. ROBERTS: Maywood. Did you have*
15 *children among your family?*

16 *MS. THOMAS: I have a Sophomore in high*
17 *school.*

18 *MR. ROBERTS: Does he attend here?*

19 *MS. THOMAS: No, he would attend East.*

20 *MR. ROBERTS: Where is he?*

21 *MS. THOMAS: In the south with my*
22 *parents. I'm originally from Mississippi and he*
23 *chose to go to school there.*

1 MR. ROBERTS: *Would you feel that he*
2 *would be satisfied in this setting?*

3 MS. THOMAS: *It's hard. I feel if I can*
4 *work for the district, my kids should be able to*
5 *be educated for the district, so.*

6 CHAIRPERSON LYON: *Mr. Ewing?*

7 MR. EWING: *As a classroom teacher, do*
8 *you probably have some knowledge of the level of*
9 *parent involvement and yesterday and last evening*
10 *we heard reports expressions of concern that*
11 *especially among certain ethnic groups there was a*
12 *low level of parent participation, but nobody yet*
13 *has told us what steps the district takes to*
14 *improve parent involvement. So are you aware of*
15 *any district wide -- well for this particular*
16 *school program, that is designed to increase*
17 *parent participation?*

18 MS. THOMAS: *One of the things that we*
19 *do, especially in Special Ed and I'm in a*
20 *self-contained program so I have my kids for five*
21 *classes all day. I call the parents once a week*
22 *whether the kid is acting up or doing fine. I let*
23 *them know so that I'm trying to build a bridge*

1 *that if there is a problem, I won't have to put up*
2 *my defense right away. We'll have a working*
3 *relationship that the parents will feel freely to*
4 *come to me and to also get them involved with any*
5 *activity that's going on in school because when I*
6 *call, I notified them of the open house, of the*
7 *market day, of whatever is going on. Good*
8 *example, as a class sponsor a couple of Saturdays*
9 *ago we had a craft show, Class of 96 sponsored a*
10 *craft show where we went out and solicited 20*
11 *crafters from the community to come in and pay to*
12 *rent a table to sell their goods on. We had three*
13 *parents from the Class of 96 to show up to help*
14 *out that day and very few parents of any students*
15 *to come out and support the crafters as patrons.*
16 *So, yes, that's a major problem.*

17 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay, we'll move on to*
18 *our next panelists, thank you very much.*

19 *Could you please give us your name*
20 *and spell your full name, for the record?*

21 *MS. THOMPSON: My name is Linda*
22 *Thompson, L-i-n-d-a T-h-o-m-p-s-o-n.*

23 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: My name is Bob Rosignolo,*

1 *B-o-b R-o-s-i-g-n-o-l-o.*

2 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay, and could you*
3 *also tell me what you teach and any extra*
4 *curricular activities and how long?*

5 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: I've been at Proviso West*
6 *for 23 years. Presently I've been in the business*
7 *education department for those years, department*
8 *chairman teaching computer science. Prior to that*
9 *I was the marketing coordinator for the two years*
10 *and I ran the Decca Work Program working with*
11 *students and employers in the community and was*
12 *the club sponsor of Decca and was also vice*
13 *president of the union for eight years.*

14 *MS. THOMPSON: I'm not a teacher, I'm an*
15 *administrative secretary to the assistant*
16 *principal. I'm also a representative, union*
17 *representative for the non certificated staff,*
18 *support staff employees at Proviso West and*
19 *Proviso East. That includes the secretarial*
20 *clerical staff, para professional security and*
21 *teacher aide.*

22 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Very good. Why don't*
23 *we start with Mrs. Thompson as far as any remarks*

1 *you wish to make to this panel?*

2 *LINDA THOMPSON*

3 *I have been an employee in District*
4 *209 for ten years. My employment will be ending*
5 *very shortly as of tomorrow because I'm moving out*
6 *of state. I began at Proviso East before I came*
7 *to Proviso West. I was in an unusual situation*
8 *when I went there. When I began working there I*
9 *had no background working in a school. I had come*
10 *from private industry. I was a white female in a*
11 *predominantly African American school and it was a*
12 *new experience for me. I had not experienced that*
13 *before. It turned out to be probably one of the*
14 *best experiences of my life. It taught me that*
15 *the students that I met there, the parent that I*
16 *met there, the administration and that carried*
17 *over when I transferred to this building. I was*
18 *able to get rid of a lot of perceptions that I*
19 *thought I didn't have. I didn't think I had these*
20 *ideas and then I found out that really I did and*
21 *as I got to know the students and I got to know*
22 *the parents, it was a good experience.*

23 *I live in a community or I'm moving*

1 out of a community that has historically been
2 predominantly white. Always there were never any
3 people of color in this community. And my
4 children who grew up in this community, I was very
5 concerned that they would not have -- they would
6 not be exposed to people of other cultures. And
7 there was an interesting situation that my
8 daughter became very good friends with an African
9 American student, female student from Proviso East
10 and they are still friends today. So what I saw
11 there and what I have seen here is that racism is
12 a perception. We often think that we are not
13 prejudice, but some of us are to some degree.

14 The support staff in the district
15 have historically been looked upon as second class
16 citizens. Not so much with this administration,
17 this administration has looked at us as valued
18 people. Prior to this administration, we were
19 viewed as people who were probably not very
20 important, that could be replaced, particularly
21 the females that you don't like what we do here,
22 well fine, go work someplace else, we can replace
23 you. That has changed. But I saw a level of I

1 *don't want to say discrimination, I guess it's --*
2 *I guess a level of not being worthy in the eyes of*
3 *the district because we were secretaries, because*
4 *we were security people, because we were para*
5 *professionals. We often are the people who deal*
6 *with students first. We are the people who deal*
7 *with the community first. It's very important*
8 *that we be looked at as very valued people.*

9 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Thank you.*

10 *BOB ROSIGNOLO*

11 *Just a short statement. I started*
12 *at Proviso West in 1972. The school was all*
13 *white. I enjoyed my experience then and I'm still*
14 *here and I will still enjoy my experience. I deal*
15 *with people as individuals and I try to do the*
16 *best I can and that's the way I approach life in*
17 *dealing with anyone. So that's basically where*
18 *I'm at.*

19 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Questions from the*
20 *panel? Mr. Pugh?*

21 *MR. PUGH: I was in the typing*
22 *laboratory, your computer.*

23 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: We don't call it typing,*

1 *we call it keyboard.*

2 *MR. PUGH: And I heard you mention you*
3 *had something to do with computer aspects, was I*
4 *correct?*

5 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: In my department?*

6 *MR. PUGH: How would you characterize the*
7 *status of the use of computers at your school?*

8 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: Very limited.*

9 *MR. PUGH: Why?*

10 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: This school has been*
11 *struggling financially to deal with this. They*
12 *recently had a referendum which was not passed.*
13 *Our equipment was quite dated. We got our new lab*
14 *just recently out of educational enhancement*
15 *monies that were developed just within the last*
16 *year, but I have equipment that's ten years old*
17 *and that's considered pre historic in computer*
18 *terms. We don't have different online service.*
19 *The library is not connected, doesn't have any*
20 *kind of Internet, so forth.*

21 *MR. PUGH: That's what I noticed. I*
22 *should have asked the librarian. I didn't see any*
23 *computer in that library at all.*

1 MR. ROSIGNOLO: *Just a few, but again*
2 *very-dated. Part of the plan of the educational*
3 *enhancements depends upon how much money is*
4 *available; once we got our lab done, computer*
5 *science, they're putting together an a science lab*
6 *that's under construction and depending on the*
7 *availability of funds, we will start working on*
8 *the library. But it was a tremendous need*
9 *throughout the building for technology.*

10 MS. PETERS: *From your viewpoint other*
11 *teachers and some parents have mentioned the fact*
12 *that a referendum failed. Is there a sense, do*
13 *you believe that there is any merit to the thought*
14 *that perhaps the kind of article that the Times,*
15 *the Bissenger points out is going to make it more*
16 *difficult for the school to get the funding it*
17 *needs to fulfill some of these plans like the*
18 *science lab, like the funding for the computer?*

19 MR. ROSIGNOLO: *I would think so. The*
20 *problem in the community is there -- there is a*
21 *perception and what the perception is that's the*
22 *reality. And we've all tried to convince people*
23 *if you feel that there's certain things wrong with*

1 *Proviso West, come and see for yourself and see*
2 *what it's like at Proviso West and make your own*
3 *judgments. But don't listen to what other people*
4 *say and that has hurt us because the reality is we*
5 *are a functioning school who is trying to do the*
6 *best job we can and there are a lot of good things*
7 *going on here. But there's a lot of reaction in*
8 *the community that those things are not happening*
9 *and that has hurt us it.*

10 *MS. PETERS: With reference to the bond*
11 *referendum?*

12 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: Yes?*

13 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Yes, I started to ask*
14 *earlier some other panelist, to what extent is*
15 *support of athletics an issue across the Board?*
16 *Is it divided by groups?*

17 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: In what way?*

18 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Attendance at sport*
19 *groups. Do the teachers tend to fall in to*
20 *different ethnic or racial groups in terms of who*
21 *comes out for what?*

22 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: In terms of in general I*
23 *think sports events are poorly attended by*

1 *students.*

2 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: By African Americans?*

3 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: Yes.*

4 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: No different?*

5 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: In general attendance*
6 *has been off in most sports.*

7 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: It makes no*
8 *difference who comes out?*

9 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: No to my knowledge.*

10 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Do you come out?*

11 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: Not that often.*

12 *DR. SMITH: Is that bad?*

13 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: No, not at all with*
14 *committment, involvement and all kinds of other*
15 *activities on the weekend, I was a club sponsor*
16 *for 23 years my coop group we attended many*
17 *conferences. Last year I took 8 students to*
18 *Minneapolis, Minnesota and I've taken students to*
19 *Detroit last year and I'm taking students to*
20 *Florida and Kentucky, you name it and a variety of*
21 *students we've had a good time.*

22 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: There's been much*
23 *discussion about the accuracy of the article that*

1 *appeared. I'd like to simply in terms of one item*
2 *which is the form of print to what extent was the*
3 *article accurate or inaccurate with respect to the*
4 *former principal?*

5 *This question goes to both of you.*

6 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: Which principal are you*
7 *talking about?*

8 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: And I guess for that*
9 *one I would almost rather you have a specific*
10 *reference. I don't want people commenting on*
11 *things they don't know. They don't recollect. If*
12 *you have the article and can refer to it.*

13 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: If you recall the*
14 *articles were there any comments made by the*
15 *former principal?*

16 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: Quite Honestly I can't*
17 *remember the reference to the principal.*

18 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Do your recall*
19 *whether or not the principal commented on the*
20 *accuracy of that article with respect to his own*
21 *comments.*

22 *MR. ROSIGNOLO: I don't recall.*

23 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Same question to Ms.*

1 Thompson?

2 MS. THOMPSON: I don not recall, either
3 I do not know without a specific reference.

4 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: No, simply whether he
5 commented on the accuracy of the article with
6 respect to his comments?

7 MS. THOMPSON: I don't recall if he had
8 so or not.

9 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: And the other
10 question I asked you about Mr. Rosignolo about
11 support at other events whether they differed in
12 the teaching population by ethnic orientation?

13 MS. THOMPSON: If support of the
14 athletic events differs by ethnic group among --

15 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Among the teachers?

16 MS. THOMPSON: I really can't comment. I
17 don't think so. As Mr. Rosignolo said, our events
18 are often not well attend by staff. That's not
19 because we don't support our teams, it's simply
20 because we have lives outside of school and often
21 do not have the time to do so. I have no personal
22 knowledge of any particular ethnic group.

23 MR. ROBERTS: You have made the comment,

1 *you indicated that the para professionals are the*
2 *first people who interact with the new students*
3 *that would be coming into West?*

4 *What is your sense as to the*
5 *formulation of the para professional or the staff*
6 *based upon, from your position?*

7 *MS. THOMPSON: Are you referring to*
8 *ethnic group or -- I'm not sure I understand.*

9 *For example, if I was in the*
10 *district and I was bringing my child in, would I*
11 *be comfortable in my approach or in my first*
12 *initial visit to the school based upon your*
13 *statements?*

14 *MR. THOMPSON: I think that you would*
15 *be.*

16 *MR. ROBERTS: In other words, I'm saying*
17 *you don't know the make up, you don't know that*
18 *there are majority black 56, 57 percent black*
19 *students here, but I have moved into Hillside,*
20 *Maywood, whatever and I'm coming into this*
21 *setting. Would I be comfortable when I came in*
22 *with my -- would myu child feel comfortable when*
23 *we're transferring from the inner city or wherever*

1 we lived?

2 MR. ROSIGNOLO: We're just coming here
3 and I'm saying that I come into the situation and
4 I see all whites and I'm saying maybe I shouldn't
5 send my child here, he doesn't want to come here.
6 Would he get the impression from his initial
7 approach that he's coming to an all white school
8 that's 90 percent your staff.

9 MS. THOMPSON: I think what you're
10 asking me is the majority of our paraprofessional
11 staff is African American at this time. We do
12 have white para professionals. Our secretarial
13 staff is predominantly caucasian white female.
14 That is changing somewhat. We do have hispanic
15 and African American secretaries now. We had one
16 of the major problems that we had experienced that
17 we have been working towards is that we had at one
18 time absolutely no bilingual clerical or support
19 staff members. We had no one on our staff
20 clerically who could assist our spanish speaking
21 parents and that was a real problem. We have
22 addressed that. We now have on our staff,
23 secretarial staff, two fully bilingual American

1 *Spanish, English speaking secretaries. That has*
2 *made things much more comfortable for our Spanish*
3 *speaking parents.*

4 *We have tried very hard to address*
5 *that. We have had made available to us various*
6 *workshops, multi cultural workshops, sensitivity*
7 *workshops. I personally attended one last summer*
8 *in conversational spanish. So we're moving forth*
9 *in that area and I think we're trying. We have a*
10 *ways to go, but it's better than it was ten year*
11 *ago as far as that's concerned, if that answers*
12 *your question.*

13 *MR. ROBERTS: It does.*

14 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Looks like there's no*
15 *other questions, so we thank this panel for*
16 *joining us today to express their opinions and*
17 *ideals.*

18 *I believe at this point we have a*
19 *chance to break.*

20 *(A brief recess was taken.)*

21 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: We will call the*
22 *meeting back to order and turn to members to speak*
23 *will come to the table. Mr. Gill and Mr. Voss.*

1 *Thank you very much for coming.*
2 *Would you please state your name and spell your*
3 *full name and then what -- you're all community*
4 *members, but what specifically you might be*
5 *involved in in the community that you bring to*
6 *this forum and if you pick up the mike and speak*
7 *into it, I'd appreciate it.*

8 *MS. GILL: My name is Susan Gill,*
9 *S-u-s-a-n G-i-l-l, I lived in Bellwood for 15*
10 *years and my children went through the school*
11 *system and they graduated from Proviso West and I*
12 *was called last night and asked to come on down,*
13 *so I came.*

14 *VALERIE VOSS*

15 *My name is Valerie Voss, V as in*
16 *Victor a-l-e-r-i-e, V-o-s-s, resident of Bellwood*
17 *for over 15 years. I'm also the owner of*
18 *Valerie's Mother Land Connection Afrocentric Book*
19 *Store and a founder of the House of Nia and that's*
20 *a Swahili word for "purpose". How I got involved*
21 *in this that I have had several students come into*
22 *the store complaining about some of the situations*
23 *that was going on in the school.*

1 *I became aware of this about two*
2 *years thing and a lot of students just don't want*
3 *to go to school here at Proviso West because they*
4 *say they feel a lot of prejudice and racial*
5 *tension. Also my daughter was a student here and*
6 *I took her out of the school system last year, not*
7 *because she was a troubled child, but she said she*
8 *just got so tired of the challenges that she faced*
9 *here at this school. One occasion she was kicked*
10 *out of the classroom because she questioned the*
11 *teacher. She was in an English class and the*
12 *teacher told her she was using black English in*
13 *writing a story and her response was that she*
14 *knows the difference between black English and*
15 *standard English and this is the way the people*
16 *were talking in the particular story. She was*
17 *then attacked by the teacher. The teacher told*
18 *her that not only was she using black English, but*
19 *she didn't know how to write. And my daughter*
20 *was, you know, the teacher said something about*
21 *the way you make the letter M and my daughter said*
22 *well I've been writing that way ever since I*
23 *learned cursive, and the teacher said well you*

1 *don't know how to write. And so my daughter's*
2 *response to her was then we have something in*
3 *common because sometimes when you write something*
4 *on the board I don't understand either. My*
5 *daughter was asked to leave the classroom and they*
6 *wanted her to do a 20 minute detention which she*
7 *refused to do. I forget the name of the*
8 *counselor, but he was told that he knew the*
9 *teacher had a problem for my daughter to do the*
10 *detention any way and then he brought it down to*
11 *15 minutes, then he brought it down to ten*
12 *minutes. So my daughter said apparently I haven't*
13 *done anything wrong if you went from 20 minutes*
14 *down to 5. So perhaps the teacher is the one who*
15 *should be in here doing detention.*

16 *I also have a young man that's still*
17 *a student here by the name of Dannie Dietz where*
18 *his mother said in his Sophomore year --*

19 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Excuse me. We need*
20 *the consent of those parents to speak of those*
21 *events.*

22 *MS. VOSS: I'm sorry, all right. Well,*
23 *several students are being told that they are not*

1 college material, even though they are A students.
2 So there is one of the problems that we do have in
3 this school system.

4 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Do you have any
5 comments you would like to make?

6 SUSAN GILL

7 I'm not sure of the purpose of this
8 forum. Maybe a question or two would help me
9 get -- I don't know what you'd like to hear from
10 me.

11 CHAIRPERSON LYON: We're just looking
12 for any opinions or observations, opinions you may
13 have or observations you may have made about the
14 school and racial relations. Do you have an
15 opinion as to whether or not this school has a
16 race problem?

17 MS. GILL: I think the country has a
18 race problem, and probably Proviso West reflects
19 the United States of America in it's make up.

20 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Have you yourself or
21 do you know or witnessed any type of a racial
22 problem here at the school?

23 MS. GILL: This is a very subjective

1 *type of question. My children are mixed. My*
2 *husband is black and I'm white. So I'm not sure*
3 *the racial type things you're talking about. My*
4 *children in their unique type of situation would*
5 *experience negative things and positive things*
6 *from both black people and white people and so you*
7 *can see both sides of the coin from that*
8 *perspective.*

9 *Now the way I feel that my children*
10 *needed to deal with that is that they needed to*
11 *realize that there is a real world and that their*
12 *most important thing is to have faith and pride in*
13 *themselves, regardless of what anybody else said*
14 *to them or how anybody else reacts to them, and*
15 *that includes teachers, and other students, and*
16 *now that they're in college, their college*
17 *professors. I never felt that the way a teacher*
18 *would react to my children had to determine how*
19 *they did in that class. They had to determine how*
20 *they did in that class.*

21 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: You feel that the way*
22 *teachers handled your children was anyway racially*
23 *motivated? Did you ever have that feeling?*

1 *MS. GILL: Yes, but not necessarily*
2 *negative way or not necessarily. I mean there*
3 *were times when there was negative aspects and*
4 *there were times when there was a positive aspect*
5 *and there were times when there was just plain*
6 *ignorance involved, not knowing.*

7 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Did you feel you had*
8 *an opportunity to talk with that teacher?*

9 *MS. GILL: Yes, I always made an*
10 *opportunity to talk with whoever needed to be*
11 *talked with. That's a paren'ts job.*

12 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: And do you feel that*
13 *it was resolved?*

14 *MS. GILL: Well my biggest problem at*
15 *Proviso West during the time my children were*
16 *here, and you have to understand that it was a*
17 *different school board and there was a different*
18 *administration, and there were even different*
19 *guidance counselors. My biggest problem with the*
20 *guidance department, and as Ms. Voss said,*
21 *children, black children were children that are*
22 *perceived as being black children are basically*
23 *told, not now, at that time, at that time were*

1 told not to pursue higher education, and even my
2 own children who happen to be straight A students
3 were told not to bother going any further than
4 Triton College. Both of them received
5 scholarships to the universities that they go to.
6 Both of them are graduating from universities. My
7 daughter still has a straight A average at the
8 University of Missouri and Tom's now an
9 undergraduate, Research Grad in Washington
10 University in St. Louis. So I think they had more
11 potential than the guidance counselor thought they
12 had. But what I did about that was I went to Mr.
13 Melano at the time and the head of the guidance
14 department who I can't remember his name, and I
15 told them that the guidance counselors would not
16 counsel my children, do not allow them to do that,
17 that is out of the picture, period, and that was
18 taken care of.

19 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Do you feel that the
20 current administration is, for lack of a better
21 word, much more user friendly?

22 MS. GILL: Well during the time that I
23 was a parent here there was a big transition going

1 *on with the board of education. The old guard who*
2 *had been in power for 30 years and were still*
3 *living in the 50s basically were retiring and they*
4 *were leaving and they were going out and we had*
5 *new people. We have a lot with a lot of energy.*
6 *I think some of them got burned out. So I think*
7 *there's a lot of potential in Proviso West, the*
8 *Proviso High School District, tremendous*
9 *potential. We have enormous resources. We have*
10 *multi culturalism here which is an enormous*
11 *resource in itself, which can be tapped and used.*
12 *I think people need to learn how to do that. I*
13 *think that is the biggest problem here is it's not*
14 *that people don't want to do it, it's that they*
15 *don't know how to do it, and that is where the*
16 *resources need to be put. You can't point fingers*
17 *and blame people, what you need to do is help them*
18 *learn how to do it.*

19 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Any other questions?*
20 *Mr. Scales?*

21 *MR. SCALES: The question is for both*
22 *parents. So when your young people were attending*
23 *Proviso West, were you active participants in PTO*

1 *or any other school organization activity?*

2 *MS. VOSS: I wasn't active in the PTO at*
3 *Proviso West, but I do community work throughout*
4 *the Village of Bellwood and Maywood also. When my*
5 *daughter was in grammar school I was president of*
6 *the PTA at that time, and I did volunteer work,*
7 *you know, I followed her as she was going through*
8 *the school system because I do understand that*
9 *it's important to be involved in the child's*
10 *learning process and a lot of times parents are*
11 *guilty of when our children are in elementary*
12 *school that's when we're there the most, but when*
13 *our children need us the most is in the high*
14 *school. Whereas I did not attend the PTO meeting,*
15 *I did attend other programs with her.*

16 *MS. GILL: When my kids started at*
17 *Proviso West there was no PTO. The PTO started up*
18 *a couple of years later and I attended those*
19 *sessions. Then my kids got out of here, so*
20 *basically I had to deal with University life, so*
21 *but the PTO just started up a couple of years ago.*

22 *MR. ROBERTS: What was the last year*
23 *that you had a student that graduated?*

1 *MS. GILL: My son graduated in '92.*

2 *MR. ROBERTS: The year that your*
3 *daughter.*

4 *MS. VOSS: The last year mu daughter*
5 *attended here was '92.*

6 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Any other questions?*

7 *MS. YANDLE: I have a question. Ms.*
8 *Voss, prior to you removing your daughter from the*
9 *school and I assume was that as a result of the*
10 *incident that you described with the guidance*
11 *counselor, et cetera?*

12 *MS. VOSS: No, not just with that. it*
13 *was several things. She just said she didn't feel*
14 *comfortable here. It wasn't so much the racial*
15 *tension, she just felt that she wasn't being*
16 *taught and that's something with a lot of black*
17 *students. They feel we're getting the same thing*
18 *over and over again. One of her biggest*
19 *challenges was when were they going to start black*
20 *history. So whenever they have meetings, she*
21 *would be the one to bring it up, when are we going*
22 *to have someone to start teaching black history in*
23 *the school system? So the year that she was*

1 *leaving the principal did approach her and told*
2 *her that they were getting ready to start a black*
3 *history course. But she just said she just felt*
4 *she wasn't being educated. That most of the*
5 *teachers didn't seem to have control of the*
6 *classroom and the children that wanted to learn*
7 *couldn't, you know, didn't have the opportunity to*
8 *learn because the teacher was disciplining other*
9 *children in the classroom.*

10 *MR. SCALES: I'm going to ask you the*
11 *same question I generally asked the students.*
12 *When your young people were graduating from the*
13 *8th grade and you knew they were going to be going*
14 *to Proviso West, had anyone talked with you about*
15 *what to expect or what the environment was at*
16 *Proviso West?*

17 *MS. VOSS: No, no offhand remarks,*
18 *statements.*

19 *MS. GILL: When District 87, that's*
20 *where my kids came from, they were given a tour of*
21 *the school and since the kids were in bands at*
22 *that time, the band leader used to come over and*
23 *talk to us and what have you, but there were*

1 always rumors that it was, you know, there were
2 things going on at Proviso West. But basically I
3 regard that as rumors. Most high schools, public
4 high schools there are rumors. When I graduated
5 from high school in 1967, when I graduated from
6 high school in 1967 there were kids who used to
7 smoke in the bathrooms, have sex under the
8 stairway and drugs were just coming into play. So
9 you have choices to make in high school and you
10 always have had choices to make in high school.
11 So public high schools need support from people
12 and my kids were definitely going to public high
13 school and by the way I think they had a great
14 education here, it's available here. You have to
15 go get it, and maybe that's one of the problems is
16 you need to extract it more, I don't know.

17 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Thank you. We need
18 to move on to our next two speakers. Thank you
19 very much.

20 Thank you very much for coming.
21 Could you please give us your name and could you
22 spell it, for the record and then tell us how long
23 you lived in the community and what your

1 *involvement is?*

2 *MR. ROBESON: Okay. My name is Garland*
3 *Robeson and I've been living in Bellwood for -- in*
4 *this community since about 1980.*

5 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Spell your name,*
6 *please?*

7 *MR. ROBESON: My last name is spelled*
8 *R-o-b-e-s-o-n. My first name is spelled, Garland,*
9 *G-a-r-l-a-n-d.*

10 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Thank you.*

11 *GARLAND ROBESON*

12 *First let me say that I'm here on*
13 *behalf of Arlie Bryant, he's our local NAACP*
14 *President. I'm his special assistant. He gave me*
15 *a call this morning because of his work he had to*
16 *be in court and he just wanted me to speak to our*
17 *activities concerning supporting civil rights*
18 *interests of students in the community at large.*
19 *We were here at the high school to help students*
20 *who were of age to register to vote about two or*
21 *three election cycles and we are concerned about*
22 *better race relations here at the school. And*
23 *we'd like to say to the student body in general*

1 *that we'll help all students who, be they black or*
2 *white with problems that they might have*
3 *concerning questions about their civil rights, and*
4 *if someone wants to stand up and speak to and*
5 *address those issues.*

6 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Do you know of any*
7 *racial problems here at the school.*

8 *MR. ROBESON: In the past we have made*
9 *some, addressed some situations with parents have*
10 *come to us with questions and problems concerning*
11 *their children. So there have been some.*

12 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Do you know what kinds*
13 *of problems they've had?*

14 *MR. ROBESON: Just situations involving*
15 *some of the instructors here. More some of the*
16 *instructors.*

17 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Is it more instructors*
18 *versus students or is it students versus students?*

19 *MR. ROBESON: In the one particular*
20 *situation it was an instructor and one women she*
21 *had two or three children here at the school, so*
22 *we did spend some time addressing those issues.*

23 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Have you ever made a*

1 *formal list of those issues and maybe review that*
2 *list with the administration ever so often or when*
3 *you initially confront the administration about a*
4 *teacher or -- and the handling of a student, it's*
5 *dealt with and so there's not a need to review it.*

6 *MR. ROBESON: Well in terms of a list,*
7 *president he's much more versed in that regard, so*
8 *I'd, like I say, I do assist him in some matters*
9 *so.*

10 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Any questions from the*
11 *panel?*

12 *MR. SCALES: Is there a student chapter*
13 *of the NAACP in this area?*

14 *MR. ROBESON: Not to my knowledge there*
15 *isn't, but we've been together for a number of*
16 *years.*

17 *MR. SCALES: But you somehow through your*
18 *P.R. students do know or understand that they can*
19 *come to you if they have concerns?*

20 *MR. ROBESON: Yes, they have come to us*
21 *in the past.*

22 *MR. SCALES: Thank you.*

23 *MS. YANDLE: I would just, could you*

1 *expand a little bit on the situations that the*
2 *NAACP has dealt with or has addressed based on*
3 *complaints that you've gotten from students*
4 *regarding instructors that they feel was something*
5 *racial or prejudicial. I mean I don't want names*
6 *or anything like that. Can you give us some idea*
7 *of the type of situations that are involved?*

8 *MR. ROBESON: Basically it's -- if*
9 *it's student-teacher interactions and basically*
10 *the negative kinds of feelings that the black*
11 *students and other students get from the exchange*
12 *and things like discipline and attendance kinds of*
13 *situations, those -- that's the nature of the kind*
14 *of situations that we look into.*

15 *MR. EWING: Are there any current*
16 *situations that your branch is addressing with the*
17 *goal of bringing about some change in the school*
18 *district that will have a result of reducing what*
19 *people perceive to be racial and discriminatory*
20 *practices?*

21 *MR. ROBESON: Well I can't necessarily*
22 *get into any specifics.*

23 *MR. EWING: I don't want you to mention*

1 *names just general categories. I don't know*
2 *whether being familiar with the NAACP branches I*
3 *know people come with problems about suspension,*
4 *expulsion and things of that nature.*

5 *MR. ROBESON: Yes. We have looked into*
6 *situations like that, but basically we want to*
7 *have students here get about the business of*
8 *education primarily and education isn't concerned*
9 *with what race or color you are, of just being*
10 *able to learn and that's the primary thing that*
11 *we're concerned with. So the students don't have*
12 *to feel they have to contend with well I'm like*
13 *this and the teachers treat me like that. It's*
14 *the education and through our investigations and*
15 *matters that we look into, that's what we'd like*
16 *to emphasis to the community and students.*

17 *MR. EWING: One other quick question. We*
18 *heard especially yesterday some criticism against*
19 *parents for the low level of parental involvement.*
20 *Is your organization or any other organization*
21 *targetted that as priority concern with the goal*
22 *of improving parents involvement among minority*
23 *parents?*

1 MR. ROBESON: Parental involvement is
2 important, but that particular area we haven't
3 focused on, but we do have other areas that we
4 look into.

5 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Roberts?

6 MR. ROBERTS: In terms of the complaints
7 that you received, have you received any
8 complaints from some para professionals who work
9 at this school or in this district?

10 MR. ROBESON: Our chapter president he
11 could speak more specifically to that and he has
12 made me aware of situations involving some para
13 professionals here.

14 MR. PUGH: I don't know the coverage of
15 our chapter, but does Proviso West or Proviso
16 East, are they more of a problem than any other
17 high school?

18 MR. ROBESON: I don't think they are.
19 It's just sometimes you can have the media, be it
20 electronic or print, they, for whatever reason
21 they might have they'd like to maybe portray the
22 the schools West and East as being problematic and
23 I think they have situations that any other high

1 *school has. Just that you can get treatment*
2 *that's lopsided from the media that's driven by*
3 *money kinds of issues so.*

4 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Any other questions?*
5 *Very good, thank you very much.*

6 *MR. ROBESON: You're welcome.*

7 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Our next panelists?*
8 *Would you please state your full*
9 *name and spell it for the record?*

10 *MR. BLAINE: My name is Terry Blaine,*
11 *B-l-a-i-n-e.*

12 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Go ahead and spell*
13 *your name one more time?*

14 *MR. BLAINE: B-l-a-i-n-e.*

15 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Thank you.*

16 *MS. ROUTEN: Andrea Routen R-o-u-t-e-n.*

17 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Andrea is A-n-d-r-e-a?*

18 *MS. ROUTEN: Yes.*

19 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Okay. Could each of*
20 *you tell me what community you're from and what*
21 *your community involvement consists of?*

22 *MS. ROUTEN: Sure, I'm a resident of 11*
23 *years in Bellwood. My community participation is*

1 *I'm an active executive board member of the PTO.*
2 *Also within the community I'm a den mother for a*
3 *cub scout troupe. I also have a first grader and*
4 *a senior in high school here at Proviso West. I'm*
5 *also a real estate sales associate for the area,*
6 *so therefore I do understand the basic concerns as*
7 *far as quality education which reflects and the*
8 *value of our homes and an appreciation for the*
9 *school definitely has a reflection of that.*

10 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Blaine?*

11 *MR. BLAINE: I'm a resident of*
12 *Westchester. I currently have a senior daughter*
13 *here. My oldest daughter graduated in 1990 from*
14 *here. I graduated in 1961 from here. So I've*
15 *been in Westchester for awhile. I've been an*
16 *officer in the PTO for several years. I was in*
17 *the original group that formed the PTO. I was*
18 *their first president. That's about it.*

19 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Why don't you go*
20 *ahead and give us any opinions you may have as to*
21 *racial relations?*

22 *TERRY BLAINE*

23 *Well I can really only state, you*

1 *know, from my experiences and the experiences of*
2 *my daughters. They have never come home and*
3 *complained of any racial problems, so I won't go*
4 *so far as to say there are none here because I'm*
5 *sure there are. There's somewhere I work, so it's*
6 *everywhere, but it doesn't seem to affect the*
7 *students and the education that they're getting.*

8 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Thank you. Ms.*
9 *Routen?*

10 *ANDREA ROUTEN*

11 *I would probably have to state I know*
12 *that we all understand that racism is definitely a*
13 *problem, but I basically consider it probably more*
14 *sort of an attitude problem is that it's all on*
15 *how we look at it and the attitude that we get*
16 *from it.*

17 *Proviso has gotten a bad rap with a*
18 *lot of negative publicity and it's hurting the*
19 *community, it's hurting the quality of the*
20 *teachers that we currently have, and it's*
21 *definitely hurting the students. There may be a*
22 *lot of students that could or could not decide to*
23 *come to Proviso West in the future and in the near*

1 future. And also as far as the teachers. If we
2 continue letting that be the biggest issues, one
3 of the biggest issues here, it's that the outcome
4 in the long run is going to cause all of us to
5 suffer. The students that we have in our school
6 right now, in my opinion, if they see that this is
7 a primarily issue, then what do they have to look
8 forward to, you know, we have the opinions of one
9 person that can create total uproar in our
10 community and it hurts, it really does. I haven't
11 seen any direct racial problems. I'm not saying
12 that they don't exist because they probably do,
13 but I haven't been directly involved in any racial
14 situations as it stands.

15 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Question from the
16 panel? Mr. Ewing?

17 MR. EWING: I have two short questions.
18 First you said that the school gets a bad rap.
19 We've heard that from a lot of people. Why do you
20 think that is?

21 MS. ROUTEN: Well in my business I sell
22 homes. There are people constantly moving out and
23 there are people constantly moving in. The

1 reasons why they may or may not move in or out,
2 they vary, but the situation is in my opinion is
3 that a lot of times what happens is that what's
4 happening now is a direct -- is that we may have a
5 lot of quality students currently living in the
6 area and if those students and their parents
7 decide to uproot and move in different areas, the
8 reflection of some of the incoming students may or
9 may not have the same potential as those that are
10 currently leaving. So therefore, what we have is,
11 in my opinion, is what we have is an unequal
12 balance and because we have that unequal balance
13 with the educational systems, because it's a
14 little lopsided. I mean the quality of the
15 education in some areas surely differ from other
16 areas. There's no doubt about it and what's
17 coming in sometimes is creating a negative for the
18 people that are deciding to stay. If they're
19 thinking that, well there's no need in my staying
20 here because the quality of the education is going
21 down. It does cause the bad rap to occur because
22 all of a sudden they're thinking that the quality
23 of the education that they're receiving will go,

1 *won't remain consistent.*

2 *MR. EWING: So in other words, some of*
3 *the people that you deal with, what is it*
4 *residential real estate?*

5 *MS. ROUTEN: Yes.*

6 *MR. EWING: They indicate though that*
7 *they're moving somewhere else because they're*
8 *believing that there's a decline in the*
9 *educational opportunities.*

10 *MS. ROUTEN: Well education, it's a*
11 *mainly or it's of the people that are moving out.*
12 *It may not be the same priority of the people*
13 *moving in and I too believe that the involvement*
14 *has a lot, the parental involvement has a great*
15 *reflection on the students and their attitude.*
16 *I'm not saying that every parent should belong to*
17 *PTO or is the Booster Club because those really,*
18 *they don't have direct ties as far as the*
19 *performance of our kid's education. But it does*
20 *show that we are concerned with their education.*
21 *I mean by me coming to PTO meetings doesn't*
22 *necessarily mean that my kid isn't going to have*
23 *any problems within the school.*

1 *MR. EWING: What's the, as you see it as*
2 *a person involved in real estate, what does the*
3 *future hold with respect to your housing patterns,*
4 *your demographics and your racial make up?*
5 *They're undergoing changes more towards black and*
6 *Hispanic. Is that what's happening?*

7 *MS. ROUTEN: Well in real estate by law*
8 *we're not supposed to speak racial as far as the*
9 *make up in our communities and I can't say that I*
10 *know what the racial make up is. I can say that*
11 *from what I see in our area though and not that*
12 *this is to create anything to be lopsided or vice*
13 *versa, but there are probably more minorities*
14 *moving in into some of our areas. Within the*
15 *Proviso township there are probably more*
16 *minorities moving into our community and truly*
17 *less whites moving into our community. Why or*
18 *what the reflection is, I couldn't say.*

19 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Roberts?*

20 *MR. ROBERTS: This is for the*
21 *youngsters. You indicated that people that you*
22 *were associating or moving out or that you were*
23 *counseling or selling to or selling from or moving*

1 out because of education. If this situation at
2 Proviso West of 140 teachers white, ten percent
3 minority faculty, would you say that that's just
4 to blame or are the students that are still here
5 could not still get the same education that the
6 first daughter got, would that be education or the
7 association with other students?

8 MS. ROUTEN: Actually I just think it's
9 all in publicity. It has nothing to do with the
10 quality of education. It's all in what people
11 perceive, You know. People have a tendency of
12 believing what they read and if you have a lot of
13 negative publicity coming from the community, then
14 people choose to send their kids to different
15 schools. If they decide to stay here, they may
16 decide not to actually send their kids to Proviso,
17 not because of what they know about Proviso, but
18 because of what they read about Proviso or because
19 of what they've heard about Proviso. Kids are
20 going to, they're going to excell regardless of
21 what our surroundings are if we make it an issue.

22 I'm a product of a high school that
23 went through a very critical racial imbalance in

1 *the early 70s and it caused a lot of change.*
2 *Then, well at the time I didn't see it because as*
3 *a high school person you don't really see it, but*
4 *the reflection in the outcome of it now is*
5 *drastic. I mean the change that my school went*
6 *through during the early 70s and what it is now is*
7 *the difference of night and day because it was*
8 *very obvious that there was a change going on and*
9 *there was a rapid change and there were no*
10 *improvements done. There were constantly things*
11 *being torn down and as it was torn down it just*
12 *continued to decline.*

13 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Blaine, and then*
14 *we have to close.*

15 *MR. BLAINE: To further address your*
16 *question. Perfect example would be on the news*
17 *last night when they covered this Board being*
18 *here, the closing remarks of the reporter was that*
19 *there was I believe five students from Proviso*
20 *West and 16 from Proviso East that were expelled*
21 *because think were found with guns and were*
22 *harrassing the teachers, physically abusing the*
23 *teachers. What she did not tell the people the*

1 *general public was that that student did not get*
2 *in the school with guns, but now the perception is*
3 *everybody in this school is carrying a gun.*
4 *That's the type of press that really hurts, you*
5 *know. They don't tell quite the whole story. And*
6 *I think those are the things that really get us in*
7 *a bind.*

8 *In answer to your other question why*
9 *we've gotten bad press in the past. I think in the*
10 *10 or 15 years ago we had a board that was not*
11 *very responsive to the public and everything was*
12 *done kind of in secret and we had another real*
13 *estate lady in Westchester that owned her own*
14 *company and was giving us a lot of bad press.*
15 *When we first started the PTO I went to her and*
16 *just asked her why she was dissatisfied with*
17 *Proviso West, had she ever been here? Her comment*
18 *was that she had walked the halls one time and it*
19 *was too noisy, and that was her only complaint,*
20 *but she was giving us a lot of bad press. And now*
21 *telling people of Westchester Proviso is a bad*
22 *place. That's the kind of thing we've been trying*
23 *to fight.*

1 *MS. ROUTEN: It creates a panic. The*
2 *bad reputation creates a panic for the community*
3 *in general and if they would, in my opinion, do*
4 *more positive publicity for the school, people, if*
5 *they choose to sell their home it surely won't be*
6 *because the educational system and that they don't*
7 *want their students to come to Proviso.*

8 *MR. BLAINE: I would also like another*
9 *example is you know Mr. Patterson deal that came*
10 *out of hte article and the way the school board*
11 *handled it. The first comments that came in the*
12 *paper were negative. I believe our school board*
13 *president said something to the effect that we*
14 *will not tolerate this kind of action. When I*
15 *think what she should have said for the press was*
16 *this particular gentlemen some 22 or 25 year*
17 *employee has never had a bad rap on his record.*
18 *We don't think he said it, but we will investigate*
19 *it.*

20 *It would have been a much more*
21 *positive statement. Right now public says he did*
22 *it because I read it in the paper. Things like*
23 *that hurt.*

1 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Thank you very much.
2 We need to move to our next two panelists.

3 Thank you for joining us. If you
4 would please state your full name and spell it for
5 the record and then I need to know what community
6 you're from and what your involvement is. Please
7 use the mike.

8 MR. ROBINSON: My name is McArthur
9 Robinson, M-c-A-r-t-h-u-r R-o-b-i-n-s-o-n. I
10 have two kids here. I have one that graduated
11 from here and I'm involved with a couple of their
12 activities here.

13 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Smith?

14 MR. SMITH: My name is James E. Smith,
15 Jr., S-m-i-t-h. I'm a parent of a senior here.
16 I'm President of the PTO. I'm involved with the
17 Booster Club and I'm a graduate of Proviso West.

18 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Robinson, you
19 have some opinions that you'd like to express to
20 the panel.

21 MC ARTHUR ROBINSON

22 Well, I did hear the last lady that
23 just left, the gentleman that was speaking about

1 *the lady that was involved in the business in*
2 *Westchester speaking of the noise level here at*
3 *this school. And I've been here during when kids*
4 *are moving from class to class and the noise level*
5 *is above normal, but the kids we're raising today*
6 *are much different than 20, 30 years ago, for*
7 *whatever reason. We can cite a lot of reasons,*
8 *it's kind of hard to discipline kids at home now.*
9 *For the things that are good the courts have done*
10 *in the country, a lot of things I think has kind*
11 *of torn down things. The fact that they don't*
12 *want you to spank your kids at home and in my*
13 *opinion there are a lot of children that could use*
14 *a good spanking at home. If they got a good*
15 *spanking at home, you wouldn't have as many*
16 *problems with them when they leave home. You*
17 *can't even, if you see a kid that's doing*
18 *something wrong, now you can't even say son I*
19 *don't think you should do that. I've said that to*
20 *a couple of children that I've seen doing some*
21 *wrong things and I wouldn't care to say the*
22 *language what he told me. And this is the way it*
23 *is now. You no longer mention allegiance to the*

1 *flag any more, you can burning the flag now and*
2 *it's no harm done. They've taken the prayer out*
3 *of he school system and the dress code. I see*
4 *children walking aorund with a size 40 and he may*
5 *be a 30 in the waist, baseball cap turned*
6 *backward, which I don't allow my boy to wear. Gold*
7 *rope chains and all of these things can carry a*
8 *negative tone if you understand what I'm saying,*
9 *and I think a lot of things could be addressed to*
10 *issues like this.*

11 *We've gotten a lot of negative*
12 *publicity from the things that were stated in the*
13 *newspaper article and on the whole I think this is*
14 *a good school. I think kids get a good education*
15 *over here and the ones that really want it, they*
16 *get it because it's here.*

17 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: So is it your opinion*
18 *there isn't a racial problem?*

19 *MR. ROBINSON: That would be saying like*
20 *is there a racial problem in the United States. I*
21 *couldn't say there's no racial problem here. I*
22 *mean anywhere you go there can be a racial*
23 *problem, but I don't think it's overt, or it's*

1 *what it's made out to be here. I've made good*
2 *rapport here. I've come to parent/teacher meeting*
3 *with my kids to get their grades and everybody*
4 *that I've met so far I've had good rapport with*
5 *and I don't see anything that's overt.*

6 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Very good. Thank you*
7 *Mr. Robinson. Mr. Smith?*

8 *JAMES E. SMITH*

9 *Regarding the article I was not*
10 *happy with it. I didn't think it portrayed*
11 *Proviso as it is. It focused also on black and*
12 *white when I think it ignores the diversity that's*
13 *here at the school. I think you've seen*
14 *statistics on our student population which is*
15 *probably 57 percent black or African American,*
16 *something on the order of 25 percent Hispanic, 18*
17 *percent white and three percent other. So other*
18 *is a mixture of Asian, Indian, Philippino and many*
19 *others. In fact there's also a Tessle Program*
20 *which is for students who have a first language*
21 *other than English and at last report I think they*
22 *had 16 languages being spoken at Proviso Township*
23 *District other than English as a first language,*

1 *and those students come here to Proviso West as*
2 *part of the Tessle program. So the article didn't*
3 *address any of that. And I think that as far as*
4 *an education the students receive here, I think*
5 *it's excellent for any level of student,*
6 *particularly I'm not familiar with the honors*
7 *curriculum and that's been excellent for my*
8 *students and other parents that I've spoken with.*
9 *Their students have gone on to universities,*
10 *various kinds and have been successful. Also I've*
11 *been here like maybe I've been here during the day*
12 *in thge mornings, in thge evenings. I've seen*
13 *nothing overt that you would construe at racism.*
14 *I see students, particularly those that are*
15 *involved in the student government, in the*
16 *activities working together towards goals, trying*
17 *to accomplish what is needed for their particular*
18 *group.*

19 *The most specific example I can give*
20 *of that was when my son was a Freshman and he was*
21 *on the cross country team which was very small,*
22 *but it was a mixture of black students, Hispanic*
23 *and white students and they were at an*

1 *invitational at Niles West. They were successful,*
2 *but not quite as successful as they wanted and as*
3 *they completed their cool down lap, they were*
4 *gathered together discussing among themselves what*
5 *can we do to be better as a team? And that was*
6 *their goal, to become better as a team and that's*
7 *what I see here at Proviso and I think what needs*
8 *to be looked at is how well this school is*
9 *handling the diversity which I think is unique in*
10 *the western suburbs at least if not in the Chicago*
11 *area. I don't know a school that has this kind of*
12 *diversity that is not a unit school district that*
13 *I know Proviso West has minimally six feeder*
14 *districts and to assimilate these people and to*
15 *provide them with the education they do, I think*
16 *is quite excellent.*

17 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Questions from the*
18 *panel?*

19 *MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Robinson, what area do*
20 *you live in and how long have you lived there?*

21 *MR. ROBINSON: I've grown up in this*
22 *community. I went to Proviso East. I'm now*
23 *living in Bellwood.*

1 MR. ROBERTS: Originally from Maywood?

2 MR. ROBINSON: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Any other questions?

4 MR. EWING: I have one. I'm trying to
5 look to the future, a vision of two or three years
6 from now and as people who are here and involved
7 and you've seen transition. Do you have a vision
8 of where things are headed as if all the things
9 that the press have implanted and impacted the
10 school?

11 MR. SMITH: Well that's a complicated
12 thing to answer.

13 MR. EWING: Yes, I understand.

14 MR. SMITH: Well, the referendum based,
15 I think the financial aspects would have been
16 alleviated. Some of things that we need to do and
17 want to do in terms of upgrading technology,
18 providing better or more teachers, depending on
19 the curriculum I think that that's going to have a
20 negative impact currently, but I think in the long
21 run Proviso has always provided a good education
22 and I think they will continue to do that.
23 They've seen provisions that are necessary and I

1 think that with the involvement of the parent
2 groups and some other organizations, and I hope
3 that actually through the investigation of this
4 panel that Proviso will be looked at objectively
5 and the excellence can be shown. And if that's
6 the case, then I think the future can be bright,
7 and that's my hope anyway.

8 MR. EWING: How do you think the negative
9 rap or being a victim of inaccurate or unnecessary
10 publicity do you think that will change any time
11 in the immediate future?

12 MR. SMITH: Not in the immediate future.
13 I'd see if in the findings of this panel if and
14 when they're made public, if they're positive,
15 that will I think change a lot of people. If it's
16 negative, obviously it will have a negative
17 effect. Our vision as a parent/teacher
18 organization is what you find is an excellent
19 installation as problems that need to be addressed
20 and they're working to address them. And if that
21 comes to light, the perceptions can be changed.
22 The irritation that we have within the
23 parent/teacher's organization is that we seem to

1 *always be defending the school from things that*
2 *are inaccurate. That they're not true, and as*
3 *parents we're concerned as in fact more concerned*
4 *than the general population as to the safety of*
5 *the students; whether there's gangs, whether*
6 *there's drugs, and I've asked many people who have*
7 *stated to me that they feel that there's problems*
8 *at Proviso to tell me exactly what are the*
9 *problems, what do you know? Do you know something*
10 *that I don't because I'm in somewhat of a position*
11 *to have the ear of people who could make changes*
12 *and I would certainly want to do that to make sure*
13 *that the school is safe for my students.*

14 *No one has given me anything*
15 *explicitly that I can work with. But my wife*
16 *and I have been here as I said during the school*
17 *day. It's a safe place, it's a good place, it's,*
18 *as Mac says, it's louder than when I was here 30*
19 *years ago and there are fewer students, but*
20 *everything is louder today. It's not necessarily*
21 *an indication of anything other than loud*
22 *children.*

23 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Ms. Yandle?*

1 MS. YANDLE: Mr. Smith, given the fact
2 that you said you were here 30 years ago, right?

3 MR. SMITH: Yes.

4 MS. YANDLE: How do you compare Proviso
5 West now to how it was 30 years ago? Basically I
6 assume 30 years ago it was not multi cultural?

7 MR. SMITH: We were kind of the same.

8 MS. YANDLE: Now it's, how do you view
9 the difference?

10 MR. SMITH: I find it as positive.

11 That's one of the reasons we were happy when my
12 son chose to come here. He chose to come here.
13 We gave him the opportunity to look at the schools
14 in the area and he chose to come here and that's
15 one of the reasons we got involved. We heard the
16 negative stories, but I attended here, I had three
17 brothers that attended, a sister that attended
18 here, my wife and I we live in Hillside by the
19 way, through Triton College. We went to family
20 night, swim here, my children were involved in Mr.
21 Massi's track program. So we were here. We were
22 in the building and, in fact, my son he even hates
23 that I mention this, but he was involved in pre

1 school activities here. So we're familiar with
2 the building, the people, and we've always been
3 comfortable. And one of the things that I think
4 is very positive is that where when I was his age
5 if I were to meet a black person or a Hispanic
6 person, I probably would have been very
7 uncomfortable. I knew some, but not many. He's
8 not uncomfortable at all. In fact he has a part
9 time job in a company. He has people who are from
10 Nigeria. The president is an American who was
11 born in Germany. There's a Hispanic receptionist
12 and there's a Philippino American technician that
13 he works with. He's comfortable and he's
14 comfortable I think because in part anyway because
15 of the experience he's got here because he deals
16 with all kinds of people all the time.

17 I think that's a valuable asset to
18 any student when you go out into a world today
19 where you're going to be expected to deal with
20 many different people from different cultures. I
21 think this is a big help.

22 CHAIRPERSON LYON: One quick question.

23 MR. MATHEWSON: It seems to me a lot of

1 *negative perception rose out of the community*
2 *rather than this school. It's obviously a lot of*
3 *people don't really know what's going on here and*
4 *how good it is, but the community has turned it's*
5 *back on the school now and a succession of*
6 *referendums, right. What are you doing to carry*
7 *that referendum? Will you try it again and can*
8 *you clear that? How bad was the vote against you*
9 *in November?*

10 *MR. SMITH: Well I don't know, I'm not on*
11 *the board. So I don't know if they're going to do*
12 *it again. I presume from what I heard that they*
13 *are. But that's not a new phenomenon. There's*
14 *this perception that the community is turning it's*
15 *back. Well if you look at the record, the last*
16 *time an education fund increase was voted through*
17 *I believe it was 1969. I believe it was '58 or*
18 *'59 for the operating fund. This is nothing new*
19 *in the township. It isn't just turning it's back*
20 *and when I was a student here and living in*
21 *Westchester, I'd say 60 percent of my friends went*
22 *to parochial school. Hillside, Westchester, many*
23 *of the towns around here have a history of sending*



1 children to parochial schools. That's not going
2 to change. That's part of the population in the
3 community. Even when, by the way yes I've lived
4 in Proviso Township 41 years. I grew up in
5 Maywood and I moved to Westchester and I live in
6 Hillside now. So I've seen both ends of the
7 township and it's the referendum votes as it was,
8 yes we're turning our back, but like I say it's
9 not a new phenomenon. But it's something we need
10 to deal with as a community. And what we need to
11 do is change the perception and show the people
12 that this is really an asset to their community,
13 to the township and if that can be done then we'll
14 get additional support. We do that by trying to
15 get people in to the open houses, both here at
16 West and at East and we have varying degrees of
17 success. We wish there was more participation by
18 the communities. They come in and see what they
19 have as part of the community and the assets
20 they're paying for. They should be concerned how
21 the tax dollars are being paid for or used and
22 they should come and take a look at it.

23 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Very good. Thank you

1 *for your participation. We need to move on.*

2 *(A brief recess was taken.)*

3 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: If everyone would*
4 *return to their seats we will get underway.*

5 *Our next panel member is Mr. Husk.*
6 *Would you please spell your entire name and what*
7 *community you live in, how long you've lived there*
8 *and what your involvement is, please?*

9 *MR. HUSK: My name is Michael Husk,*
10 *M-i-c-h-a-e-l H-u-s-k and I'm from the community*
11 *of Westchester. I've been in the community for 15*
12 *years. I'm currently a school board member for*
13 *Westchester district 92 and a half. I also have*
14 *one child in school as a Freshman currently and I*
15 *had one child graduate last year is now attending*
16 *the University of Iowa.*

17 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Go ahead with your*
18 *comments. Any opinions you'd like to express?*

19 *MICHAEL HUSK*

20 *I was asked to participate in this forum*
21 *by the school because of my involvement here at*
22 *Proviso West and because I also live in the town*
23 *of Westchester and I think you've also talked to*

1 *some other residents who live in Westchester. I*
2 *was unable to talk to them before I was talking to*
3 *you to find out what their feelings were as far as*
4 *expressed to you and I would also, you know, I*
5 *really don't know what your purpose is for being*
6 *here other than if it was from the article that*
7 *was written, I spent an hour and a half with that*
8 *gentleman on the phone on a Sunday night and he*
9 *didn't mention my name at all and everytime I*
10 *talked to him you know and answered questions for*
11 *him I was being very positive about Proviso West.*
12 *But in looking back at the article was written and*
13 *having heard comments from other people, I could*
14 *definitely see some type of a pattern of him*
15 *keeping to go, you know everytime I said something*
16 *positively, he would bring up a negative and he*
17 *would kind of pounce on that and then I would move*
18 *on and he would go back to that and say, but isn't*
19 *there something else you know? Why are they doing*
20 *this? And I would continue {on|oh} being positive*
21 *and in reviewing that I can definitely see, you*
22 *know, he wasn't looking for the positives, he was*
23 *looking for sensationalism and that's what he got.*

1 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Any questions from the*
2 *panel?*

3 *MR. PUGH: You live in Westchester.*
4 *There was an indication in the Tribune article*
5 *yesterday that some people in Westchester are*
6 *talking about creating another school district.*

7 *MR. HUSK: Yes, they are.*

8 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: And is that rational?*
9 *Could it stem from a sense of racism? Is*
10 *Westchester an all white --*

11 *MR. HUSK: No, it's not.*

12 *MR. PUGH: Essentially?*

13 *MR. HUSK: Essentially. A lot of towns*
14 *are undergong a change as you go west of the City*
15 *of Chicago. I don't think it's the racism that is*
16 *causing them the concern. Some parents have the*
17 *performance of what's happening here at the*
18 *school. There has been some problems*
19 *administratively and that has caused a question in*
20 *a lot of the minds of the voters in Westchester*
21 *and they have come to the Board and asked*
22 *Westchester District 92 and a half board to*
23 *investigate a unit school. We haven't told them*

1 *we're going to do it, and we haven't told them*
2 *we're not going to do it. But we have to give*
3 *them the option and by doing that and in order to*
4 *do that and give them information that would be*
5 *useful, we have to do a study and at the last*
6 *Board meeting we agreed to spend an amount of*
7 *money, under \$2,000 to find out if it's rationale*
8 *to pursue a unit school. I mean if it isn't, we*
9 *will let them know that.*

10 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: I'd like to ask a*
11 *question, and before I do, I'd like to make it*
12 *clear that I'm doing so in a personal capacity,*
13 *not as a member of this Advisory Committee. Not*
14 *in any way the views of anyone other than my own*
15 *personal views.*

16 *It always fascinates me that some*
17 *day it might be possible before people burn up*
18 *hundreds of thousands of dollars of legal time,*
19 *public and private, that someone might suggest to*
20 *them in advance that if they can spend enough*
21 *money to really get an independent view, they*
22 *wouldn't burn the money, public and private. In*
23 *my personal view, I believe firmly that the action*

1 you're talking about, while it may be popular in
2 the community, will get the community cited, will
3 burn endless amounts of legal time, public and
4 private, and in the end fail for all kinds of
5 reasons which will be clear to the simplest minded
6 lawyer in this state, if the lawyer has no
7 interest. Therefore, I plead with you, spend a
8 little more than \$2,000, go to a good firm that is
9 told in advance you will not be able to represent
10 the district or anyone else in this connection.
11 We want an opinion as to the likelihood of long
12 term success and I suggest to you that no firm in
13 it's right mind will come out with the idea that
14 you're doing anything other than burning money.
15 And therefore, this is because I must put it in
16 the form of a question, has that occurred to the
17 Board?

18 MR. HUSK: No. You know it's funny, I
19 don't know whether you're being critical or
20 sarcastic.

21 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Absolutely serious.

22 MR. HUSK: Now let me speak. The
23 Village of Westchester has certain factions that

1 *have indicated in the past that they would like to*
2 *do this and it failed. For one reason they had*
3 *all the support, but in order to do it it cost*
4 *mega dollars and the issue died. The issue has*
5 *come up again because of things that have occurred*
6 *at this school and it's being resurrected. We're*
7 *only trying to answer the questions of the voters.*
8 *I don't know how I feel. I mean I'm very pro*
9 *Proviso West. I would love to see some different*
10 *faces at some of the PTO functions instead of*
11 *seeing the same face for the last five years.*
12 *Parental involvement at this school is very*
13 *lacking. As we keep on pounding on the people to*
14 *participate, we have a PTO meeting four times a*
15 *year and we only get 40 people, 50 people.*
16 *Sometimes we get 70, I almost have a heart*
17 *failure. But it's that type of attitude coming*
18 *from this type of socio economic reality in this*
19 *school that is sometimes hard to, you know, you*
20 *can only beat your head against the wall so long*
21 *you know.*

22 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Are all the*
23 *Westchester residents members of the PTO here at*

1 *Proviso?*

2 *MR. HUSK: No, no. We can't get all the*
3 *teachers to come participate in the PTO. I mean*
4 *I've been here five years and it amazes me that I*
5 *see teachers, I'm walking through the halls that I*
6 *haven't seen and they've been teachers here for 20*
7 *years, which goes to show you that you know the*
8 *teachers here needs a kick in the butt, too.*

9 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Well --*

10 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Can I follow up on*
11 *that just for a moment?*

12 *MR. HUSK: To be more supportive of*
13 *what's going on. I think in order for a school to*
14 *be successful, you have to have a good frame of*
15 *mind amongst all individuals who participate in*
16 *this school. Whenever certain things come down,*
17 *certain issues, you know, you always like to have*
18 *pros and cons, but it's just sometimes it just*
19 *doesn't work that way.*

20 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: But what are the*
21 *indicators that you have that it will work if*
22 *Westchester pulls out?*

23 *MR. HUSK: I don't know if it will work.*

1 *I'd like to try it, that's what I'm saying. You*
2 *never know if anything is going to work until you*
3 *see some movement towards positive.*

4 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: You have no imperical*
5 *proof that if you went to Westerchester the PTO*
6 *would be filled with Westchester residents?*

7 *MR. HUSK: No.*

8 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: There would be*
9 *parental involvement?*

10 *MR. HUSK: No. I mean some people are*
11 *willing to spend \$11,000, \$12,000 right out of the*
12 *whole to try to get a unit school and just go full*
13 *out. I don't believe that's right because I think*
14 *Mr. Schwartzberg is very right, it would cost a*
15 *very large amount of legal fees to do it and you*
16 *don't know if it's going to work. I mean some*
17 *unit schools have worked, but it's usually when*
18 *you pair one or more villages together you can get*
19 *that to work.*

20 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: You indicated that*
21 *teachers should be more involved. I have heard*
22 *informally and would like some confirmation one*
23 *way or another questions as to whether or not*

1 *teachers supported different activities in this*
2 *high school by race. That is to say whether or*
3 *not for example African American teachers tended*
4 *to support sporting events and white teachers did*
5 *not or white teachers tended to support scholastic*
6 *extracurricular activities and black teachers did*
7 *not. Is there any truth to that in your*
8 *knowledge?*

9 *MR. HUSK: No, I've never heard that*
10 *because I've seen Afro American people at both*
11 *events, teachers, and I've seen white people,*
12 *white teachers at both. I do note that has never*
13 *been an issue here at Proviso West. If it was, it*
14 *was an underlying issue.*

15 *MR. EWING: A successful detachment*
16 *effort would diminish the enrollment at this high*
17 *school by what round figure?*

18 *MR. HUSK: 275 I think.*

19 *MR. EWING: That's all?*

20 *MR. HUSK: That's all because their*
21 *base, a graduated class about 108 last year and*
22 *only a quarter came to this school, the others all*
23 *went to private institutions and opted to pay the*

1 \$4,500 or \$5,000 a year which is required for
2 tuition for going through private institutions.

3 CHAIRPERSON LYON: How would it impact
4 funding?

5 MR. HUSK: It would impact funding
6 greatly here at Proviso West, but of course it's
7 also a debt requirement that would have to be
8 picked up by the Westchester residents. They
9 wouldn't be attending here.

10 CHAIRPERSON LYON: Mr. Pugh?

11 MR. PUGH: Is it correct that Westchester
12 voted overwhelmingly against raising the taxes?

13 MR. HUSK: For referendum?

14 MR. PUGH: Yes.

15 MR. HUSK: And I don't think the vote
16 was against the school and I think the vote was
17 against the taxes. Westchester is they've got a
18 lot of older residents and I mean I stood on a
19 corner for eight hours the last referendum, I
20 stood on the corner for three hours this
21 referendum and I mean it was the issue of taxes,
22 it was not the issue of Proviso West.

23 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: In terms of break

1 *point creation of a unit school. To what extent*
2 *would that be a matter of race and to what extent*
3 *would that be a matter of other things?*

4 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: If you know?*

5 *MR. HUSK: I don't think I can answer*
6 *that question. I don't think it would be a matter*
7 *of race because there's both Afro American and*
8 *white in the Village of Westchester now.*

9 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: But a greatly*
10 *different percentage?*

11 *MR. HUSK: Oh, sure, but if you have a*
12 *village that's going to be a majority white, it's*
13 *going to change differing percentages.*

14 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: You think creating*
15 *differing percentages would be in the minds of*
16 *those to bring about the--*

17 *MR. HUSK: No.*

18 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: What do you think?*

19 *MR. HUSK: Quality of education of their*
20 *children.*

21 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: And do you think*
22 *that's reflective in any way, questions of*
23 *integration from their school?*

1 MR. HUSK: *I can't answer that.*

2 MR. SCHWARTZBERG: *Why not?*

3 MR. HUSK: *Because I don't know. But*
4 *let me go back and say one thing. My child went*
5 *here for four years and I was very happy with the*
6 *education she received here. The teachers here*
7 *are very good teachers. The curriculum that they*
8 *offer is very good. The facilities that are*
9 *available here are excellent. The programs, the*
10 *people are very hard working people, but I as an*
11 *elected official in another town am telling you*
12 *some of the information that may not be my own*
13 *personal view. My personal view is that Proviso*
14 *West is a very good high school. It has problems,*
15 *like every other high school has; drugs, gangs. I*
16 *mean they're all out there at every other school,*
17 *even the ones that in the beginning the Village of*
18 *Westchester wanted to annex to, they have problems*
19 *there too. But I think there needs to be a little*
20 *more focus and direction here at Proviso West and*
21 *I think that's what they need. I think they tried*
22 *to do that by bringing in a different principal,*
23 *Dr. Jandrus and it didn't work out and they need*

1 to really sit down and work hard at getting
2 somebody who can rally the troops and move ahead
3 and make Proviso West as good as it can.

4 CHAIRPERSON LYON: I need to move on
5 to --

6 MR. ROBERTS: I have a question. Are
7 the people in the Village of Westchester aware of
8 the numbers when it comes to the teachers who are
9 in administrative change that there are like 88
10 percent white here?

11 MR. HUSK: I don't know if they know
12 that.

13 MR. ROBERTS: Would that--

14 MR. HUSK: Would that make a difference,
15 I don't think so. I don't think so.

16 MR. ROBERTS: IN other words, they're
17 saying that these white teachers are no good
18 either?

19 MR. HUSK: No, they're not saying
20 that.

21 MR. ROBERTS: If you can't get educated,
22 don't you blame that on the teachers?

23 MR. HUSK: Not necessarily. There's

1 *other factions that would, you know, affect*
2 *education; the environment, the, you know, it's*
3 *justf other things than just teachers.*

4 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Very good. Thank you.*
5 *Thank you once again for joining us,*
6 *Mr. Banks. Would you please give your full name*
7 *and spell it for the Reporter.*

8 *MR. BANKS: The name is Leo Banks, L-e-o*
9 *B-a-n-k-s.*

10 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Thank you. And why*
11 *don't we hear from Mr. Banks first?*

12 *LEO BANKS*

13 *Well, as a member of the Board of*
14 *Education and currently Chair of the Board of*
15 *Education, we wish to welcome you to Proviso*
16 *Township High Schools and that's a plural, we have*
17 *two schools. We wish that your stay here has been*
18 *comfortable, pleasant and you're achieving your*
19 *objective. You're learning more about the*
20 *Township high schools.*

21 *We are hopeful that this meeting can*
22 *bring about some positive results and that we are*
23 *hopeful that the community will learn more and can*

1 *continue with improvements that we're in the*
2 *process of implementing. With that in mind, I'm*
3 *not here to make any specific statements or*
4 *speeches or anything. I feel, and I've been here*
5 *pretty much the better part of the day that most*
6 *of what has been said in terms of the community,*
7 *we have over ten towns feeding into the two high*
8 *schools and perhaps six or seven feeder districts*
9 *I think they really comes from, and we have a*
10 *diverse and I like to think of a microcosm of the*
11 *United States within Proviso Township High Schools*
12 *and to that end I don't think that we are any less*
13 *or any more subject to any race views or tensions*
14 *than any other community in the country. I think*
15 *we have a unique position being west of Chicago*
16 *and we have inherited migration from the city.*
17 *And to that end we are doing our best to work with*
18 *the diverse communities, communities that feed*
19 *into our high schools and we're trying to bring*
20 *attention to the community of those improvements*
21 *which we are trying to implement and those*
22 *improvements which in the long history of these*
23 *high schools, and we think at least personally,*

1 *and I use the word I because I don't speak for the*
2 *Board all the time, I feel that you know I'm just*
3 *as proud of these institutions and they will not*
4 *fail. We will overcome any of the adverse*
5 *publicity. We will overcome any of our problems*
6 *because I think in an optimistic way that is the*
7 *American way. You do what you have to do to make*
8 *an institution what it can be, and to that end*
9 *I'll be free to answer any questions.*

10 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Very good. Thank you.*
11 *Mr. Eversley already made a presentation, but I*
12 *know there were some other questions that some*
13 *panel members wanted to ask. So therefore, I*
14 *would start with Mr. Mathewson.*

15 *MR. MATHEWSON: Yes. What are your*
16 *highest priorities these days? Can you tick off*
17 *briefly one, two, three or four things that are at*
18 *the top of your list for both administratively and*
19 *in terms of the Board of Education?*

20 *MR. BANKS: Our highest priority is*
21 *first is the students. To make sure the students*
22 *feel comfortable, are supported and get the best*
23 *possible education that we can deliver. Equal to*

1 that is making sure that our staff is supported,
2 that we have the kind of tools and support that
3 they need to conduct the job and that in doing
4 that ever increasing knowledge and staff
5 development is uppermost to us in terms of making
6 sure that our staff is current. Recent technology
7 and methodology and in the teachers meeting they
8 sound, these are general but they so brought.

9 But generally the Board of Education
10 tries not to be because it will take me all night
11 to try to tick off all the specifics of what these
12 would be.

13 MR. MATHEWSON: It must be something
14 that you're especially concerned about and
15 especially interested in?

16 MR. BANKS: Frankly speaking right now
17 about 35 percent of our students are successful
18 and they can go on to college and they're doing
19 well. I'm a personal example of that. I have two
20 daughters who graduated from this high school and
21 they have done well. They've had no problems with
22 at the larger or smaller universities or colleges.
23 I've got one student here now whose been invited

1 *by almost any and all the universities throughout*
2 *the country. She's been invited to apply for*
3 *application there. So with that in mind, I think*
4 *that perhaps I've ticked off what would be the*
5 *upper 25 percent of the students. It's my goal*
6 *that all of the students would have an opportunity*
7 *to get as far as he or she wants to go and that's*
8 *to say that we have the curricular which supports*
9 *that, and in order to do that, I think we've got*
10 *to think about retooling both of our schools in*
11 *terms of staff and in terms of supportive*
12 *equipment.*

13 *MR. MATHEWSON: Can you carry this one*
14 *step further? Retooling in terms of staff and*
15 *equipment. What does that mean?*

16 *MR. BANKS: Equipment in terms of we have*
17 *know where -- our library needs to be our link*
18 *centers. We need to make them libraries. They're*
19 *not just a place to go to do research. We need to*
20 *do that. We need to implement a computer aid to*
21 *education, integrate that into the actual*
22 *curricular to make that part of the daily skills*
23 *that are picked up or that are taught in the*

1 *classrooms. We have an experimental program here*
2 *at Proviso West called Project Lift and in that*
3 *particular program we have integrated disciplines,*
4 *all of the disciplines; the math, the science, the*
5 *English, and Social studies and we've kind of*
6 *integrated that into a team approach where we --*

7 *MR. MATHEWSON: We saw that this*
8 *morning.*

9 *MR. BANKS: Where we have ten of our*
10 *staff members working in a collaborative effort to*
11 *make sure that the student is rounded; whether it*
12 *be in math or in English. And so those are the*
13 *types of things that I specifically look forward*
14 *to that we would like to expand that right now*
15 *it's probably less than 150 students in that*
16 *program, a progressive idea we are to say what if*
17 *we had all Freshmen in that type of a program. We*
18 *would like to do that.*

19 *There are many other things. We*
20 *work with our youngsters in terms of peer*
21 *counseling. They work with each other, they try*
22 *to resolve their own problems prior to those*
23 *problems getting blown out of proportion. We'd*

1 *like to expand that we don't like the idea of 400*
2 *to 1 counselor or deans. We'd like to do*
3 *something about that. We don't necessarily think*
4 *that throwing all the money in the world at some*
5 *of the things we might think we want to do is*
6 *necessarily the solution to a problem, but we do*
7 *think that if we could impact on our existing*
8 *deficits we could in some large measure impact on*
9 *some of the programs, we could update our learning*
10 *centers. We could interface those with the*
11 *communications network, with the local lab, rarely*
12 *with the local colleges and we could retool those*
13 *with perhaps computer aids in terms of filing*
14 *systems and all of those types of things. The*
15 *science lab needs renovation. We're in the*
16 *process of doing some of those things. We need to*
17 *do more of that in other labs of that. So those*
18 *are some of the things that I did not want to be*
19 *trying to be specific about, but those are some of*
20 *the things that are going on now and some of those*
21 *things are visionary and some of those things are,*
22 *we know that's going to happen and we know that*
23 *despite our financial shortfall that we're going*

1 to find ways and we're determined to find ways
2 that these things are going to happen.

3 Our high schools have been rated
4 traditionally very high within the country, within
5 the State of Illinois and we have had this to some
6 extent restored the student performance on the
7 standard test like ACT and other test measures.

8 In recent years we've seemed to have
9 tapered off and we seem to have not pushed forward
10 as we would have hoped, but we know that -- but we
11 know that we can and we think we're right at the
12 measure. Another concept is the student
13 discipline. We try and teach our young people to
14 first respect self and then to respect ourselves.
15 And within that scope of things we would think
16 that if a small percentage of our students are
17 disruptive or being disruptive, we think that
18 there should be some developmental programs for
19 those students and not every student that we think
20 that has perhaps some behavior implications belong
21 in special education and so bit way we do have an
22 alternative high school which is part of the
23 township co op. None of you perhaps has not heard

1 *about the Pace Co op which is a collaboration of*
2 *all of the feeder schools within Proviso Township,*
3 *including the high schools and there we have an*
4 *alternative high school called Proof and we have*
5 *provided programming for students who would*
6 *otherwise not fit in the regular setting and have*
7 *some defineable behavior problems and that*
8 *population is less than 200.*

9 *There are a number of dynamics I*
10 *think programs that we have in Proviso Township in*
11 *our two high schools are the benefit of a good*
12 *staff. We recognize that improvements are always*
13 *needed and we're always looking for ways to get*
14 *and define those improvements.*

15 *MR. MATHEWSON: Dr. Eversley, any*
16 *priorities?*

17 *DR. EVERSLEY: Yes. I think you'll find*
18 *a lot of overlapping things of the things I just*
19 *said that Mr. Bank has just shared. Academic*
20 *performance is a primary concern. Mr. Banks*
21 *indicated we have some of our students are doing*
22 *well, they're succeeding quite well. We have far*
23 *too many of our students who are in fact not doing*

1 *as well as they are intellectually. I don't blame*
2 *anybody for that. I think the challenge for us is*
3 *to be in a position to work more effectively with*
4 *some of the students so that they become more*
5 *skillful faster during the time they are with us.*

6 *The second area that I point to and*
7 *these are interrelated is the area of prevention.*
8 *Some of the things that cause students to run into*
9 *problems perhaps with school rules or experience,*
10 *some less than the kind of success in the*
11 *classroom that think would like to are things that*
12 *in fact we can work with students in certain areas*
13 *sooner. That is to say if a student comes to us*
14 *with a significant skill deficit, bringing that up*
15 *to speed a student has some other sort of*
16 *situation going on in their life that ends up*
17 *having a bearing on their performance. The*
18 *students who can work with that more effectively I*
19 *think that will help, if a student runs into a*
20 *chronic problem with another student. Having a*
21 *way or with some other situation, having a way to*
22 *resolve that in a more preventative way and having*
23 *the resources available to do that I think is a*

1 *major help to our schools.*

2 *During the referendum campaign I*

3 *think we generated at good amount of dialogue and*

4 *over the last several years I think we've extended*

5 *the dialogue in the community about our schools.*

6 *We need to continue that we've been working over*

7 *the time I've been here and certainly not to say*

8 *it didn't happen before, but we've been working a*

9 *lot in the area of articulation, working with our*

10 *feeder schools around communications. We're*

11 *talking now about the potential of what we'll be*

12 *calling sort of loosely a curriculum clearing*

13 *house. A place where the school districts, in*

14 *fact our curriculum people in each of the*

15 *districts have begun some dialogue to talk about*

16 *at as the schools develop their school improvement*

17 *plans that as schools work towards achieving those*

18 *goals that shouldn't we be talking to each other*

19 *in a way to coordinate that given we have eight*

20 *different political entities that ultimately come*

21 *together to deliver instructional services K 12*

22 *publicly in this township. We are for this year*

23 *for the first time in more than a decade, as I*

1 *understand it, exchanging testing information so*
2 *that when students come to us, we have more*
3 *information about their performance. We've*
4 *instituted recently some things in both of our*
5 *schools that provide us with more information*
6 *about student performance at the front end of the*
7 *school experience rather than waiting until all of*
8 *a sudden they hit the wall and then we are trying*
9 *to figure out what we've got to do. We've got*
10 *some work to do there, but there are some of the*
11 *areas we're working on. Part of what I would like*
12 *to share with you is creating dialogue that it's*
13 *my opinion at the risk of maybe not having this*
14 *right after only 30 months, it's my opinion that*
15 *we have over the years become separated from our*
16 *community in a way that hasn't been helpful to*
17 *either the schools or the community. I think*
18 *referendum efforts has been helpful in generating*
19 *some of that dialogue in renewing some of those*
20 *connections. We've got to continue to nurture*
21 *that because these are the community's schools.*
22 *We are increasingly making schools available to*
23 *the community, whether I think perception is right*

1 *or wrong, I think it's the perception on part of*
2 *some that, the community is sort of over there and*
3 *the school is sort of over there and the two come*
4 *together is a good thing, but nobody is working on*
5 *it. We're trying to work on that because our*
6 *facility to be able and connect with our*
7 *communities. Mr. Banks made some mention about*
8 *staff development. I think that's important, any*
9 *progressive organization has to training, it has*
10 *to continue to train and retool overall the time.*
11 *I think that's a growth area for us.*

12 *As I indicated earlier today, we*
13 *started to do some things in the area of cultural*
14 *diversity, some other workshops in teaching*
15 *styles, but they haven't been organized in a way*
16 *to impact the entire organization. Individuals*
17 *have been involved, those groups of people have*
18 *been involved on some of their curricula, so I*
19 *think that's something that's important.*

20 *We met last spring with our*
21 *instructional leadership, both the department*
22 *chairs at both schools and at the administrative*
23 *staff to talk about a wide range of issues and of*

1 *the things that came up and several themes emerged*
2 *in staff development and we are hopeful that I*
3 *will be able to implement a staff program*
4 *beginning second semester. But we did do some*
5 *things in the fall and we're going to build on*
6 *them.*

7 *MR. MATHEWSON: Is that program going to*
8 *deal with --*

9 *MR. EVERSLEY: Part of our continuing*
10 *work in the area of cultural diversity, the second*
11 *area has to do with teaching styles and learning*
12 *styles. Certainly the more we know about that the*
13 *more sophisticated we get about that. We'd like*
14 *to be in a position perhaps this place of where we*
15 *have mismatching to really help students and*
16 *faculty match up better each accommodating each*
17 *other's situation.*

18 *The third area that we talked about*
19 *is classroom management and it's specific sorts of*
20 *hands on skills in that arena. So those are the*
21 *three I can remember.*

22 *MR. MATHEWSON: Thank you.*

23 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Another question from*

1 *the panel, Mr. Ewing?*

2 *MR. EWING: Yes, I have one. In the two*
3 *days I've heard concerns and criticisms of parents*
4 *that one of the things that was hurting the*
5 *education of these children was a severe lack of*
6 *parent involvement and I'm a person who after 25*
7 *years of working in schools has reached the*
8 *conclusion that a percentage of the educational*
9 *opportunities that children enjoy comes from the*
10 *degree to which their parents are involved. So*
11 *they're actually successfully academically is*
12 *directly related to that. I've also concluded*
13 *that racial perception or perception of justice*
14 *and injustice in a given school building can*
15 *depend on, to a degree of which the parents is*
16 *involved. Rather than those who are uninvolved,*
17 *who are somewhat alienated from the school based*
18 *on information that they may get.*

19 *So one of the underfunded and the*
20 *untried effort is in the area of having a goal*
21 *annually of a significant percentage of increase*
22 *in parent involvement. And the first thing that*
23 *you have to do is to study the barriers to parent*

1 *involvement and then you come up with some*
2 *strategies of overcoming this, and one of the like*
3 *I was in a small town and you know 5,000 people*
4 *and I convinced the school board that what they*
5 *needed to do was where there were high*
6 *concentrations of students, go to that school*
7 *itself to establish what we call child/parent*
8 *centers where parents, the sole place to deal with*
9 *school personnel was not in the school building*
10 *because one of the barriers is that many of them*
11 *don't want to come to places like this for a*
12 *variety of reasons I won't get into that. So this*
13 *is more of a suggestion is that you establish some*
14 *satellite efforts to increase parent involvement.*
15 *In other words, when the PTO meets, it comes here*
16 *to the school, so why not have several*
17 *neighborhood type situations of children to*
18 *interface with? Why can't staff people go into*
19 *the community from where the children come, staff*
20 *people. So I've seen some districts that are*
21 *trying that with some degree of success of*
22 *reaching out to the parents rather than just being*
23 *critical of them and offering them assistance in*

1 *overcoming these barriers to the degree they can*
2 *be.*

3 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Very good. Any other*
4 *questions?*

5 *MR. SCHWARTZBERG: Yes, during the*
6 *course of the last two days one of the things that*
7 *was popping up is the question of acquisition of*
8 *male black teachers. One of the people suggested*
9 *that there was a search being conducted perhaps in*
10 *the wrong places. Mr. Scales had suggested that*
11 *he has the lists of those who are going to be*
12 *graduating who are going to be teaching, to what*
13 *extent do you expect within the near future that*
14 *will be additional black males hired?*

15 *MR. EVERSLEY: The way you phrase the*
16 *question in terms of what I expect makes that*
17 *somewhat difficult, but let me tell you what our*
18 *interest is. What our interests are that we need*
19 *to continue to diversify our faculty. That's not*
20 *to say that there aren't good teachers in all*
21 *hues, but it's to say that in fact we have a*
22 *committment here to continue to diversify our*
23 *faculty. So our faculty increasingly reflects the*

1 *make up of the student body. We are always*
2 *looking for good teachers and if Mr. Scales has*
3 *anything that I can connect on that, I have a*
4 *great willingness to work with that. We've been*
5 *working on several fronts and it hasn't always*
6 *broken down in terms of male/female, but in terms*
7 *of acquiring new people in terms of enhancing the*
8 *number of people. As I indicated earlier today, a*
9 *third of the people we hired this past year were*
10 *people of color. We've been working with Mr.*
11 *Milnor at the university and they're forming up*
12 *some things around interesting African American*
13 *students increasingly in the area of education and*
14 *they have been looking for some school sites to*
15 *work with on a student basis, on a training basis,*
16 *on an collaboration basis. So we're talking with*
17 *him as it flows. We've been talking with him.*
18 *We've been out in the recruiting, I think results*
19 *have been less successful than in fact we would*
20 *have hoped, but we have active interests in this*
21 *areas and will continue to work on that area.*

22 *CHAIRPERSON LYON: Any other questions?*
23 *Very good. I think that brings this forum to a*

1 *close. Once again I want to thank everybody who*
2 *participated in making this forum I think a*
3 *success.*

4 *Thank you very much one and all.*

5 *(The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.)*

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CERTIFICATION

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I, VERNITA HALSELL-POWELL, a Certified Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public within and for the County of Cook, State of Illinois, hereby certify that I reported in shorthand the testimony given at the above-entitled cause, and state that this is a true and accurate transcription of my shorthand notes so taken as aforesaid.

Vernita Halsell-Powell
~~VERNITA HALSELL-POWELL, CSR. No. 084-001831~~